

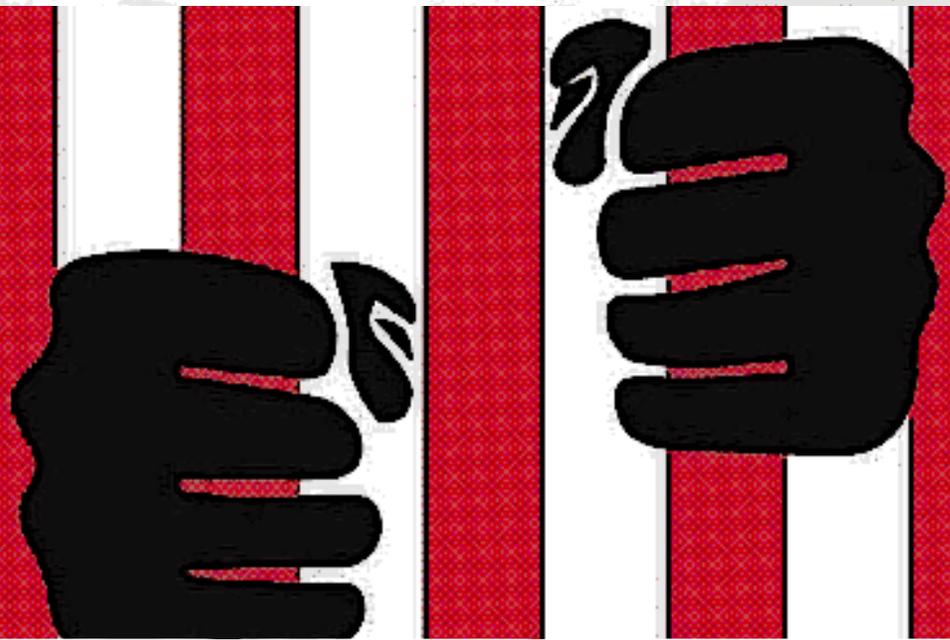
Criminal Justice System

A GRAPHIC NOVEL

FROM SLAVE TO CRIMINAL WITH ONE AMENDMENT



13TH



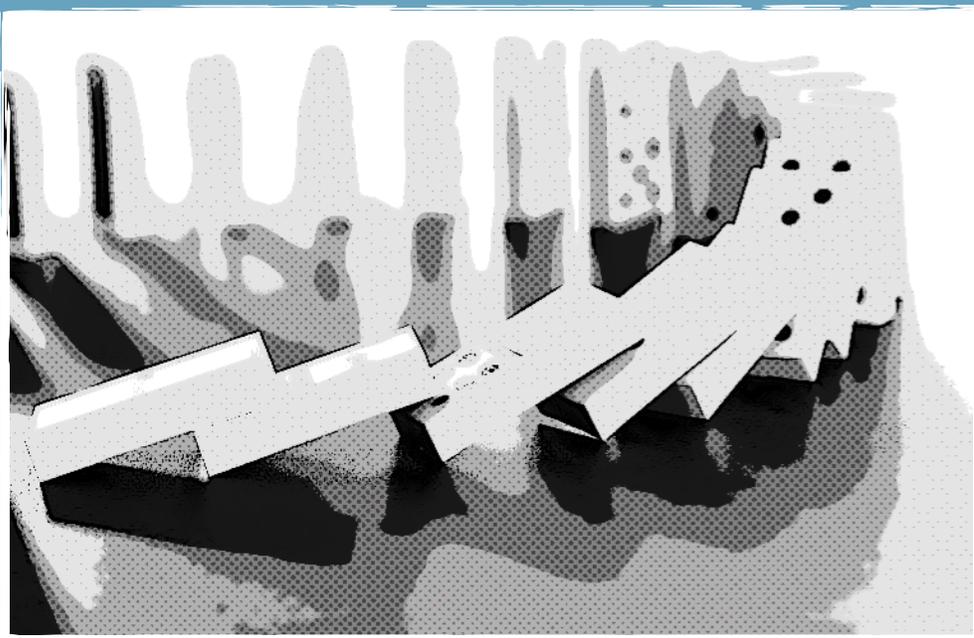
THE 13TH AMENDMENT

Makes it unconstitutional for someone to be held as a slave, granting freedom to all Americans... except for the exception of criminals.

13th Amendment

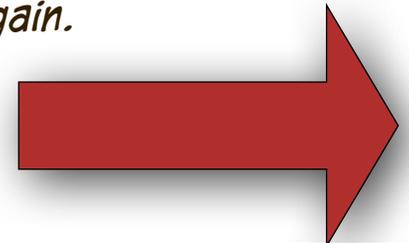
Section 1. Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction.

Section 2. Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.



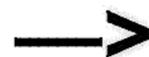
The demise of slavery led to economic collapse in America.

This led to white people of privilege quickly using the exception to the 13th amendment as a loophole so they could force labor again.



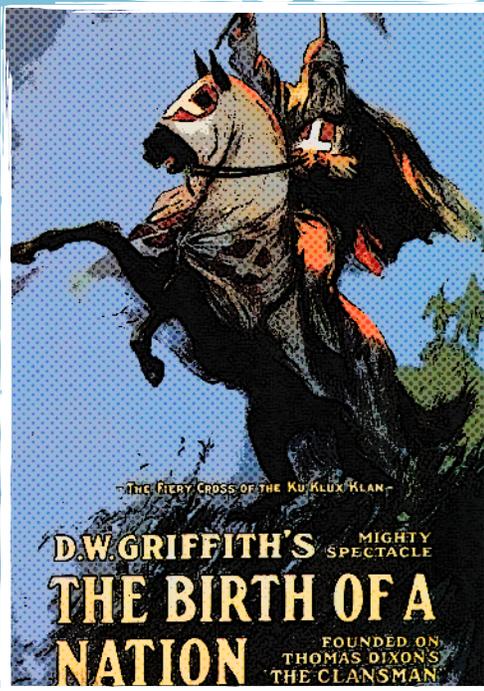
Black Codes' were developed so black people could be arrested for pointless things. Convicts were then leased to plantation owners and railroad companies to do labor in often dangerous, inhumane conditions.

1865



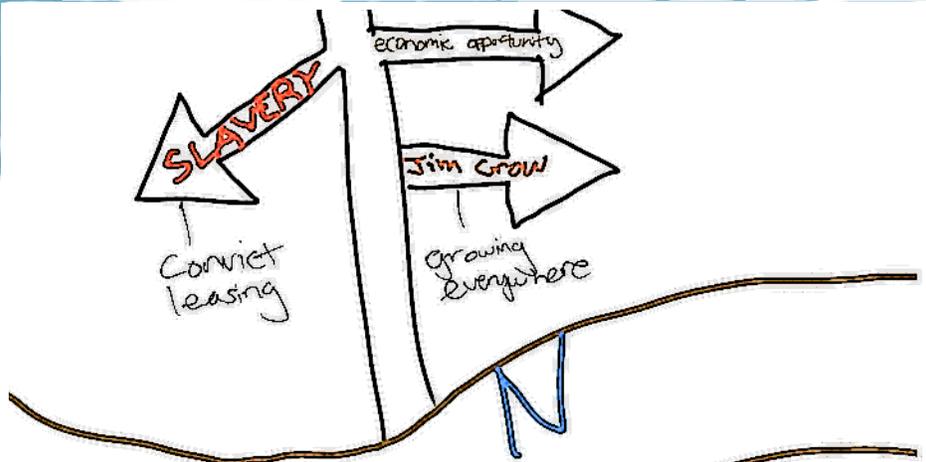
1928

This new form of slavery continued from 1865-1928.



'Birth of a nation', a play released around this time, was pivotal in absolving white guilt around the new forms that racism was taking. Every image portrayed of a black person was cruel and cannibalistic. The reaction to the film demonstrates the power of the media in justifying a mindset based on systemic oppression, and empowered the KKK's hate.

Fleeing the trauma experienced by their ancestors, black refugees moved North. Around this time, Jim Crow laws were tightening their grip on society as a replacement for open terrorism into more insidious codes that stripped black dignity.



Crime happened to be increasing as the civil rights movement gained momentum, which became a convenient excuse for politicians to make crime stand in for race.

RACE
A
determinant of crime

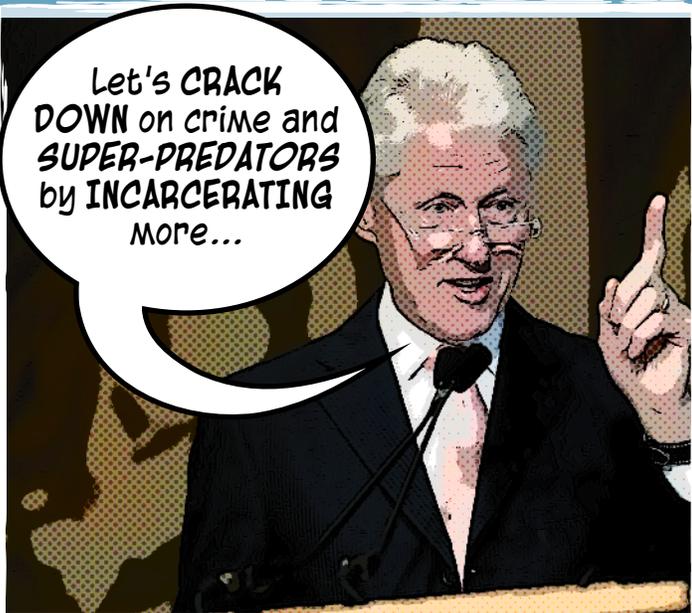
The tide of mass incarceration began, and President Reagan declared the war on drugs. Subsequently, drugs (crack and cocaine) were being marketed to black communities. Mandatory sentencing was given to all caught with drugs, and one prison for basically the rest of their life. Spending for drug law enforcement went up 30%. This policy decimated black families & communities.



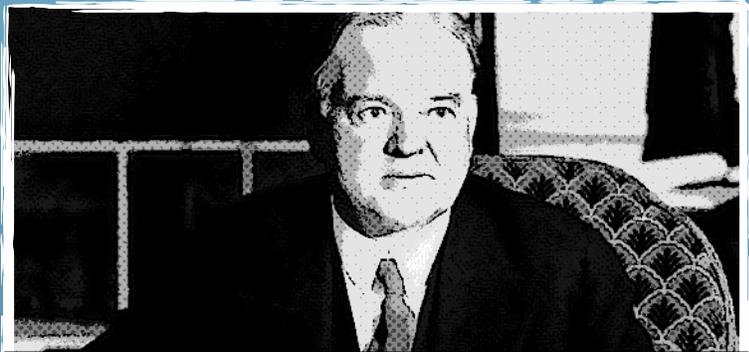


Bush and Dukakis vied for the presidency. Bush made the criminalization of a black man, Willie Horton, accused of rape, as the focus of his campaign.

Dukakis believed in ending the death penalty. Bush used that against him, shaping the narrative of Republican support for brutality (i.e.: death penalty) within criminal justice as a form of 'protection' from and 'justice' to black criminals- never mind that the history of interracial rape was almost always white men harming black women!



Bush's successor, Bill Clinton, set a dangerous federal precedent through a 1994 federal crime bill: a 30 million dollar bill creating mass expansion of the prison system to incarcerate 100,000 more people involved in drug crimes, put 100,000 more police officers on the street, and militarize this police.



President Hoover believed the Black Panthers were the greatest threat to white supremacy.

In 1969, the FBI murdered the very powerful Illinois Black Panther leader, Fred Hampton, and his pregnant wife at 4:30 in the morning.

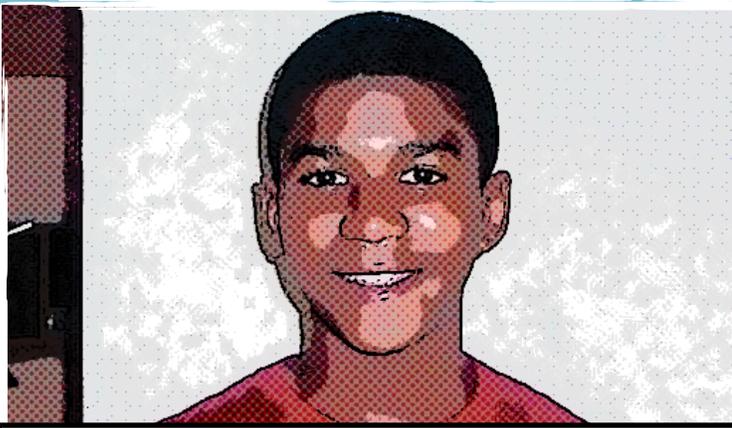


ALEC

The American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC), is a hugely powerful, rich lobbyist organization that has and continues to wreak havoc with its interference in policy.

\$ 30,000,000

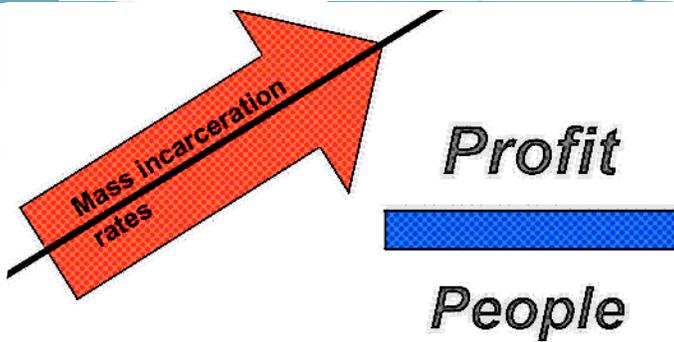
- mass incarceration for drug crimes
- 100,000 more police officers



ALEC pushed bills in states that permitted a person to shoot if they thought someone looked suspicious. This is how a white man thought he was justified in shooting and killing Trayvon Martin in Florida.



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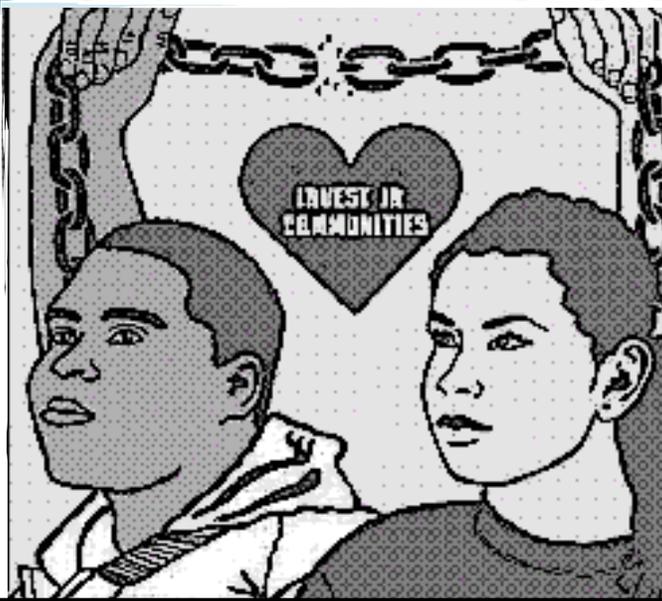
The Corrections Corporation of America (CCA) and American Prison Labor corporations profited off incarceration. System fairness was incumbent on wealth (rich folks could get out on bail). Now, 97% of incarcerated people don't even get a plea. Fair trial with prosecutors that represent people racially and without bias, would dramatically reduce the prison population.

Politically, policy has passed which increases 'criminalization' - criminalization of immigrants. Today, police can fingerprint someone without arrest, only 'reasonable suspicion'. All of those fingerprints are sent to Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and if the person is suspected of being an immigrant that ICE wants to deport, they'll send a 'detainer' - a request for that local police station to hold the person into custody for them, until ICE picks them up and, most likely, initiates the deportation process. The underlying influence of ICE in municipal services such as policing, healthcare, education, etc. can make immigrants very frightened to utilize them for fear of being criminalized.



Today, there are over 40,000 collateral consequences which occur after prison. For example, the inability to access student loan debts. 30% of the black male population can't vote today because of their criminal debt. So Jim Crow is here again, redesigned through the criminal justice system.

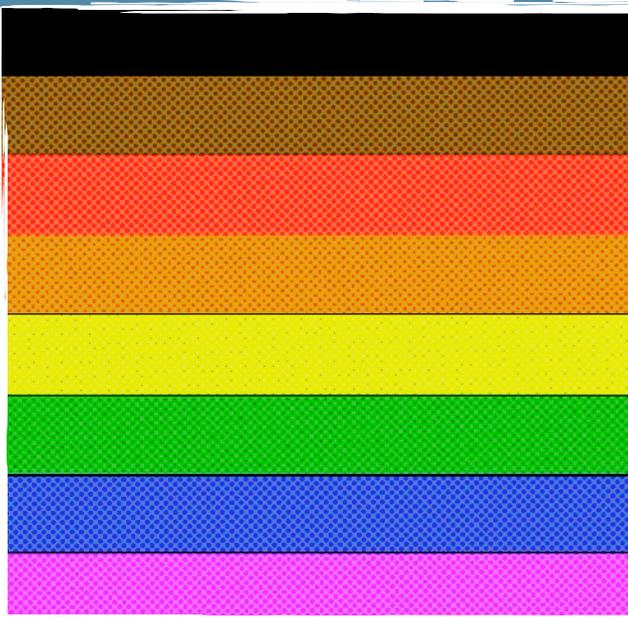




DIVEST REINVEST REFORM

We need to divest from the police and reinvest funds in instating more folks with understanding of human behavior, such as social workers and doctors, in communities. We need a dramatic reimagining of what police programs and training should look like, and HUGE criminal justice reform.

Yet... as Ta-Nehisi Coates wrote, we cannot forget "the truth that the police reflect America in all of its will and fear, and whatever we might make of this country's criminal justice policy, it cannot be said that it was imposed by a repressive minority. The abuses that have followed from these policies—the sprawling carceral state, the random detention of black people, the torture of suspects— are the product of democratic will. And so to challenge the police is to challenge the American people who send them into the ghettos armed with the same self-generated fears that compelled the people who think they are white to flee the cities and into the (American) Dream."



The time is NOW and it is ALL OF US that will change. We all belong and are needed in this fight. Go to bit.ly/racialequityinitiative to access a toolkit and find out how you can get involved!