



SOME FACTS ON SLAVERY

WHY HJ 1 RESOLUTION MATTERS

- Resolution seeks to close a chapter of this state's hideous past.
- Resolution seeks to continue the dialogue towards racial harmony.
- Resolution calls on Connecticut citizens to abolish racial prejudices that still exist today.

HOW MANY STATES HAVE OFFERED AN APOLOGY?

Seven - Alabama, Virginia, North Carolina, New Jersey, Maryland, Florida. Connecticut becomes the first New England state to apologize for slavery.

HOW MANY STATES ARE CONSIDERING AN APOLOGY?

Nine - Rhode Island, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, Arkansas, Delaware, Georgia, New York and Tennessee.

HAVE NATIONAL GOVERNMENTS OFFERED APOLOGIES FOR PAST MISDEEDS?

In 1988 President Reagan signed a bill apologizing for the internment of Japanese in concentration camps in the U.S. during WW2. The federal government is currently considering a bill apologizing for slavery

In 2001 at the U.N. Conference on Racism in South Africa, 15 European nations apologized for their role in the slave trade. African countries have offered their apologies for their involvement in the trade. At this conference it was concluded that the historical injustices of the slave trade undeniably contributed to poverty, underdevelopment, marginalization, social exclusion, economic disparities, instability for certain populations across the World.

In 2007 The Canadian Parliament apologized to native Americans for the residential school system a system which oppressed native American Indians for generations.

On July 29th, 2008 the U.S. House of Representatives issued an apology for slavery.

On June 18th, 2009 the U.S. Senate issued an apology for slavery after the House passed a resolution.

HAVE ANY INSTITUTIONS APOLOGIZED FOR SLAVERY?

In 2000 Aetna, Inc., the nation's largest health insurer, apologized for selling policies in the 1850s that reimbursed slave owners for financial losses when their slaves died. Aetna acknowledged that for several years shortly after its founding in 1853 that the company may have insured the lives of slaves.

In 2006 Brown University in Rhode Island offered a formal apology for its role in slavery. Brown's endowment came from slave owner's wealth.

CONNECTICUT'S ROLE IN SLAVERY

Connecticut's wealth exploded in the Triangle Trade, as shrewd merchants and other businessmen supplied the slave plantations in the West Indies that grew and processed sugar cane.

Connecticut's role in shipping food and livestock to these islands is no secret. But for many years, little connection had been made between that role and slavery. Most people, in fact, have assumed, if they thought of it at all, that the major role of Connecticut citizens in American slavery was one of liberation. But while this was certainly true - Connecticut played a large role in the abolition effort, and in the Civil War, Connecticut men fought beside other northerners - the total picture turned out to be more complicated, and far more damning.

CONNECTICUT'S ABOLISHMENT OF SLAVERY

In 1784, the abolition forces in the state tried a new tactic and presented a bill for gradual emancipation as part of a general statute codifying, in great detail, race relations. Almost as an afterthought it provided that black and mulatto children born after March 1 would become free at age 25. The strategy worked, and the bill passed without opposition. An act of 1797 reduced that age to 21, bringing slavery in line with apprenticeship, though obviously slavery was not voluntary and slaves did not receive money, clothes and professional standing at the end of their servitude.

As in other Northern states, gradual emancipation freed no slaves at once. It simply set up slavery for a long-term natural death. Connecticut finally abolished slavery entirely in 1848.