

# MAKING SENSE

## BLACK CIVIL RIGHTS IN THE SOUTHERN STATES OF AMERICA

17th and 18th Centuries – Africans imported into Southern States to work as slaves on plantations growing cotton. Slaves were the ‘possessions’ of their masters and could be bought and sold.

19th Century – Protest from Northern States about the injustice of slavery in a country that was supposed to be free and democratic.

1861 – Because they would not agree to abolish slavery, the Southern States left the Union of American States.

1861–1865 – Civil War between Northern States (Union) and Southern States (Confederacy).

1865 – Confederate states defeated. United States of America formed. Slavery abolished. Blacks given full citizenship, including right to vote and hold public office. A few negroes owned land. Period of ‘Reconstruction’ – Much disorder in the South. Unfairly blamed on the newly freed blacks.

1876 – ‘Redeption’ of the South and restoration of ‘white supremacy’. Legal tricks took away voting rights from the blacks. Money for black schools was diverted to white schools. Black and white segregated in all aspects of life; housing, schools, the church, public transport, eating places etc. Whites campaigned to prove that blacks were sub-human and incapable of being educated. Much violence against blacks by whites, including the notorious Ku Klux Klan.

20th Century – ‘Negro Protest’ movement started, mainly based in northern cities. Much unrest in South, but little progress until 1950’s. ‘Civil Rights’ Movement led by Martin Luther King.

1967, 1964, 1966 and 1968 – Civil Rights Acts gave blacks back their rights, but caused much unrest and violence.

