

0. FROM SLAVERY TO FREEDOM - Story Preface

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President Franklin Roosevelt decided to replace his war-years' VP—Henry Agard Wallace, America's 33rd Vice President (1941-1945)—when FDR ran for a fourth term. He selected Harry Truman, who replaced FDR as President when FDR died in April of 1945. Wallace—a Progressive—made a bid to run for President in the 1948 election. He believed that African-Americans should not be treated as they were under "Jim Crow." This image depicts one of his 1948 posters. He believed that "Jim Crow Must Go."

Once the slaves were free, the South had to find a way to live with them. The North had created a model.

Jim Crow laws, separating blacks from whites in public facilities, were already on the books in the North. Massachusetts had passed the first known law in 1841, separating whites and blacks in railroad cars.

Once reconstruction was complete, and the Union soldiers were gone, the South had to make a huge transition from slave to free society. Because it had been illegal for a slave to read or write before the Civil War, most slaves were illiterate.

Education was sorely needed to assimilate former slaves into mainstream society. But how would that be done?

Since Congress had passed no plan to help African Americans make the transition from slavery to freedom, a societal vacuum existed. The South began to fill the vacuum with Jim Crow laws. By 1914, every southern state had its own version of how it chose to live with former slaves.

At the same time, the South struggled to make another equally problematic transition: from slave to free economy. Since 1619, when southern colonists first used slaves, the South had a *plantation* (cheap labor) economy. Now southerners needed to create a completely new *market* economy.

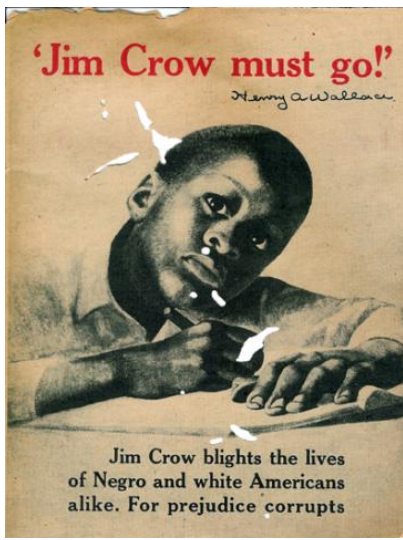
To put the difficulty in perspective, keep in mind this fact. America's plantation system had been in effect longer (246 years) than America has been free from British control.

See [Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:](http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/FROM-SLAVERY-TO-FREEDOM-jim-Crow-Laws)

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