

# “ ‘Reconstruction’ --- Yesterday and Today’ ”

One hundred twenty years ago, Frederick Douglass, the great black orator and leader, said in a speech that “... The ground which a colored man occupies in this country is, every inch of it, sternly disputed ...” Can anyone deny that this is still true today? Have we ... can we learn anything from the past? The National BLACK MONITOR thinks so. Thus, our theme for 1974 - “Reconstruction - Yesterday and Today.”

Our purpose is to examine the First Reconstruction Era, which we consider began with the Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854 and ended in 1883. This was the year the Supreme Court declared the Civil Rights Act of 1875 unconstitutional. We will then compare these years with the Second Reconstruction Era which we at the MONITOR consider the years beginning with the Supreme Court decision on school desegregation in 1954 and may run to the early 1980's.

In doing this, we hope to provide our readers with ideas and information that will aid them in dealing seriously with the present and future struggle for black survival, black liberation and black self-development ... for, we at the National BLACK MONITOR ask, “How can America survive and grow to the richness of its potential if all people in America are not free, productive and treated with fair play?”

This approach is in keeping with our ongoing aim to monitor the actions of all in regard to black Americans - past and present. This will enable us to provide information to protect ourselves and all others in America from further repressive action by many in the larger community. Additionally, it will help us to assure our freedom, to be productive in an unfettered way, and to be treated fairly (or equitably) in light of our unique historic situation in America.

(Continued on Page 6)