

A TIMELINE OF THE MODERN ERA OF MASS CRIMINALIZATION

1960

Sit-ins in Charleston and Rock Hill disrupt the cities and would continue for the next 5 years.

The Rock Hill protests, led by the Friendship Nine – a group of young men who refused bail to push the issue – created a wave of statewide sit-ins.

1961

Charleston native Septima Clark opens citizenship schools throughout the state to increase literacy and teach activism – pioneering the link between education and activism. Along with Bernice Robinson, she is credited for registering nearly 2 million previously disenfranchised Black Southerners to vote.



1966

Esau Jenkins – founder of the Progressive Club (which educated activists in citizenship training including MLK Jr.) started the C. O. Federal Credit Union to create economic mobilization for residents; as well as the Rural Mission which provided social services to migrant workers; and the Sea Island Health Care Corp, which provided low-income health care and low-income housing.

1968

Orangeburg Massacre. On February 8, 1968 white state troopers fired into a rally at South Carolina State College, an HBCU in Orangeburg after students attempt to desegregate a local bowling alley. Three students were killed and 28 were wounded. No one was charged.

Harvey Gantt desegregates Clemson University.



1969

Charleston Hospital Strike. Led in part by Coretta Scott King, 300 hospitals workers went on strike to protest working conditions and wages.



1972

Oneita strike in South Carolina led by Black workers and supported by the Textile Workers Union of America was victorious in raising wages. In the years that followed, there was a crackdown on organized labor across the state.



PRESENT

Lee Correctional Uprising represents the most deadly prison riot since 1993.

Nearly one-third of Black and Latinx South Carolinians live at or below the poverty line.



1964

● **Barry Goldwater runs on a fear-mongering, racist law-and-order platform.** His campaign sets the stage for Nixon's Southern Strategy – deliberately using coded racism to draw in voters.

● **Civil Rights Act of 1964 is passed.** Title VII outlaws discrimination in employment based on race, religion and creed.

1965

● **Voting Rights Act of 1965 passed.**

● **Malcolm X assassinated.** NYPD and FBI had knowledge beforehand.

● **Watts Uprising spawned by police brutality** – LAPD creates SWAT.

● **Law Enforcement Assistance Act of 1965** provides a ramping up of federal dollars to flood streets with police officers and spend on law enforcement.

● **Moynihan Report provides the rationale for over-policing by perpetuating racist stereotypes of Black criminality** (*This would continue to be exploited by politicians from Nixon, to Reagan, to Clinton's "superpredator"*). Begins to suggest uprisings stem from inherent criminality.

"In a word, most Negro youth are in danger of being caught up in the tangle of pathology that affects their world, and probably a majority are so entrapped... The combined impact of poverty, failure, and isolation among Negro youth has had the predictable outcome in a disastrous delinquency and crime rate."

1966

Black Panther Party Formation: A critical analysis linking economic injustice and racial oppression is set forth in cities across the North.

1967

Detroit and Newark Uprisings. In the following year, uprisings – most often the result of an incident of police brutality – occurred in over 300 cities.

1968

● **Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. is assassinated** while organizing sanitation workers in Memphis, the beginning of a campaign for economic justice.

● **Nixon declares War on Drugs**
"The Nixon campaign in 1968, and the Nixon White House after that, had two enemies: the antiwar left and black people. You understand what I'm saying? We knew we couldn't make it illegal to be either against the war or black, but by getting the public to associate the hippies with marijuana and blacks with heroin. And then criminalizing both heavily, we could disrupt those communities. We could arrest their leaders, raid their homes, break up their meetings, and vilify them night after night on the evening news. Did we know we were lying about the drugs? Of course we did." John Ehrlichman, Nixon's Domestic Policy Chief.

1969

● **Fred Hampton Jr. is murdered by the FBI in his sleep.**

1970

● **340,000 people in jail and prisons.**

● **Deindustrialization wreaks havoc on urban centers; unemployment surges:** Skilled union jobs and well-paying manufacturing jobs moved overseas leaving workers in central cities to contend with precarious labor positions in service industries that were often low-wage and without benefits.

● **Black Workers Congress founded by James Foreman.**

1971

● **Attica Uprising** and a new wave of collective organizing in prison across the country, as well as a new wave of backlash on political education in prisons.

1973

● **Rockefeller Drug Laws:** Toughest drug laws in the nation, possession gets 15 years to life. These laws set a precedent for states to follow suit. The 1970s sees a general increase in incarceration for low-level felonies.

1982

● **President Ronald Reagan recommits to War on Crime** while slashing the budgets for public housing, public schooling, and public benefits.

● **Los Angeles begins to enforce gang injunctions,** which begins a trend that spreads throughout law enforcement today.

1986

● **Iran Contra and the CIA's involvement in the proliferation of crack cocaine.**

● **Anti-drug Abuse Act further criminalizes drugs and possession.** 100-to-1 "crack cocaine" to cocaine disparity in sentencing enforced.

1990s

● **Popularization of Broken Windows policing** provides rationale for racialized over-policing of low-income neighborhoods of color.

1994

● **Omnibus Crime Bill** enacted under President Bill Clinton adds 9.7 billion to prison budget, eliminated Pell grants for incarcerated individuals, reinforced mandatory minimums, truth in sentencing, and three strikes provisions.

1995

● **Myth of the "Super-predator" emerges** as John Dilulio, a Princeton professor, predicts that low-income youth of color were becoming dangerously aggressive – a fear mongering analysis that further criminalized children of color. States respond by enacting automatic adult prosecution for children and permitted life without parole for youth.

1996

● **Welfare reform prohibits people convicted of drug felonies to access social safety net.**

PRESENT

2.2 million people are incarcerated; 4.7 million people are on probation or parole; 70 million have a criminal record.

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