Document I

Note: W.E.B. DuBois was a black leader and scholar in the early 1900s who fought for black rights.

“In these years, there have occurred:

1. The disfranchisement (removal of voting rights) of the Negro.
2. The legal creation of a distinct (separate) status of civil inferiority (less than somebody else) for the Negro.
3. The steady withdrawal (removal) of aid from institutions for the higher training of the Negro.

...the whites, North and South, [have shifted] the burden (responsibility) of the Negro problem to the Negro’s shoulders...; when in fact the burden belongs to the nation, and the hands of none of us are clean...

Document J

Source: Library of Congress

A family sits outside of a shack in Alabama
Version #1

The top priority of the progressive era should be fighting for African American rights. W.E.B. DuBois states, “the disfranchisement of the negro” (Doc. I) has happened. If black people have been disenfranchised and lost the right to vote, then they will never have the same opportunities as white people and will not truly be equal. Also, in a photo from the Library of Congress a woman sits outside of a shack with her five kids, ragged clothing and no shoes. (Doc. J) Many black people, at least in the southern states like Alabama, need support. They are still living in poverty and could use support from the government during the progressive era with financial assistance, education and job training to help them get back on their feet.

Version #2

The top priority of the progressive era should be fighting for African American rights. W.E.B. DuBois states, “the disfranchisement of the negro” (Doc. I) has happened. If black people have been disenfranchised and lost the right to vote, then they will never have the same opportunities as white people and will not truly be equal. Even though the 15th Amendment was created during reconstruction to give black men voting rights, voter intimidation and other southern laws have stopped them from voting and making any real change to the laws. Also, in a photo from the Library of Congress a woman sits outside of a shack with her five kids, ragged clothing and no shoes. (Doc. J) Many black people, at least in the southern states like Alabama, need support. They are still living in poverty and could use support from the government during the progressive era with financial assistance, education and job training to help them get back on their feet. Decades after the Civil War, most black people are still sharecroppers who are in debt to white landowners. The promise made to black citizens has not come true.

Version #3

The top priority of the progressive era should be fighting for African American rights. W.E.B. DuBois states, “the disfranchisement of the negro” (Doc. I) has happened. If black people have been disenfranchised and lost the right to vote, then they will never have the same opportunities as white people and will not truly be equal. Even though the 15th Amendment was created during reconstruction to give black men voting rights, voter intimidation and other southern laws have stopped them from voting and making any real change to the laws. Also, in a photo from the Library of Congress a woman sits outside of a shack with her five kids, ragged clothing and no shoes. (Doc. J) Many black people, at least in the southern states like Alabama, need support. They are still living in poverty and could use support from the government during the progressive era with financial assistance, education and job training to help them get back on their feet. Decades after the Civil War, most black people are still sharecroppers who are in debt to white landowners. It is more important to support black rights, than the rights of women because if the U.S. cannot follow through with the laws they made and guarantee rights to black citizens, then women cannot believe the government if they were to gain rights.