

do so, to beautify it, to build it up. But if they wish to live in other sections of the city, better located, closer to places of work, or for other reasons, they will also be free to do so. In fact, the living in close contact and the mixing of peoples of all nations and of all races will be encouraged, for this will hasten the destruction of all forms of separatism passed down as a heritage from capitalism, will tend to freely amalgamate all peoples.

Thus, in a general way, we see the tremendous possibilities for the Negro in a Soviet America. No privileges for the whites which the Negroes do not at the same time have, full equal rights—this is the minimum to be expected from a Soviet America.

But today some eight million Negroes—two-thirds of the Negro people—live in and around the plantation area, in the most backward section of the country. The basic work will have to be done here. Here the real economic basis for equality, the social and political realization of equality, is to be guaranteed.

The Soviet Negro Republic

We assume here that the new Negro Republic created as a result of the revolution for land and freedom is a Soviet Republic and that this Republic has settled the question of self-determination in favor of federation with the Soviet United States. Under such conditions, we will try to picture in its main features the transformation which can and will take place in this territory.

The actual extent of this new Republic would in all probability be approximately the present area in which the Negroes constitute the majority of the population. In other words it would be approximately the present plantation area. It would be certain to include such cities as Richmond and Norfolk, Va., Columbia and Charleston, S. C., Atlanta, Augusta, Savannah and Macon, Georgia, Montgomery, Alabama, New Orleans and Shreveport, La., Little Rock, Arkansas, and Memphis, Tennessee. In the actual determination of the boundaries of the new Republic, other industrial cities may be included. The actual settlement of the question of boundaries will depend largely on the steps taken to assure well-rounded economic development to the Negro Republic. This question we will discuss shortly.

What will be the basis of political power? Who will hold the political power in this territory?

At the present time political power is in the hands of the

plantation masters and the capitalists. The democracy which permits the voters to elect this or that representative of the interests of the large landlords and the capitalists is limited only to a section of the white population. The Negroes are practically entirely excluded. There is less democracy here than in any other part of the country.

As a result of the revolution the plantation masters and the capitalists will be overthrown. The formerly exploited classes of the population will come to power. These will be the workers, the former share-croppers, small tenants and small individual landowners. Because the Negroes are in a majority, especially of the exploited classes, the new governmental bodies will be predominantly composed of Negroes. The actual working out of real democracy in this territory—democracy for the majority of the people and not for the minority as under capitalism—will result in the Negroes playing the principal role in the new governmental authority.

It would, however, be wrong to say that the new government would be a dictatorship of the Negroes. Political power is based not upon racial characteristics but upon classes. The new political power would be a dictatorship of the workers and the small farmers. Since most of the workers and the small farmers in this territory are Negroes, they would naturally compose the greater part of the personnel of the new town, township, county and regional government bodies.

The Soviet has proven to be the international form of this kind of governmental power. The first Soviets were created by the Russian Revolution of 1905, and were established as the form of the dictatorship of the proletariat as a result of the Russian Revolution of 1917. Since then in revolutions which have taken place in Germany, Hungary, Austria, Spain, China, Cuba and other countries, Soviets have also appeared as the form of power of the workers and peasants. The Soviets which will arise in the old South will be somewhat as follows:

They will arise locally, here and there, as the revolution starts, and spread as it develops further. Let us try to picture the composition of one of these Soviets, which will hold power in a certain locality. On this Soviet there will be representatives of the share-croppers, tenants and wage-workers of the plantations; then representatives, let us say, of the workers in a local

sawmill or of a fertilizer plant, cotton gin, cotton-seed oil factory, or nearby textile mill; there might be one or two poor and small landowners. This Soviet will represent the interests of the workers from the mills and plantations and the poor farmers. It will embody the alliance between the workers and the poor farmers. It will be a dictatorship of these classes, using its power to defend the gains of the revolution and defeat all attempts of the former plantation masters and capitalists at counter-revolution.

As the gains of the revolution are consolidated these Soviet territories will unite to form the new Soviet Negro Republic. The central Soviet body of the Republic will be composed of the representatives of the same interests which are to be found in the local Soviets. The term "Soviet Negro Republic", therefore, does not mean a Republic or a government composed exclusively of Negroes. Whites as well as Negroes will participate in the new power—white workers as well as Negro workers, white share-croppers as well as Negro share-croppers. But the name "Soviet Negro Republic" does express the fact that complete democracy, and the important role played by Negroes in the revolution itself, have placed the Negroes in the bodies of government in accordance with their real majority.

It must also be borne in mind that the present ruling class of the South is composed entirely of whites. The revolution will disfranchise and expropriate the present exploiting and ruling class. This, of course, will be done on the basis of class distinction and not race distinction. Nevertheless, it will result in cutting down the number of enfranchised white citizens.

We have somewhat of a similar situation in our own history. In the years 1867-1877 a revolutionary dictatorship ruled the South. The purpose of this dictatorship was to prevent the former slaveowners from returning to power. This was a dictatorship of the Northern capitalists and Southern middle class, supported principally by the former Negro slaves, many of whom were in the army which patrolled the South or in locally organized rifle clubs and militias. The dictatorship was also supported, especially at the start, by the poor white farmers. The county governments in the plantation areas were composed almost entirely of Negroes. In a number of states the Negroes were in the majority in the legislatures, and they held many of the important

state offices. A number of Negroes were elected to the Senate and House of Representatives in Washington. If at that time full democracy had been in force the Negroes would have had even larger representation in the state and national governments. After the defeat of these revolutionary governments, the Negroes were completely disfranchised.

Under the revolutionary government of the Soviets, however, full democracy for the majority will be assured by creating the economic basis for this democracy.

The Economic Foundation of Equality

THE LAND

Among the first actions of a Soviet government would be a decree recognizing the confiscation of the large landownings where this has taken place or authorizing such confiscation if it has not yet taken place, converting all privately-owned land into the property of the whole people without compensation, and the confiscation of all livestock and implements of the large landowners for the use of the people.

Thus would the destruction of the plantation system in the South be authorized according to revolutionary law.

The land would now be the property of the people as a whole. Local Soviets or land committees, composed of the poor farmers and the farm workers, could now determine the allotment of land to the former tenants and share-croppers. While the land would remain the property of the Republic, it would be divided up among the poor farmers whose right to till their farms would be recognized. Those who already have a small holding of land would be permitted to continue working it and they might even be given more land after the needs of the landless are satisfied.

All previous debts and obligations would be cancelled. Financing, the banks and credit would now be in the hands of the Soviet state. With the removal of all restricting forces, such as the old credit institution and the plantation system, a complete transformation of agriculture in the South would now be possible. The most backward area under capitalism could now be turned into a source of well-being for its population. Cotton, the most important commercial crop, which under capitalism is the scourge of millions of toilers, can now be turned into the instrument for rapid economic and social development.

From the huge plantations as they exist today two kinds of

agricultural enterprises are likely to develop in the first stages of Soviet Power. There are about 40,000 plantations in the South. The size of the average plantation is about 725 acres, but only slightly more than half of this acreage is worked by tenants and share-croppers. The rest is worked by the landowner himself with wage-workers. Cotton is grown on the tenant section of the plantation, and the other section is used as a reserve of land and for the purpose of growing feed crops. On the one hand, the present tenant holdings together with a certain section of the reserve land could be turned into small farms worked by the former tenants. On the other hand, a good part of the wage-labor section of the plantation could be turned into model state farms or collectives. These could serve from the very beginning as immediate examples for the surrounding small holders of land also to form collectives. For the advantage of this form of farming, the socialist form, would immediately become apparent.

Some of these plantations are on a tremendous scale. There are over 400 plantations, for instance, which have an average acreage of about 3,500, of which 1,700 acres are today worked by the landowners themselves with wage workers. The largest plantation in the world is situated at Scott, Miss., and is owned by Oscar Johnson, one of the high officials now in the AAA. This plantation covers 37,000 acres. On plantations of this kind the use of modern machinery and the latest and most scientific methods of agriculture, the benefits of which will be shared by the producers themselves, will serve as tremendous encouragement for the creation of similar giant farms out of the small holdings.

The technical transformation of agriculture will now for the first time become possible in the old South. Today untold wealth is being lost in soil erosion which is caused by the backward methods established by the credit and plantation system. The good soil is being exhausted or simply washed away. With the aid of trained specialists supplied by the Soviet Government, new methods of agriculture will be instituted. Instead of a one-sided, one-crop agriculture, which is demanded by the bankers and creditors, it will be possible to have a rounded and planned agriculture. Inferior land may be withdrawn and replanted with lumber, food crops may be raised on other land and the soil restored by rotation of crops and the cultivation of forage, etc. Live-stock breeding will replace mule-breeding, as the tractor and

other agricultural machinery replace the mule. The huge collective farms can be tremendous cotton-growing factories. The land, no longer divided up into small tenant lots, can now be plowed by a tractor, planted by a seeding machine, chopped by modern agricultural equipment. The mechanical cotton picker, whose development has been retarded by the present system of growing cotton, could now be employed profitably. There would be a tremendous saving in human labor. Hundreds of thousands of farm families would now have the possibilities of leisure and peace, plenty and abundance, education and culture.

Social planning will make this possible. The nearest capitalism has come to "planning" is to plan the destruction of millions of acres of cotton under the A.A.A. and the Bankhead Bill. The new planning will plan, not destruction, but production and distribution.

Where will the resources and capital be obtained for this transformation of Southern agriculture? At the present time the bankers, other creditors, large commission and merchanting houses and the large landowners obtain great profits from the cotton country. Much of the surplus now produced in the cotton country is accumulated by the financiers in the form of exorbitant interest, in some cases reaching as high as 700 per cent per annum. This parasitism will no longer exist. All cotton will be sold directly to government agencies either from the collective or state farms or by the cooperatives of the individual owners. Government credit will be made available, on easy terms, to the poorest section of the farming population and to the collectives. Thus the capital produced by cotton cultivation will not flow into the coffers of Wall Street but will be utilized for improving Southern agriculture and the conditions of its workers.

But this will not be the only source of capital. The government of the Negro Republic could allocate to agriculture additional funds from the revenues of the State, largely obtained from State-owned industry.

Thirdly, there would be even greater aid from the Central Soviet Government of the United States. The principal policy of the Central Soviet Government with regard to the Negro Republic would be to establish the basis of full equality by rapidly raising the economic level of this region. Funds would immediately be allocated for agricultural and industrial development in

the South; the necessary skilled technicians and experts would be supplied. This was precisely the policy followed by the government of the Soviet Union in relation to the backward areas where the formerly oppressed nations lived. If the Soviet Union could do this, with its relatively limited resources, the Central Soviet Government in this country will be able to do it on a much greater scale. This question is connected with that of the building of industry in the South.

INDUSTRY

In comparison to the rest of the country, there is a very undeveloped and unbalanced industry in the plantation area of the South today. With the exception of cotton mill towns, there are no important large-scale industries in the Black Belt. The only heavy industrial center is in Birmingham, which is just off the northern tip of the Alabama Black Belt. The textile industry, by far the largest industry in the South, is centered in the North and South Carolina Piedmont and in the Northeastern part of Georgia. The rayon and tobacco industries are also removed from the plantation area. The only industries within the plantation area itself are those which are *closely connected* with agriculture, such as fertilizer, cotton gins, cotton-seed oil, lumber, turpentine.

The basic policy of the Soviet government in this respect would be to industrialize this area. Such industries as already exist would pass into the hands of the Soviet state. Even before new industries are built the first steps are likely to be: to open the textile industry to Negro workers, to incorporate such an important area as Birmingham in the territory of the Negro Republic in order to create a basis for the machine-building industry; to modernize and improve the fertilizer, cotton-ginning and other similar industrial plants; the use of scientific methods in the exploitation of the pine woods, which under the competitive capitalist system, are now being quickly exhausted; to develop the furniture industry in connection with lumbering.

One of the principal problems would certainly be the supply of agricultural machinery. The development of such a large-scale industry in connection with the Birmingham area would be on the order of the day. Birmingham has not been developed to its full potentialities because of the competition of the northern steel-producing centers. Yet Birmingham is conceded by all specialists in the field to be ideal as the center of a huge metal

industry. There are close at hand the necessary coal, ore and dolomite. This could become the great manufacturing center of tractors and other agricultural machinery which will be a great force in bringing about socialism on the former slave land.

This area is also rich in water power. Capitalism has only just begun the development of electric power in the South and this growth has been retarded because there is not sufficient industry to make use of this power. Under the planned economy of a Soviet state, old industry would be reconstructed, new industries would arise.

We have only indicated some of the possibilities. Still greater ones would unfold in a Soviet America. This much is important and certain: with the overthrow of the landlord-capitalist power and the establishment of the Soviet Negro Republic, the most backward section of the United States would develop into an advanced, wealthy area. The rich resources of the territory, until now wasted and plundered by the capitalists, would be turned to their own account by the workers and farmers, with the aid of the working class of the North and northern resources. Then would the basis of Negro equality be established. And the so-called poor whites would also be liberated from poverty, extreme exploitation and backwardness.

The Realization of Social Equality

When the slaves were liberated in the South as a result of the Civil War the slave blocks and auction houses were burned to the ground by the former chattels. One can well imagine with what elation the liberated people of the South will now burn the jim-crow signs, symbols of the capitalist slavery of white and Negro alike. The bonfire of jim-crow signs will light the way to real freedom.

The power of the workers and poor farmers will create for the first time a culture for the masses of the South. New, modern school buildings will arise by the thousands. Illiteracy, the shame of the South, will be wiped out. Technical schools and universities will also become a southern product. We think it entirely safe to predict that the public school system in all its branches will develop at a rate in the South exceeding any previous records in the history of American capitalism.

Much will have to be done in the field of health protection. The diseases of poverty—pellagra, hookworm, etc.—which plague

the southern masses today, will for the first time meet a stronger foe. This foe will be victorious because it will at the same time do away with poverty, the prime cause of these diseases. Professional care and public hospitalization will for the first time be available on a large scale to the Negro masses and poor whites. President Roosevelt's present estate in Georgia and the other resorts of the millionaires, can be turned into sanatoria, hospitals, clubs, etc. Palm Beach can become the haven of tired workers and toiling farmers. The pine woods can also be used as health-giving resorts. All the best spots and resorts of the present ruling class can become rest homes for the masses.

Much will also have to be done in the socialist education of the white population. The revolution will have removed the basis of prejudice, but socialist education will remove even the remnants of prejudice.

Only on the basis of socialism is the possibility created for the full and equal development of the Negro people. Under the slave power and under the capitalist power the Negro people have been retarded, oppressed, persecuted. Under the power of the workers and the poor farmers they can blossom forth and realize all their potentialities. Only then as a full-fledged people will they be able to take their undisputed and equal status besides all the peoples of the world.

This is only a mere peep into the vista of a glorious future for the masses. Such things are not easy to achieve. They come as the result of hard struggle. But why not turn those energies and powers of ours, which the exploiting classes are using for their benefit, to our benefit?

We must begin now—begin by organizing, by preparing our forces in our daily struggles to improve our conditions, by learning "to take over." Above all we must build and support the *only* revolutionary party of the working class, the Communist Party. This Party, composed of staunch revolutionists and militant workers, is training and leading the working class and the oppressed masses towards their great objective.

Join the Communist Party, help create the powerful, great vanguard which is leading the masses towards Socialism.

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P. O. Box 148, Sta. D, New York City. June, 1935

What's Back of Anti-Discrimination Bills?

The past year or two a wave of propaganda has demanded the enactment by Congress and the several States of so-called "Anti-Discrimination Laws."

The assumption of many persons is that these measures are a generous and timely effort that will bring contentment to all the people. But there is impressive evidence that they are, instead, merely one more attempt of the Communists to stir up trouble.

There undoubtedly is some discrimination against many Negroes, and to a certain extent against many Jews. But it is in large part merely the expression by the 117 million non-Negroes and non-Jews of their choice of employes or fellow-employees, or of companions or associates. Such choice is, in the very nature of things, a part of liberty itself.

Negroes and Jews in the United States have had greater opportunities than in any other country on earth. On the day the New York legislative committees held a hearing on an Anti-Discrimination Bill, the New York papers carried long articles telling of the election of a Negro as President of the Bar Association of Dutchess County, New York, and mentioning incidentally that his daughter is a Justice of the Domestic Relations Court in New York City.

Increasing numbers of Negroes are constantly attaining distinction in many fields. There is less reason now for anti-discrimination laws than there might have been ten, twenty or thirty years ago. The situation has been steadily improving in that slow but sure way which is the soundest way of all, but which apparently annoys the zealots and fanatics who wish to see any situation they think wrong righted over night. And many good citizens, who have lacked opportunity really to study the matter, are today being misled by these very fanatics, and by an alien-minded element with aims and purposes of its own.

Most Americans regret the existence of any discrimination. True education, patience and greater emphasis on the Christian quality of charity (that is, good will) will accelerate the improvement in race relations that has long been noted. But to resort to *compulsion* by legislation is not the remedy. That will set the clock back—and will probably do worse. The Eighteenth Amendment proved that.

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We submit herewith an offset copy of a pamphlet published in 1935 by the Workers Library Publishers (the Communist Party of the

U.S.A.). A perusal of this suggests the likelihood that the anti-discrimination campaign for which many good people, including church organizations, have fallen, is of wholly alien origin.

"The Negroes in a Soviet America," as the reader will see, is a direct incitement by the Communists to bloody revolt against the white people of the United States, urging them to set up a Soviet form of government and affiliate with Soviet Russia. The Foreword on page 2 urges social equality as "a minimum desire" of the Negro. On page 35 is the statement, "The Negro people can find inspiration in the revolutionary attempts of Gabriel, Denmark Vesey, Nat Turner . . ." etc.; and upon consulting Volume XIV of Albert Bushnell Hart's "History of the American Nation," it will be found that two at least of these Negroes were the leaders in Negro revolts in which scores of white men, women and children were mercilessly slaughtered.

On page 38 is the statement that, "Any act of discrimination or of prejudice against a Negro will become a crime under the revolutionary law."

The anti-discrimination bills carry out this idea precisely!

At the present moment, of course, the Communist technique has changed—it would not aid in securing a continuance of lend-lease or the expected help in Russian reconstruction if so crude a pamphlet were circulated now. Nevertheless, as David J. Dallin points out in his book, "The Real Soviet Russia" (published by the Yale University Press, 1945), this current attitude of the Communists is merely a phase from which the Communists will return to their ruthless Communist program when the current need has passed.

James W. Ford, one of the authors of the pamphlet, has been several times the candidate of the Communist Party for Vice-President. "James S. Allen," the other author, is the alias for Sol Auerbach whose activities were a matter of record before the Dies Committee.

This special offset edition of "The Negroes in a Soviet America" has been brought out in order that the people may form a true understanding of what is back of the present hullabaloo about "Race Equality."

NATIONAL ECONOMIC COUNCIL, INC.,
350 Fifth Ave., New York 1, N. Y.

April 1945

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