
PROBLEMS OF THE DEMOCRATIC FRONT IN THE SOUTH

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ONE of the most thoroughgoing component parts of President Roosevelt's legislative program is the program of agrarian reform contained in the report of his Committee on Farm Tenancy. The realization in life of the proposals there made would have the most far-reaching results in the South, the biggest agrarian region in the United States and the center of the most widespread farm tenancy. This program, as it stands, is capable of forming one of the most fundamental parts of such a People's Front program, as is required if the South is to be raised to a status of full equality and unity with the rest of the nation.

The significance of this program must be appraised against the background of the long-maturing crisis in the Cotton Belt.

1. THE CRISIS IN THE COTTON BELT AND ROOSEVELT'S AGRARIAN PROGRAM

The old plantation system of the Southeast has for some time been in a state of near bankruptcy and collapse.

The soil of the Southeast is so exhausted and eroded that only drastic measures requiring highly centralized planning can redeem it. This is a result (1) of the reckless wasting of the

soil under slavery and the system of sharecropping, which took the place of slavery, and (2) of the one-crop system of agriculture. Continuation of one-crop agriculture will only intensify this ruination of the soil. But the plantation economy is built upon this one-crop system.

As a result of soil deterioration, the quality of the cotton produced in the Southeast is constantly getting worse. The center of cotton production has shifted to the Southwest. Mississippi and the states west of the Mississippi, except for drought years, have been producing three-fourths of the cotton in recent years. Texas and Oklahoma now produce, as a rule, nearly one-half of the cotton crop.

The basis of this crisis and the resultant shift in cotton production to the Southwest is to be found in the high cost of production in the Southeast as contrasted with the Southwest. In one year, the cost of production in the Southeast will run from twelve to thirteen cents a pound, while in the Southwest it is only five cents. Even the average cost of production by regions fails to show the differences between costs on family-sized farms and on plantations or corporation farms. Not only does the family-operated farm compete with machinery and

other special advantages of capitalist farms, but also with the fifty-cents-a-day wage for farm labor. Bluntly, it means farmers who work their own crops receive prices for them based on fifty cents per day labor, which by itself is enough reason for these farmers to support the organization of farm labor.

This means that year after year the owner-operated and tenant-operated cotton farms fail to make production costs. Landlords seek to escape these consequences through greater exploitation of sharecroppers and farm wage hands. The result intensifies the cotton crisis in the Southeast, as well as for the hill farmers of the Southwest.

On the cotton farms of the Southwest, with their better soil, the old plantation economy does not exist to anything like the extent to which it is found in the Southeast. Wage-labor is much more prevalent in the Southwest. This means that new methods of cotton culture do not encounter there to the same degree the social problems which in the Southeast offer so much resistance to technological changes. As a result, cotton farming is there being mechanized much more rapidly. There is widespread use of the tractor and two-row equipment. Experimentation in the mechanization of cotton culture indicates that such mechanization will become much more widespread.

The planters of the Southeast are increasingly unable to stand competition with the cotton farms of the Southwest. The production of greater quantities of cotton in India, Egypt, Brazil, the Soviet Union, and elsewhere is also threatening the market

of the Southeast. There has thus been a marked decline in exports. There is also constantly growing competition from cotton substitutes.

The Southeastern planters are being forced increasingly into debt, are becoming ever more dependent upon the banks, and are increasingly having to sell their land. The outcome of the whole credit structure which has been built has been a tremendous concentration of land ownership in the Cotton Belt. An even larger proportion of farm lands and farm mortgage indebtedness is held by the Federal Land Banks. This is important in view of demands to liberalize this government agency to reflect the progressive policies of the New Deal land program and prohibit foreclosures.

About 30 per cent of the cotton lands is owned by insurance companies and banks. A study of five selected areas of the Mississippi Delta in 1920 by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics revealed that 81.2 per cent of the rented farms were owned by landlords owning five or more rented farms. Thus there is increasing central management of cotton farms, increasing absentee ownership.

All these factors indicate that the plantation system of the Southeast is in a state of crisis. The planters cannot improve their own precarious position without abandoning the plantation economy and the one-crop system, *i.e.*, without introducing crop diversification, mechanization of agriculture, wage labor, measures of soil conservation, and the like. But the whole system of exploitation, the whole system of oppression of the Negro people in the South, is built

upon the basis of one-crop farming and sharecropping. Furthermore, such measures by their very nature cannot be carried out adequately by individual landlords, but only by central—in this case, federal—planning. Such federal measures would threaten the whole peculiar system of exploitation in the South. The landlords as a result find themselves in a contradiction. If they move or if they attempt to stand still, their former status as a semi-feudal ruling class is threatened. Their state is one of demoralization.

Because of their precarious position, some of the Southeastern planters are beginning to introduce some technological changes—slowly and hesitatingly. Some of them are beginning to use machinery to a certain extent and here and there to replenish the soil by the planting of legumes. Other landlords are quietly shifting to the system of wage-labor. Other factors in the shift to wage-labor represent the scheming of landlords to get the greatest benefit from higher prices and to escape A.A.A. tenant regulations. Many of the cotton laborers occupy a status half-way between that of sharecropper and that of agricultural laborer. The results of these changes seem to be indicated by the increase of the productivity of cotton cultivation in certain sections of the Southeast in the past two years. However, it is for the most part only the biggest planters in the Delta country who are able to any considerable degree to take advantage of these new methods. The small landlords in the hills are for the most part completely unable to make use of them.

The system of sharecropping has

for many years been dragging increasing numbers in the Cotton Belt into an unbearable status of poverty, degradation, and semi-serfdom. In the South as a whole, the number of farms operated by tenants was 36.2 per cent in 1880; 49.6 per cent in 1920, and 55.5 per cent in 1930. In the Cotton Belt itself, the figures are much higher. More than 60 out of every 100 cotton farms are operated by tenants. In the Black Belt specifically, which forms a large part of the Cotton Belt, tenancy is still higher.

Before the Civil War, cotton cultivation was carried on entirely by Negro slaves. The number of white tenants in the Cotton Belt, however, by now far exceeds the number of Negro tenants. There are 1,790,783 tenant families in the Cotton Belt (1935 Census). Of these, 1,091,944 are white and 698,839 are Negro, and the families of white tenants are larger than those of Negroes. This means that about 64 per cent or almost two-thirds of the cotton tenants are white, in spite of the fact that in the Black Belt specifically Negro tenants are in the majority. Furthermore, *on the whole*, white tenancy is increasing while Negro tenancy is decreasing. Between 1920 and 1930, white tenants in the cotton states increased by 200,000 families (approximately a million persons), while the number of Negro tenants decreased by 2,000 families.

These figures, however, must not be allowed to obscure the special exploitation of the Negro sharecroppers or the differences between regions where Negro croppers predominate and the regions where white croppers predominate. It must be recognized first of all that there are varying degrees

of tenancy. There are cash-tenants, sharecroppers who never receive money, sharecroppers who work partly as laborers, croppers who are held on the land through debt. The worst forms of tenancy are to be found most extensively among Negro tenants. It must be recognized, secondly, that the Black Belt is not co-extensive with the Cotton Belt, although most of it lies within the Cotton Belt and forms a large part of it. On the Black Belt itself, which covers the coastal swamps and the Delta region, the Negroes form a majority of the entire population. Here the worst form of cotton tenancy, *viz.*, an extreme degree of debt-bondage, is to be found most extensively. It is true that the same form of virtual peonage is also to be found among some white croppers, but to nothing like the extent to which it exists among Negro croppers.

The Cotton Belt extends beyond the swamps, coastal plains and Delta to the hill country. It is here that the largest proportion of croppers are white. It is on these hill cotton farms, traditionally operated by white owners, that the rate of increase in cotton tenancy has been the greatest. The disintegration of this class of independent middle farmers has also contributed a great deal to the growth of tenancy among the whites in the Black Belt. Thus, while the largest number of tenants as a whole are white, the picture is by no means simple, and Negro and white croppers do not as a rule work side by side. In fact, there are systematic efforts to prevent this. Thus, while the total number of white croppers increases, they have been systematically weeded out of the biggest Delta plantations.

At the same time, outside the Black Belt, Negro tenants are being driven off the land. Where organization proceeds among Negroes, efforts are made to replace them with white tenants even in the Black Belt. Thus in the heart of the Black Belt on some of the biggest plantations, cotton farming is carried on almost entirely by Negro croppers; while in the hill country of Arkansas and other sections of the Southwest, it is carried on almost entirely by white croppers. While white tenancy increases on the whole, Negro tenancy increases in certain regions.

The important aspect of these developments is that cotton tenancy is increasingly becoming the *common* problem of both Negro and white.

According to *The Collapse of Cotton Tenancy*, by Johnson, Alexander, and Embree, the earnings of cotton tenants are approximately as follows: In six widely separated counties, 43.4 per cent of the tenants were in debt before planting their 1934 crop. Average indebtedness, so far as records were available, was \$80. A study of Negro tenants in Macon County, Alabama, showed that 61.7 per cent "broke even," 26 per cent "went in the hole," and only 9.4 per cent made more than actual operating expenses for the crop season. Of some 3,000 tenant families in Mississippi, Alabama, Texas, and South Carolina, the average cash income for those who received such an income in 1933 was \$105.43, or \$1.75 per month per person for an average family of five.

It was these intolerable conditions which gave birth in 1931 to the Sharecroppers Union, which has now become a part of the Farmers Union,

and somewhat later to the Southern Tenant Farmers Union, which is now affiliated to the C.I.O. Cannery and Agricultural Workers Union. The heroic struggles of these unions in the face of the most brutal terror helped focus the attention of the whole nation upon the conditions of the share-croppers.

The crisis in the Cotton Belt is bringing these conditions increasingly to the attention of the nation as a whole. Books by liberal and progressive Southerners, such as H. C. Nixon, Howard Odum, Charles Johnson, Rupert Vance, Charles Embree, Couch, Vann Woodward and Erskine Caldwell are to an even greater degree tackling the problem of farm tenancy and widely publicizing it. The significant factor is that they are not doing this in a vague or impractical manner. The President's Committee on Farm Tenancy, on which many such progressive Southerners served, has drawn up a general program. More and more progressive Southerners are lining up behind the agrarian program of the "New Deal" Committee on Farm Tenancy.

The general nature of the recommendations of this Committee may well be summarized as follows:

1. That the federal government, through the Farm Security Administration, buy huge acreages of land, especially from insurance companies, land banks, and other large centralized owners, and make long-term loans at low interest to tenants, in order to enable them to purchase land of their own. The aim is to convert tenants into owners under such conditions that they will not have to sell or mortgage their new holdings.

2. That service agencies for the purpose of supervising, guiding and aiding the new farm owners be established in the various localities. These should give advice, provide seed, fertilizer, and other equipment, and should aid in soil conservation and introduction of diversified farming.

3. That as a part of this wide-scale land distribution, there should be established carefully guided, experimental types of communities, such as cooperative farms; model communities with highly developed school, health, and recreational facilities; forms of cooperative marketing, etc.

The President's Committee's Report outlines such a program as the above with great detail. The following quotation is of especial interest:

"In general, the aim should be establishment of family-size farms. Families vary greatly, however, in their capacity for independent management. Farm sizes should be adjusted to these differences.

"Certain economic disadvantages of the family-size farm can be, and should be, overcome through cooperative ownership of the more expensive types of farm machinery and breeding stock, and through cooperative buying, processing, and marketing. In some cases it may be found desirable for small holders to be cooperatively associated for the employment of technical supervision. The Farm Security Administration should be authorized to aid the formation of local cooperatives, either by technical assistance or by loans.

"In some cases, cooperative groups may well be aided to acquire land by purchase or long lease for subleasing to group members. The cooperative organization would serve the function of a non-profit-seeking landlord, working in the interest of its membership. Such an arrangement would relieve federal agencies of much responsibility for management. It is recommended that such a policy be initiated also on an experimental scale."

A few such experimental cooperative farms are actually being launched by the Department of Agriculture in the Delta region of the Mississippi and Arkansas, *e.g.*, the newly-opened Lake Dick Agricultural Community.

This entire program is proposed as being carried out in conjunction with a widespread program of shifting families from sub-marginal to good land and of extensive soil conservation. Here the full importance of T.V.A. to the South in providing flood control, resettlement of farmers on better land, production of better and cheaper fertilizer and cheap electricity, institution of crop diversification programs, and so on, should be recognized and geared to strengthen the government's tenant program.

The advancement of this program must also be viewed in conjunction with the new Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1938. This act puts into practice again, but without many evils of the first act, the major principles of the original A.A.A. It provides for payment to farmers (with provisions that checks for tenants and sharecroppers be made directly to them and not to landlords), for reducing acreages in certain major crops, in order (1) that by producing crops in proportion to the markets, farmers may receive higher prices, and (2) that the soil may be conserved through the planting of other soil-replenishing crops. Provisions are also made for crop insurance and for guidance in soil conservation. While a policy of crop reduction in a nation of ill-fed people is far from the correct solution, it is at least necessary to protect the interests of family farms by placing the bur-

den of crop reduction on the corporation farms. The obvious contradiction of the practice of crop reduction where millions are undernourished must in itself form a powerful argument for the basic solution of the problem through socialism. While certain landlords may seek to utilize the new A.A.A. as an alternative to the Farm Tenancy Program, it must in reality be viewed as a complement to the latter.

The recommendations of the President's Farm Tenancy Committee offer an agrarian program which is sadly needed at present by the Negro people of the Black Belt and by the millions of white tenant farmers in the South. It forms one of the most far-reaching parts of the developing program of the democratic front in America. Land being the basic question for the national liberation struggle of the Negro people, it offers a relatively advanced agrarian program for the present stage of that struggle. Since this agrarian program is also in the interests of the millions of white sharecroppers, it forms a *common* program for the cause of Negro liberation and for the progressive movement of the Southern white masses. In other words, the present stage of the movement of the Negro people to obtain land is capable of becoming an integral part of the general development of the democratic front in the South.

This program also raises other interesting problems. Its proposals for making accessible farm machinery through cooperative purchase resemble to a very limited extent the tractor stations in the Soviet Union. In my opinion, we have in the past adopted

too negative an attitude toward the development of mechanized cotton-farming. With the federal government advancing such a program as this, in the present period of cotton crisis, with large centralization of land ownership, should we not actually support the establishment here and there of experimental cooperative mechanized cotton farms, accompanied by careful legal guarantees against disemployment or eviction of the present tenants?

Certainly, the major emphasis should be, as advocated by the Committee's Report, upon the establishment of family-size farms. This is the desire of the tenants themselves, who certainly do not today desire collectivized agriculture. However, certainly we should advocate the establishment in some places of experimental mechanized cooperative farms, especially in the fertile Delta region with its huge plantations, where the sharecroppers at present work cooperatively to a certain extent, but for the planters.

In this connection, Engels wrote to Bebel on December 11, 1884:

"The demand should be made that the great demesnes which are not yet broken up should be let out to cooperative societies of agricultural laborers for joint farming. The Imperial Government has no state lands and will therefore no doubt find a pretext for shelving such a proposition put in the form of a motion. But I think this firebrand must be thrown among the agricultural day laborers, which can indeed be done in one of the many debates on state socialism. This and this alone is the way to get hold of the agricultural workers; this is the best method of drawing their attention to the fact that later on it is to be their task to cultivate

the great estates of our present gracious gentlemen for the common account." *

However, in the establishment of cooperatives, clearly it would be dangerous to try to move too fast. Cooperatives within the encirclement of capitalist economy always suffer a precarious existence and are always subject to conscious sabotage on the part of the banks and other capitalist agencies on which they may be dependent, as well as from hostile elements within the government. Thus, such farms should clearly be advocated only within limits and on an experimental basis for the moment. On the other hand, it must be remembered that small family-size farms will have great difficulty in competing with the big mechanized farms and plantations. A few good experimental cooperatives will be highly influential in helping to educate the tenants and small farmers as to the need for passing forward to socialist economy.

The small farmers who still own their land, but who face disaster, must also be won for the farm tenancy program. There have been instances of small farmers encouraging their own croppers on strike to organize other croppers. These instances could be increased a hundredfold by intensive organization.

The Jones' Tenancy Bill, recently passed by Congress, marks the first step toward the realization of the thoroughgoing agrarian program recommended by the Committee on Farm Tenancy. This bill as it stands is inadequate. It calls for an appropriation during the first year of only \$10,000,000 for loans to individual land pur-

* *The Correspondence of Marx and Engels*, p. 434. International Publishers, New York.

chasers, and provides for repayment within 30 years at 3 per cent interest. It makes no provision for democratic administration or for guarantees that loans will be made to the most needy tenants without discrimination against Negroes. However, our position should be to support the Jones' Tenancy Bill while calling for amendments to increase appropriations; to democratize the administration of land purchases and loans through committees of working farmers, tenants, and croppers; to lengthen the term of loans to 40 years at $11\frac{1}{2}$ per cent interest; to give preference to those "who are most in need" instead of to persons "who are able to make an initial down payment"; to provide that benefits shall at all times maintain a balance between Negro and white sharecroppers.

It is important to remember that there are two forms of proposed solution to tenancy—a landlord's solution and a tenant's solution. The tenants themselves demand (1) good land at low prices; (2) government control of the land made available, governmental scientific guidance, and credit from the government; (3) variations and flexibility in size of farms, management, etc., to meet the needs of different conditions; (4) an adequate appropriation really to attack the problem; (5) federal control with local and elective boards of tenants to make selections of land and tenants to receive the benefits.

The program of the landlords, on the other hand, calls for (1) distribution of poor land at high prices; (2) complete independence of tenants from any governmental supervision and an unconditional title to the land

at the end of a few years. (This would make it possible for big landlords to take advantage of a tenancy program); (3) small and individual farming exclusively; (4) small, tiny appropriations, loans to the upper crust of well-to-do tenants to create a sort of aristocracy of tenants; (5) local political control, state by state, with local county boards of landowners or their agents to select tenants and lands. It must be realized that the present Jones' Tenancy Bill is not a thorough-going tenants' program, but can be utilized in the direction of a landlords' solution unless democratized through proper amendments. However, with such amendments, it can become the basis for the development of a real tenants' solution to the problem.

The emergence of the specific agrarian program outlined above is a further indication of the crisis in the plantation system. While the planters are demoralized, "unable to go on ruling in the old way"; the tenants themselves, as indicated by their formation of unions in recent years, together with ever-increasing members of the middle class in the South, are *beginning* to be "unwilling to go on being ruled in the same way." Such a development requires the rapid building and consolidation of our Party, in order that we may correctly lead the Southern people to a realization of the agrarian program which is being developed and to which they are increasingly turning. The crisis of the planters in the South certainly does not mean that they are going to submit to the realization of this program. They will resist with all the ferocity which they have always shown

toward any progressive movement—whether through Ku Klux violence, the employment of lynching, or the filibustering antics of a Bilbo. As the Wall Street hostility toward Roosevelt and his program increases, the Southern Bourbon allies of Wall Street are increasingly joining forces with Wall Street to prevent by all means the realization of that part of the Roosevelt program which most directly threatens their own rule in the South.

The Cotton Belt landlords, however, are not only in a state of economic crisis, but are also faced with serious political difficulties.

As a result of the completely reactionary one-party system which has continued almost unchallenged in the South from the days of the Populist struggles until recent years, the Southern masses for many decades have been politically apathetic. However, the emergence of the Farm Tenancy program, together with other New Deal legislative proposals, such as the Wages and Hours Bill, all of which require political action for their enactment, are causing a differentiation to take place within the once "solid" one-party system in the South. The result is that the masses are beginning to awaken from their traditional political apathy.

2. THE POLITICAL DIFFICULTIES OF THE SOUTHERN RULING CLASS

At the Philadelphia Convention of the Democratic Party in 1936, a motion was passed that, in the future, delegates to the Democratic Convention will be elected on the basis of the number of *voters* in their districts, and not, as formerly, on the basis of population. Another decision was

passed that motions in the future will be carried by a *majority* rather than a two-thirds vote. These two measures mean that the reactionary Southern Democrats can no longer hold the balance of power in the Democratic Convention—*unless they extend the franchise*—and this in itself would undermine their position.

The passage of these two measures is a real victory for the progressive wing of the Democratic Party. The Southern delegates to the Democratic Convention have been traditionally reactionary, just as have Southern Congressmen. This is primarily due to the fact that they have never represented the Southern people, but only the Southern upper classes. Thus an equal number of representatives are elected from Georgia and Wisconsin, whose populations are nearly the same; but the Georgia representatives are elected by *only about 50,000 voters while those from Wisconsin are elected by nearly a million and a half voters*. The decisions of the Democratic Convention will break the stranglehold of representatives of only a small minority over delegates really representing the masses.

The Bourbons now are in a state of dismay, not knowing in which direction to move. While the reactionary Democrats are in this quandary, many progressive Southern Democrats are advocating extension of the franchise—some calling for the complete abolition of the poll tax, others for its reduction. Leaders of the Young Democratic Clubs especially have in places been outspoken in their opposition to restrictions on voting. In this respect, as well as in relation to the cotton crisis, many of the reactionary Demo-

crats are to a certain extent in a state of demoralization. The lesson to be drawn here also is that now is the time to strike hard—now when we can deal the Southern reactionaries a real body blow.

The majority of the white people in the South are disfranchised to an extent almost as great as that of the Negro people. Here, again, we have a common need of Negro and white. If the progressives strike hard on the two fronts of winning the right to vote and agrarian reform, now while the Southern ruling class is to a certain extent in both economic and political crisis, they should be able to launch a people's movement in the South embracing both Negro and white.

The blow delivered at the reactionary Southern Democrats in the last Democratic Convention was just one aspect of the growing political realignment in our country. This was a blow struck in the interests of the Southern people, as well as of the American people as a whole, even though it emanated mainly from progressive Democrats in the North. The Southern people are showing by their increasing support of Roosevelt's legislative program that they are well aware of the fact that the progressive forces, no matter in what section of the country they are to be found, are their true allies.

In response to this support, Roosevelt has now carried the fight for progress into the heart of the South itself through his Gainesville, Georgia, speech, in which he challenged the low wage scale in the lower South and denounced the remnants of feudalism as a form of fascism. This has just been supplemented by the Report of

his Committee on the South, which lays the basis for a real democratic program for the South.

The fight between the forces of progress and reaction in the South is being waged almost exclusively within the framework of the Democratic Party. Here, more than anywhere else, the fight within the Democratic primaries is decisive.

The reactionary Democrats from the South of the variety of Harrison, Smith, Garner, Bilbo, Ellender, Glass, and Byrd, have been working hand in glove with the most outspoken Republican supporters of finance capital. They are attacking the New Deal Democrats with ever-growing bitterness. Yet they do not break with the Democratic Party, although in a moment of rage one of the South Carolina Senators denounced the Democratic Party as now being "controlled by Negroes." They do not break, because they know that the traditionally Democratic South would completely repudiate them. This and their desire to keep the Democratic Party from becoming a party of progress still hold them within the fold of the party of Roosevelt.

This fact, namely, that the reactionary Democrats are traitors within the ranks of the Democratic Party, must be impressed upon the mind of every Southerner. Every effort must be made to repudiate them within the Democratic primaries.

In order to accomplish this, it is of the utmost importance that the Negro people of the South obtain the right to participate in the primaries.

The struggle of the Negro people for the franchise is not just simply a struggle for the right to vote,

but specifically and in addition for the right to vote in the Democratic primaries, from which in a number of states they are now directly excluded as Negroes.

The white Southerners and progressives throughout the nation must be brought to realize that if they are to defeat the Wall Street-Bourbon Democrats, who are holding the whole South in its present state of poverty and backwardness and who by their reactionary hooliganism are disgracing the South in the eyes of the whole world, they must win all possible allies for the cause of progress in the primary elections. They must recognize that the Negro people will vote with them against reaction.

A demonstration of this was given by the Second Southern Negro Youth Conference held in Chattanooga, Tennessee, on April 1-2-3. This conference, which represented a real movement of the Negro people in the South, not only called for the right to vote in Democratic primaries, but proceeded to adopt a legislative program which would have the support of the Negro masses if they were given the full rights of citizenship. This program is not merely in the interest of the Negro people, but one in the interest of the entire South. It calls essentially for a progressive New Deal program for the South—the Wages and Hours Bill, the Jones' Tenancy Bill amended in accordance with the original proposals of the Boileau Bill, legislation to incorporate the recent proposals of the President's Committee on Education,

housing legislation, the anti-lynching bill, etc.

The work of the Southern Negro Youth Conference demonstrates clearly to the Southern white people that the fear of "Negro domination" is purely a myth; that just as in the Reconstruction legislatures Negro representatives adopted the most progressive legislation in the interests of both white and Negro people (free public education, civil liberties, etc.), which the South has ever known, so today the Negro people, if possessing full rights of citizenship, would actually be the most progressive force within the entire South and would, in the interest of the white people as well as of themselves, aid the Southern people as a whole to attain such prosperity and democracy as the white people by themselves can never achieve.

Lack of democracy in the South is not merely the concern of the Southern people, but of the whole nation. It is the lack of democracy which year after year returns the *same* reactionary Representatives and Senators from the Southern states, thus giving the Southern Congressmen seniority rights. Because of these seniority rights, *the chairman of every major Congressional committee, with one exception, is a Southerner*. It is these reactionary committee chairmen who have been most effective in hamstringing the whole New Deal legislative program. Getting rid of these reactionary committee chairmen by winning the battle for democracy in the South is one of the major tasks confronting the entire American nation.

Note: A following article will deal with the relationship between the Negro liberation movement and the growing democratic front in the light of the living developments in the South dealt with above.