

SOME RECENT HISTORY

By James Oneal

(Editor's Note: This is the eighth installment of a new booklet, "The Next Emancipation", written by one of America's foremost historians, James Oneal. It has been published to sell at cost, 10¢ postpaid, by the Negro Labor News Service, P.O. Box 66, College Station, New York City, or 2653 Washington Blvd., Chicago.)

In Birmingham, Alabama, on October 26, 1921, President Harding delivered an address on the race question. He said that "this is not a question of social equality, but a question of recognizing a fundamental, eternal and inescapable difference." Thus spoke the representative of the Republican party sixty years after its first triumph.

This party has been gradually casting aside its Negro traditions to obtain a standing in the Southern States. Over the prostrate body of the Negro the Republican party hopes to obtain Republican Senators and Congressmen in the Southern States. The flow of Northern capital into the Southern States is binding the North and the South into a common solidarity.

The Industrial South

The "Manufacturers' Record" of Baltimore, in March 1922, gave some figures of capitalist development in the South. The value of taxable property has increased, from 1910 to 1920, from over \$13,000,000,000 to more than \$29,000,000,000, a gain of 122.9 percent! The South then had about 33 per cent of the manufacturing establishments of the country, with a capital of nearly \$7,000,000,000, and employing 2,000,000 people.

The capital invested in Southern factories was nearly three times the sum invested in manufacturing in the whole country in 1880, and lacking only 3 per cent of the sum invested in the North in 1900. The capital invested in cotton factories in the South was four times that invested in all the cotton mills of the country since 1880. The South was also consuming 59 per cent of its cotton in its own mills. It was also producing 57 per cent of the oil of the United States.

The Masters Join Hands

The old agricultural South is becoming an image of the factory North. The same financial interests that have large holdings in New England cotton mills also have investments in Southern cotton mills. With the rise of a factory and manufacturing system in the South the capitalists of that section are also demanding tariff duties. The South for generations had been wedded to "free trade."

As the Southern masters invest their money in industry and share profits with Northern capitalists the capitalists of both sections reach a better understanding. They are also coming to contract a political alliance through the Republican party by a common agreement to exclude the Negro from elections.

Two "Lily White" Parties

The Democrats have a "lily white" party in the South and the Republicans want a "lily white" party in the South. Early in 1921

Chairman Hays, of the Republican National Committee, appointed a committee to consider the best means of establishing the party in the South. In the State campaign in Virginia in 1921 the Republicans agreed to make the party a "white man's party" in that State. It was a bargain struck with the Democratic party to keep the Negro out of elections. This was reported to be satisfactory to the Republican national leaders at Washington.

A dispatch to the New York "Evening Post" from Richmond said that in exchange for the loss of the Negroes, "the Republicans in Virginia have gained the support of many men of influence and wealth." Among these are railroad presidents, bankers, capitalists and business men. The political agreement follows the common interests which Northern and Southern capitalists have in Southern industries, banks and railroads. The agreement frees the ruling class of Virginia from dependence upon one political machine.

Lessons to be Drawn

The call of Southern capitalism across the old sectional chasm is heard by its Republican ally. The Republican party is responding to the cry. The last pretense of difference between ^{both} old political parties in national politics is being wiped out. Capitalism is national, not sectional. The capitalist parties are becoming national in scope. Both parties are agreed on "white supremacy," the supremacy of capitalism in excluding the Negro from the suffrage in the South.

The Negro Republican leaders who have led masses of Negro workers to their betrayal are themselves being kicked in the face for their treachery. The class interests of Northern and Southern capital are healing the old sores of the ruling classes and bringing ^{ing} about unity between the two. Facing the Negro worker are two parties of the capitalist class.

Workers, Organize Votes!

Quoting the language of President Harding, we may say that it is not a question of "recognizing a fundamental, eternal and inescapable difference" between the two parties. There is no difference. They are as alike as two peas. They are the political enemies of the white workers as well as of the Negro workers. They are the parties of railroad magnates, bankers, capitalists and labor skimmers in general. As the capitalists of the two sections are uniting, so the workers of both colors should unite in their own interests. Unite in the labor unions and in the Socialist party.

In the North the Negro workers have a vote. In the South they have a vote in theory, but not in fact. While they have a vote in the North they should use it in the interest of white and Negro workers. The white workers must be educated to cast their votes also in the interest of white and Negro workers.

(To be continued)