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The South's Place in the Nation

What is at the root of the South's problems?

Can cotton come back?

What are the prospects for regional planning in the South?

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The South's Place in the Nation*

IS IT true what they say about Dixie?" Out of the chorus of contradictory voices it is hard to answer the careless refrain of a current song.

A flood of artistic writing, authentic and not so authentic, *Deep Rivers* and *Tobacco Roads*, *Sanctuaries* and *Scarlet Sisters*, *Rainbows Round My Shoulders*, *Lambs in His Bosom*, and *Stars That Fell on Alabama* give facile intellectuals their facile explanations of a land that is hard to know.

A leading financial journal of New York publishes full page advertisements to show that Southern states contribute little to federal expenses, but that they draw largely on federal funds and furnish the Congressional floor leaders and key committee men of the New Deal.

The editor of a famous old South Carolina daily writes that the South would be better off if it still belonged to the British Commonwealth of Nations, because it then could sell its raw materials in the world's markets and buy its manufactured goods without benefit of tariff, and adds that since the late Confederacy failed to fight her way out, the New South might continue accepting federal subsidies until the nation may be glad to let it go.

* This pamphlet was prepared by Rupert B. Vance on the basis of "The Southern Regional Study," sponsored by the Southern Regional Committee of the Social Science Research Council. See Howard W. Odum's *Southern Regions of the United States*, Chapel Hill, 1936.

One sober economist, after completing a study on the regional distribution of the national income, feels the South will never raise its low level of living because of its inability to develop an industrial economy free of outside control. Another social scientist, this time a Southerner, tells his compatriots that the region has no choice but to admit its colonial status and ask to become the territorial ward of the nation. A group of regional spokesmen advocate giving up the gadgets furnished by industry as beyond the South's reach, and ordering a retreat to subsistence agriculture.

The strategists of the Communist Party advocate self-determination for the black belt stretching across the South, and are charged with organizing share croppers as the shock troops of the new revolution. Certain Southern industrialists decry efforts to raise the region's labor standards and submit a code for submarginal labor.

Out of the babel of voices there comes the need for the South to face the nation and for the nation to face the South. The South's economic position and its capacity for intellectual and cultural development offer a challenge to all Americans. In the past, the South developed a spirit of Southern nationalism that motivated its struggle for independence. Today that spirit is but part of an accepted background of tradition, but the problem of the South's place in the nation remains.

No one feels today that regional self-consciousness is necessarily bad or that it is confined to the South. In the South, however, it is accompanied by manifestations that raise doubt as to the region's capacity for future development. Is the South to remain forever a poor relation, a dark continent, an abode of poverty,

misery, and lack of opportunity? In the midst of the storm over Scottsboro, the nation and the region are in danger of forgetting that the primary task in the South is so to improve economic conditions that the mass of its population may partake of the cultural opportunities ordinarily thought of as open to American citizens.

Region of Potential Abundance and Actual Waste

The South today is divided into the Southeast and Southwest. Together with four other naturally defined areas, Northeast, Middle States, Northwest and Far West, they make up the mosaic that is the United States. The Southwest with its empire of Texas, its breezy Oklahoma, its unique Arizona and New Mexico, is more and more breaking off from the spirit and economy of the traditional South. Oklahoma knew not the Confederacy while not a major engagement of the Civil War was fought in Texas. When Texas holds its centennial, it commemorates not the lost cause of the Old South, but bold heroes who vanquished Santa Anna. In its new cotton culture and its wealth of oil resources, the Southwest is building on a different economic basis.

The Southeast with its eleven states of Virginia, North and South Carolina, Kentucky, Tennessee, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana and Arkansas, contains a population of 25,000,000 and is unique in its range of soil and climate. The claim that anything can be grown in the area finds support in the variety of plant life that has flourished from the tobacco areas of Virginia to the Sugar Bowl of Louisiana. Essentially an agricultural area, it contains the raw materials of industry. Water power is adequate; forests abundant;

coal, iron, minerals, chemical resources and building stone are plentiful. Communication is facilitated by coastal shipping lines, internal waterways, railroads, and hard surfaced roads. Unlike the drought-threatened Great Plains, the area has suffered no bankruptcy in essential resources.

The superabundance of things that grow and enrich the region reflect excellent conditions for the development of the region. But when the Southern Regional Study came to characterize the Southeast it was compelled to render negative verdicts in four out of six particulars:

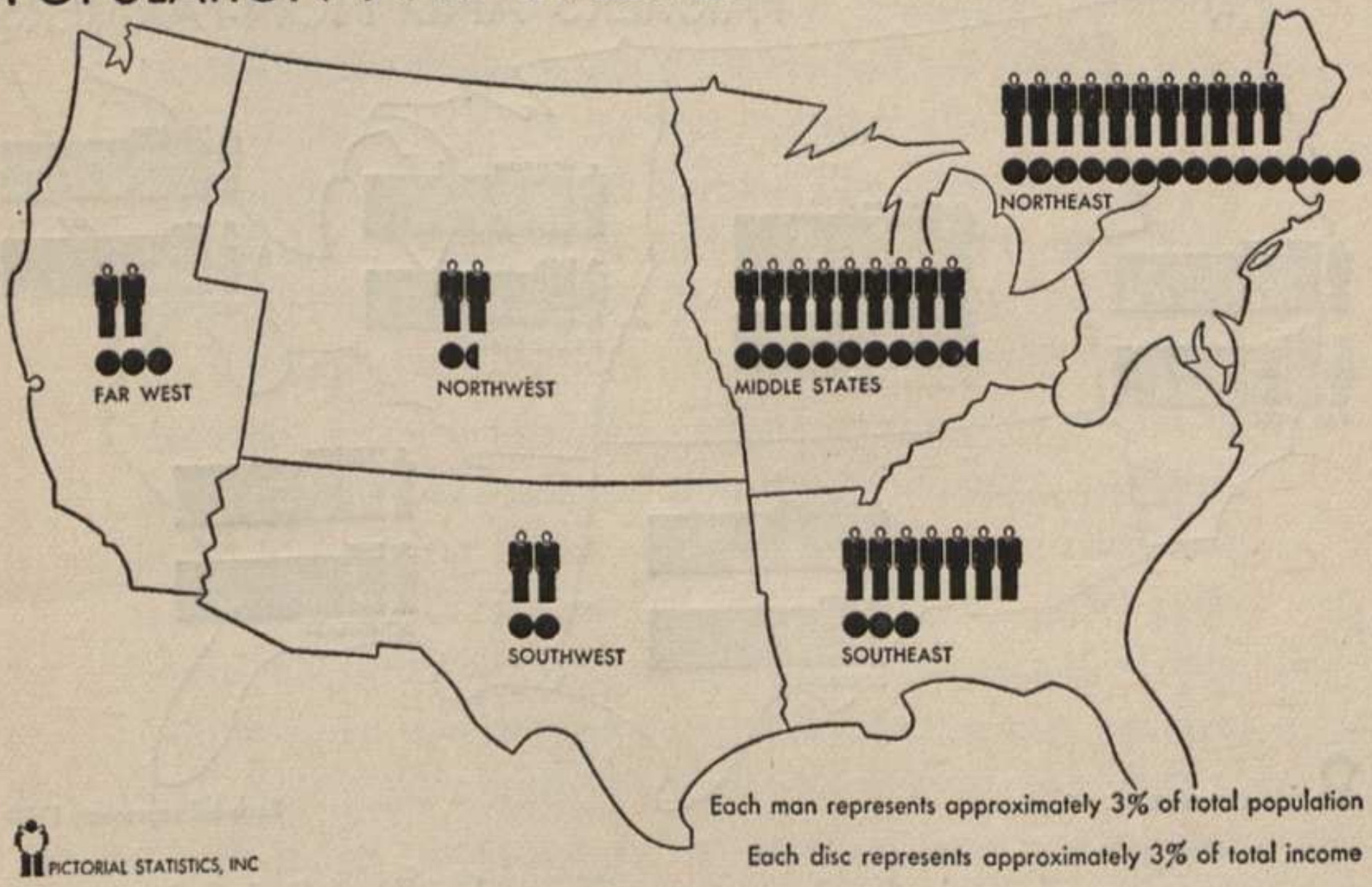
1. Natural resources—*Superabundance.*
2. Population—*Abundance.*
3. Science, skills, technology, organization—*Deficiency.*
4. General economy—*Waste.*
5. Culture—*Richness, combined with immaturity and multiple handicaps.*
6. Trends—*Hesitancy and relative regression in many aspects of culture.*

Potentially a garden spot of the world, the Southeast is far from being that in reality. It has the lowest incomes in the nation and its people are the poorest fed.

There may have been a day when the Southeast was as well off as the rest of the nation. The aristocracy of Virginia and South Carolina, the traditions of New Orleans, the power and influence of the ante-bellum Cotton Kingdom attest to its early wealth and culture. That day has long since passed. The post-war apostles of the New South visualized a future in which industrialization would repeat its wonders for the South, and their area would reassume its economic equality, in the

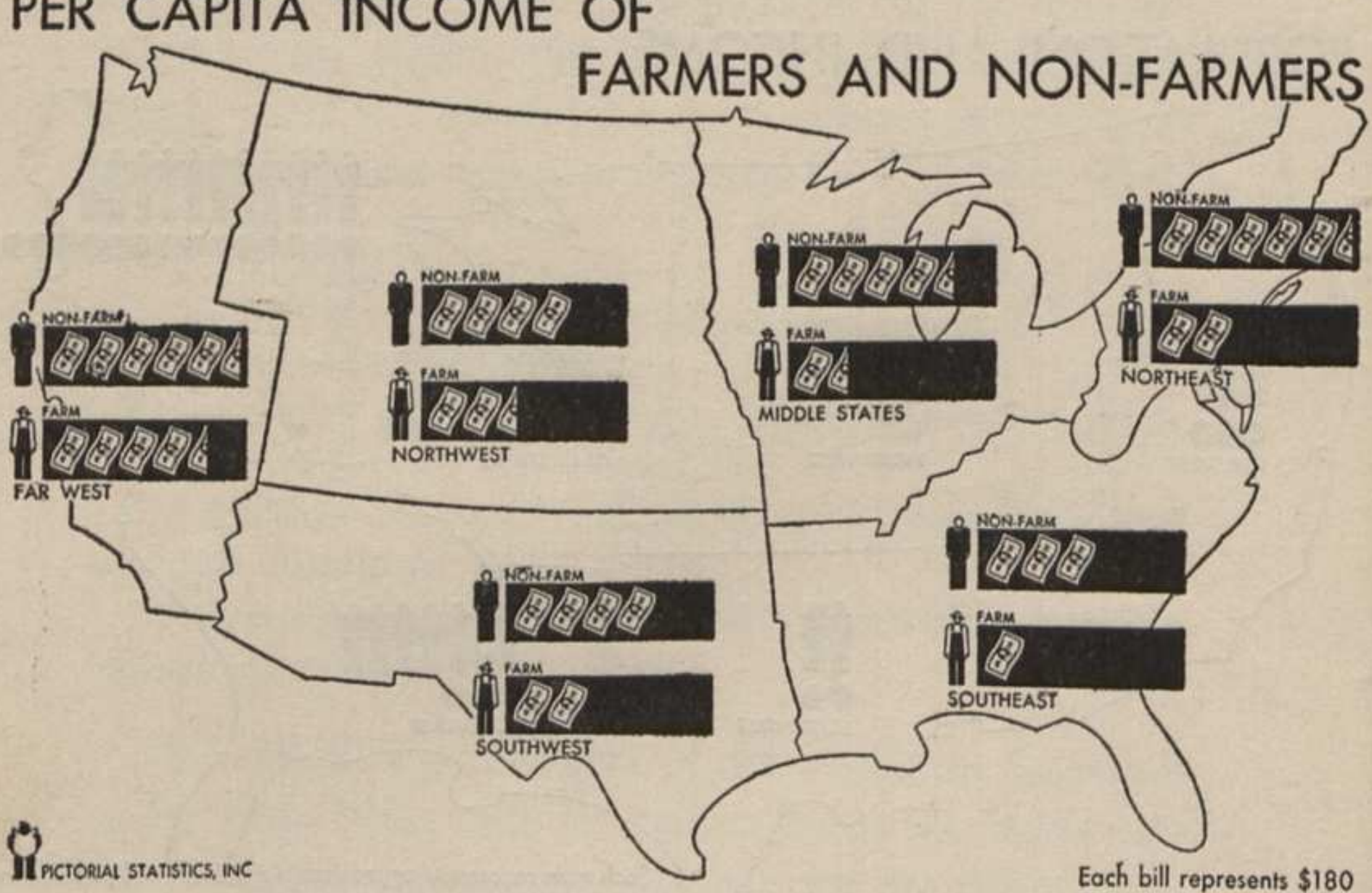
nation. That hope, too, has almost vanished. Economic competence has gradually moved from East to West until the Pacific Coast has our highest per capita income, but in the moving it passed by the Southeast. Here, for the majority, the struggle to reach an American standard of living lacks any immediate promise of attainment.

POPULATION AND INCOME



The South is an agricultural area in the midst of an industrialized nation. It derives its living mostly from the soil while the rest of the nation obtains its from manufacturing, service, distribution and management. The result is shown by examining the nation's pre-depression income. The Southeast has the lowest income per capita ($365), partly because it has both the lowest farm income per capita ($183) and the largest propor-

tion of farm population in the country. Approximately one-half the nation's farm population is in the South-eastern quarter of the United States. Yet if $183 is considered low for farm income, the Middle States including Iowa yield only $262 per capita farm income, and the nation's average is $273 per farm inhabitant, as



compared with $908 per non-farm dweller. Only the Far West with its famed California farms receives a farm income ($818) worth comparing with non-farm incomes.

We will note that income and wages in the South fall anywhere from 30 to 50 per cent below the national level. The differences are greatest in agriculture but they persist in even higher levels of skill and training. In the main they are due to three causes:

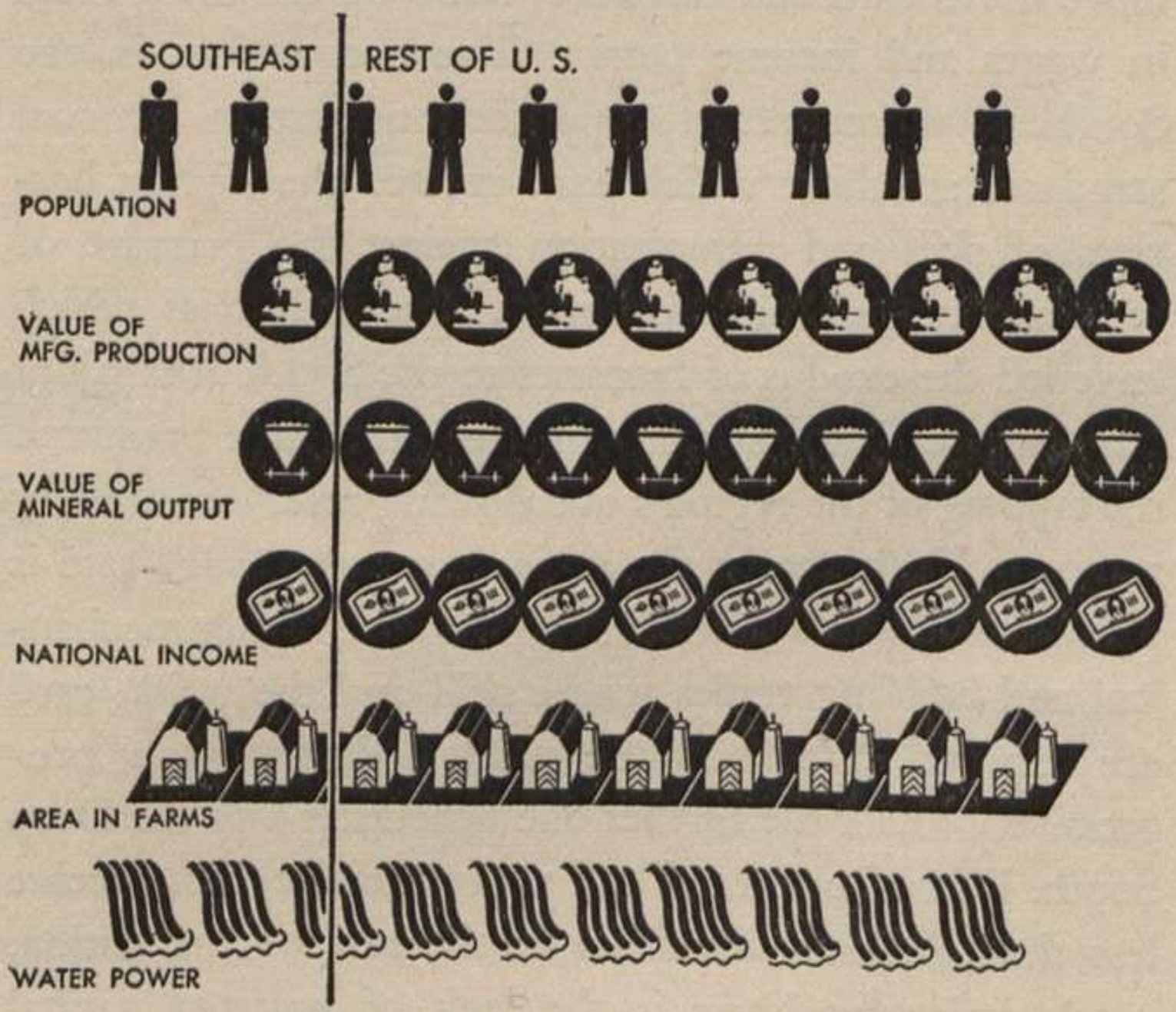
1. Lower pay for the same work.
2. Lower skill for workers.
3. The difference between a farm and industrial economy.

In a nation in which people move around as freely as in ours, industries may move South, and workers may move northward and eastward, but sectional differences in wages and income persist. The occupations in the Southeast whose returns approach nearest to national standards are those which have erected the highest barriers of skill and unionization against the pressure of reenforcements from the farms. The industries which have led the exodus of factories to the South are mainly those in which the simple skills required have permitted the tapping of the region's overflowing reservoir of labor reserves. Very nearly the nation's average wage-rate is paid in the South's railroad shops and the higher mechanical and building trades where skill and the union card are required. Wages in the textile industry grow progressively lower the further one penetrates into the Deep South. Even the learned and professional classes receive less than similar individuals in the rest of the nation.

A major weakness is the lack of invested capital and surplus wealth to develop industry. The Southeast ranks lowest in the proportion of income-tax payers and stands outside the great areas of corporate control. None of the nation's thirty great industrial zones are found in the South and in manufacturing the region does not produce twenty of the major commodities. Of the great corporate bodies which dominate national finance and commerce, the South's share is negligible. Not one

of the nation's 168 major chain store systems, for example, has its head office located in the Southeast. And in estimated per capita wealth, no state outside the region falls as low as the highest Southeastern state.

THE SHARE OF THE SOUTHEAST



Each symbol represents 10% of the total for the United States

PICTORIAL STATISTICS, INC.

The South—A Colonial Economy

The Southeast thus largely remains a colonial economy producing the raw materials and furnishing the basic resources for investments, fabrication, manufactures, and distribution. The economy of the peasant, the

miner, the fisherman, the forester draws a certain minimum return, while manufacturing, distribution, management, and finance furnish larger incomes.

A colonial economy is a debtor economy. It begins as an investment by a mother country, it accumulates only small financial reserves, and as new opportunities arise they must be financed from the outside. The profits are exported outside the area to business men in command of capital. This has its advantages, for these groups have developed a certain technical skill as purveyors of credit and developers of resources. But it tends to keep the region where it began; a colony rather than a regional economy.

This can best be seen in the tax situation of the South. The area has men and land and a few native industries that are not controlled by great national corporations. The South's tax dilemma is found in the attempt to make new and immature regional industries shoulder the cost of nursing a sick agriculture. When the attempt fails, as it is bound to, legislators turn to poll taxes, and sales taxes that frankly take from the poor out of all proportion of their ability to pay. Cumulative poll tax requirements in several of the Southern States operate to prevent the poor from voting. This creates a vicious circle, for it means that the uneducated are barred from voting for the education of their children. Southerners who approve of this as a device to keep the Negro out of politics should realize that great numbers of whites are also disfranchised. Nowhere has non-voting reached higher proportions than in the white primaries of the Democratic South.

An Agricultural Country

While the nation debates whether it shall move population out of the stricken dust bowl, no competent authority has stepped forward with the suggestion that the Southeast has rainfall and soils to spare. The truth is that the region has not done enough with her agricultural resources to convince the nation that it can support additional population. Most people have located their ideal farmer in Iowa, not in Dixie.

The key to the Southeast is in the agrarian South, old and new, an area whose agriculture furnishes an extraordinary catalog of technical backwardness, and social waste. The Southern regions have no less than 61 per cent of the country's eroded lands, lands which lose annually an estimated twenty million tons of potash, nitrogen and phosphoric acid. The drain of submarginal lands upon the region's economy is shown by the fact that it uses annually some 15½ million tons of commercial fertilizer at a cost of $161,000,000. The rest of the nation uses only about 2½ million tons. The South has the lowest per capita farm income, the lowest income per worker, the lowest return per unit of horsepower, the smallest amount of purebred livestock and the lowest average production of milk and dairy products. Moreover, there has been a decrease in the last decade in most kinds of livestock. As compared with the national per capita consumption, the region has a shortage of 121,000,000 gallons of milk and a comparable shortage of 18,540,216 purebred cattle. To make up one-half the deficiency in cattle would require four times the area now given over to pasture lands. Based on

minimum standards, these states also have an annual shortage of 70,000,000 dozen eggs, a shortage not met by income from other sources.

The Southeast is uniformly lacking in farm equipment and modern tools, a weakness reflected in wasted and ungathered crops, unpreserved produce, and underfed livestock. Its backwardness is equally noticeable in the fields of cooperative marketing and farm management with inadequate cost accounting, land use, crop rotation, pasture rotation, seasonal work planning, and animal and plant breeding programs. A $20,000,000 shortage in field peas, for example, reflects a three-fold remediable deficiency in land improvement, feed production and cash income or outgo.

This long roll of lag and waste finds itself reflected in millions of farm homes unpainted, out of repair, and below any decent standard of living. Poverty and isolation, malnutrition, lack of medical attention and lack of economic opportunity must of necessity constrict millions in cultural and economic experience.

As Howard W. Odum describes the area, it is a region of farms yet an importer of foods; potentially a garden spot, actually a region of broken hearts and backs; abounding in traditions of good living, actually lacking the means, often, of a decent subsistence level of living.

If the South possessed a healthy, a decent agriculture, it might work out its salvation in time. Faced with similar situations, peasant populations in other countries have either made a reasonable success of commercial farming or have decided that the farmers' abundance like charity begins at home. Professor David Mitrany

has remarked on the difference between the Roumanian peasant and the small farmer of the South. Faced with the insistent demand for wheat during the World War, the Roumanian peasant continued to grow farm products for himself, not for a market. After meeting his every possible need, he exchanged his surplus fowls, eggs, and lambs for paint and nails to keep his peasant home in bright repair. At the fall of wheat prices after the war, he remained on his patrimony no richer and no poorer than before, forcing from government economists the admission that he was possibly better off than if he had followed their advice and expanded his wheat acreage. On a smaller cash crop many live better than the southern farmer who spends a considerable part of his income paying interest charges for the food and feed he must consume while waiting for his crop to mature.

There are three possibilities in a decent agriculture:

1. *Successful commercial farming.*
2. *Scientific self-maintenance in live-at-home agriculture.*
3. *A balanced combination of the two.*

The South has not reached a respectable level in any of the three fields. Share tenancy and a vicious credit system are rooted so deeply in the South's agriculture that approximately 60 per cent of the region's farm operators must pay rent of one-third, one-fourth, and one-half of their products for the right to cultivate the land; and credit charges of approximately twenty-five per cent for their family living while growing a crop. Cotton tenancy as it has developed in the region is ruinous of both land and men. If it be urged that the tenant is not

a true tenant but merely a laborer paid by a share of the crop, the answer must be made that he lacks what is due the laborer elsewhere, a cash wage on which to live and a laborer's lien on the products of his toil if the wage is not forthcoming.

The few victories gained by southern agriculture have been won when the price of cotton was high, and the subsequent decline in price often served to wipe out whatever advances had been made. Today the Southeastern region faces a greater disaster. Having lost much of its cotton production to more fertile areas of the Mississippi Delta and the Southwest, the Eastern Cotton Belt finds soil exhaustion increasing, requiring more and more commercial fertilizer. Erosion is increasing and fertilizer, no matter how expensive, will not repair erosion.

To these problems must be added the failing world market for cotton. New crops will not be easy to find. The Southeast can grow many things for home use, but it cannot as yet compete with other regions in the growing of grain and livestock products. The task of developing a healthy agriculture in the Southeast would remain difficult enough if the area could count on the accustomed cash returns from its staple crop. But if half of the area's farm population are rendered jobless because of lost foreign markets, the region's problem will overflow its borders and become a great national problem.

The Southern People

Could we but say that human population is social wealth, the South would have a tremendous asset. But

during days of depression human resources may either be social wealth or social waste, depending on whether they are adequately used. The Southeast has a higher birth rate and larger ratio of children and young people than any other section of the country. Thus California has 305 children under five for every 1,000 women of childbearing age as against 694 in North Carolina. Accordingly the area sends more of its youth into the general stream of the nation's social and industrial life than any other region. But for this the nation will not be grateful, unless they bring fine hereditary qualities, coupled with good training. The nation which absorbed and partially assimilated millions from Southeastern Europe now views with askance the threatened migration from the poverty levels of the Southwest.

The white population of the Southern highlands and Cotton Belt are from the English Colonial stock that formed the dominant traditions of this country. Nevertheless, they have become more isolated from the main currents of American life, urban and industrial, than many people recently arrived from Europe. They have clung to the birth rates of a colonial and a frontier period. The spread of birth control has reached the descendants of European peasants even in our city slums, but isolation and poverty have left the Southern farm dweller with the simple faith that it is good to be fruitful, multiply, and replenish the earth.

Our cities have long since ceased to reproduce themselves and now depend for their growing population upon an incessant stream of rural migrants. Here is a question of population and culture that affects the nation as well as the South. The South, possessing approxi-

mately one-fourth of the nation's population, has and must educate approximately one-half the nation's farm children. Its problem is complicated by the fact that it has more children per 1,000 productive adults than any other section, and less per capita income with which to educate children. It has a dual system of schools dividing educational funds between black and white, sparse settlement in open country areas necessitating the added expense of bus transportation. Thus for Mississippi to attain the national average in expenditures for educating her school children would require 99.3 per cent of all the present tax monies of the state.

The Negro

The Negro should not escape mention in this discussion of population elements. Nearly eight millions or 30 per cent of the "southern people" are Negroes. Thus of all regions the Southeast is at the same time the least "foreign-born" and the least "native-white." Another four million Negroes are found outside the Southeast. Of these a million and a half are in the Northeast, a million in the Southwest, a little more than a million in the Middle States and about a hundred thousand each in the Northwest and Far West. The changing place of the Negro in the nation presents an extraordinary spectacle of cultural evolution. Despite the fact every state of the region showed a decrease in the ratio of Negroes to total population, his social and economic position is undoubtedly improving.

Past predictions regarding the place of the Negro in the nation have proved notoriously unreliable. Nevertheless four basic trends may be pointed out.

First, the ratio of Negro population to total population is gradually decreasing, a trend that may be expected to continue until our population stabilizes some half century hence. Second, the Negro population is being diffused throughout the nation so that the problem is being recognized as national rather than Southern. Third, through selection and diffusion the biological heritage of the Negro is changing, producing a brown rather than a black race. Fourth, the Negro is changing his social character as his activities widen and his cultural status is increased.

The Southern Regional Study was set up on the assumption that the Negro is an integral, normal, and continuing factor in the culture of the Southeast. It has found no reason to revoke that assumption. The conclusion seems justified that if he be given a fair opportunity, the Negro, with his remarkable power of adaptation and his attractive personality, will be one of the most important of the basic elements of American life. For the time being, however, there is no easy solution of his problem nor of that of the white man's relation to the Negro. The future of the Negro is essentially a problem of development and assimilation. With this must go the acknowledgment that a recognition of the handicaps of both the Negro and white affords no adequate basis to excuse or defend either the past or the present situation.

The South has simply been following the course of social evolution the world over. High up in the catalog of human errors is race conflict and the exploitation of minority peoples. The assumption that race was an entity in itself, that races were inherently different

led to the error of assuming that the Negro was an inferior race and therefore available for exploitation and discrimination. Manifestly it is too much to expect one or two generations to change at one stroke the powerful folkways of the centuries. Liberal friends of the South have often regretted that the region has never afforded the Negro better cultural and social opportunities. Now few can deny that outside agriculture the Northeast can offer the Negro a better economic chance than the South. And in this area the future may set a pattern in race relations that the South will watch with interest, and,—it is to be hoped—with profit.

Southern Culture: Assets and Liabilities

In its culture as in its economy the South possesses both assets and liabilities. If one thinks of the early American, it is apparent that in many ways the Southeast is most "American" of all the regions. If the Southern people are characterized as Protestant, Sabbath-observing, family-loving, patriarchal, of religious intensity, "quarrelling" with government, individualists taking their politics, their honor, and their liquor "hard"; was not all the nation so a century ago? Their attitude toward work and play, toward women, children and property, toward the dominant leader are still very much of the early vintage.

The dual personality of Southern culture fascinates while it repels. Charm and courtesy, magnolia blossoms and Southern languor conflict in the popular mind with cruelty, lynching, sudden death, and stern repression. Inherent in the glory that was the traditional South were qualities often estimated to be the most distinctive and

glamorous in the American picture; a way of living, restful and colorful, a humanism over and above the basic puritanism of the early fathers; a setting of classical architecture, classical libraries, elegant furnishings, in the midst of groves and gardens and feudal settlements; dignity, polish, respect for form and the amenities; pride of family, hospitality with merriment and conviviality abounding.

The ills, the pathologies of the South's culture, if we may so call them, are not all, but they are important and they will, no doubt, color the nation's conception of the South for a long time to come. The crises through which the region has passed explains, in part at least, many of its peculiar attitudes and prejudices. The psychological harm to Georgia, for example, of Sherman's march to the sea has long since outweighed all the material damage inflicted. The crises that have formed the attitudes of the region and the folk include secession and war, reconstruction, race conflict, turbulent politics, sectionalism, populism and prohibition, Ku Klux and demagoguery, lynching and mobs. To this list must be added the fears, insecurity and poverty encountered in the economic crises of failing cotton markets and exhausted lands, depleted forests and naval stores, plagues of cattle tick and Texas fever, boll weevil and fruit fly, crises of coal mining and textile industry, decayed plantations, and struggle for survival against overwhelming handicaps of poverty and inefficiency.

To this region comes the tragedy of Scottsboro, and for a people too much obsessed with fears of race and sex Scottsboro became the symbol of a nation's opprobrium. All the sickness of the South's regional culture

is summed up under that symbol, and it came to feel it could justify itself to itself only by a legal execution of the defendants. Yet in all fairness it must be remembered that other regions have their Sacco and Vanzetti's, their Mooney and Billings'. And just as the South's peculiar institutions offer the shield for exploitation of lesser and weaker groups, they are on a par with human exploitation everywhere.

What of the Future?

What are the hopes of the gradually evolving future? Those who struggle for a better South must realize that the region's peculiar institutions will not change over night. The South is but part and parcel of the history of class and race conflict the world over; it is a product of a long process of social development in which crisis has aggravated crisis. The professional Southerner has evoked his counter-part, the professional anti-Southern agitator, and both generate emotions that aggravate the conditions they oppose.

This is not to deny that the South owes a decent respect to the opinions of mankind. Gradually many of the peculiar ills that afflict the South may be expected to pass. The upper South, for example, is placing the ballot in the hands of its Negroes. With this has gone some of the venal politics to be found in the herding of poor and ignorant voters everywhere. Yet this whole process must serve as a test of whether the region can, in time, overcome its major prejudice.

It is the belief of the Southern Regional Study that prejudices inherent in Southern culture will respond best to economic treatment. In so far as they are the products

of fear, of ignorance, of the search for the scapegoats of misery, they are the products of poverty. To raise the economic conditions of the common men of the South, black and white, is to do the most possible to lessen hatred, prejudice, and conflict.

TOWARD REGIONAL PLANNING

WE have compared the region with other regions to the almost uniform discredit of the Southeast. Yet there is much to indicate that the Southern states with their natural resources would be capable of much greater development if they could eliminate the economic waste which keeps them drained to poverty levels. Nevertheless, we have reached the conclusion that the Southeast is not capable under its present economy of attaining the highest economic and cultural development. The evidence also indicates the inability of the Southern regions to develop their capacities independently of other regions and the nation as a whole. In both North and South there exists, no doubt, a certain impatience with the talk about Southern problems; but neither the regions, nor the nation have appeared to comprehend that the Southern problem is first of all a national problem. The South when it shall have succeeded, will have more than itself to thank; and if it fails, more than itself to blame.

The agrarian South must be rebuilt, not on the old basis, but upon a new structure consistent with the needs and equipment of today's changing economy. Such a task demands new attitudes, both inside and outside the region. Many of the prominent folk in the Southeast,

leaders in industry and agriculture, have never realized the actual suffering experienced by five million tenants and other millions of unskilled labor in the Southeast. The South needs to reconstruct its place in the nation, and the nation needs to realize that here is a national problem and not a sectional one. The South needs to build upon its own physical and cultural resources and it needs the aid and understanding of the nation in its task. The Southeast, in short, offers our greatest task in national-regional planning.

The region appears equally capable of making the best or the worst of all possible contributions to the national life in the coming generation. Honest, God-fearing folk, ignorant and poor can be dangerous. The Southeast has six hundred counties without library facilities of any kind. Here is fertile soil for the ignorant, and the loud-mouthed demagogue. The late Huey Long gave warning that economic issues are open to an agitation every whit as effective as that of white supremacy. He also showed that a Southern state may be organized into as tight a little dictatorship as any South American republic, while business goes on as usual.

Even before the depression there was evidence that much of the South was again veering toward the old type of state and sectional mindedness, limited by geographical and traditional boundaries, rather than seeking to develop a richer regional culture, merged into the national picture. There were also hidden indications in certain peculiar sectional phenomena of possible trends, both toward unsuspected fascistic principles and revolutionary tendencies. For instance, before Hitler's Nazi Germany, parts of the South were revivifying an emo-

tional culture through attack upon universities and the intellectual life; through religious coloring of politics and state craft; through appeals to sectional patriotism; through intolerance of criticism and opposition; and through continuing emphasis upon racial issues, Nordic superiority, and one hundred per cent Americanism. . . .

Southern civilization has always been dominated by its political culture. Once its politics demanded respect. Today it is largely futile. The meaning for politics is clear. If regional needs are to be served, if democratic institutions are to function, politics must abandon its futile pattern of partisanship and personalities to concern itself with questions of economic efficiency, regional economy, and social legislation. This demands from leaders in business, universities, and professional life, as from all intelligent citizens a realistic facing of facts and a program of national-regional planning more comprehensive than any yet attempted. To succeed it must have (1) a clear understanding of what is involved, (2) greater technical capacity, and (3) adequate will and motivation.

Envisaging the United States as a vast mosaic of naturally defined geographical areas, economic sections, and cultural regions, *Southern Regions* concludes that the social direction of present trends for the commonweal must be accomplished by simultaneous, integrated planning for both the nation as a whole and the component regions which make up the nation.

The Tennessee Valley

We have at hand something of an example. In its broader aspects the Tennessee Valley Authority may be

considered the testing ground of regional-national planning. If the Southeast possesses unrealized capacity for economic and social development, this unique agency of government should bring it forth. The area itself, a river basin cutting through seven states, furnishes a fair cross section of the region's natural resources, its population elements, its economic organization and its historical backgrounds. With its problems and its political hazards the TVA embodies most of the dangers and most of the virtues inherent in a great regional-national experiment in planning. From the view point of the electric power industry, the yard stick is a birch rod unjustly employed against an industry singled out for punishment. In the North the experiment is sometimes seen as regional favoritism; in the South it has been characterized as Federal dictation; yet in the nation it has most often been recognized as a hopeful portent in the American scene. Its failure might very well prove the failure of regional planning in the United States.

The TVA's objectives in navigation, national defense, and power production are generally known. For many the attainment of these possibilities will justify the project. Yet the essential test will be the success of the TVA in raising the level of well-being of the region. By training, direction, demonstration and integrated planning, the Authority may set a new pattern in rural development. Soil conservation, reforestation and fertilizer production show the possibilities in the conservation and development of a region's resources. The spread of rural electrification indicates the possibilities of a new agriculture and cottage industries after the model of Switzerland. The development of ceramic, metallurgic

and other power using industries may follow the completion of hydro-electric power programs.

To offer in our present lack of agreement a regional plan item by item would only add another to our long list of economic panaceas. Nevertheless, there are certain fundamental objectives which any attempt at regional reconstruction must keep in view. Such a program should seek to bridge the chasm between the region's actualities and its potentialities. Before the question "What is to become of the South?" can be read "What is the South to become?" many steps remain to be taken. From a survey of the Southern Regional Study they might be listed in the following order:

1. Realization of the difficulty of planning "the way on" for the South.

2. Realization of necessity of planning, if regression is to be prevented.

3. Recognition of the presence of elements necessary for success provided they can be focused in correct combinations.

4. Realization that the achievement of regional reconstruction is possible only in relation to national integration and interregional adjustments.

5. Emphasis on regional functions, regional differentials, and regional distribution.

6. Setting up of state planning boards in cooperation with federal agencies.

7. Adoption of gradual, cooperative, flexible planning programs.

8. Adoption as objectives: (a) the rehabilitation of the people, (b) reconstruction of the cotton economy, (c) increasing the South's revenue to the nation as well as its own wealth, (d) forwarding of general regional, cultural adjustments.

9. Possible creation of a regional planning board competent to do for the Southeast something of what the Tennessee Valley Authority does for the Valley.

10. On the part of the South: (a) more realistic facing of facts, (b) greater unity of effort and (c) an intelligent willingness to pay the price of progress.

11. On the part of the nation: (a) recognition of the logical, inevitable, evolutionary nature of the South's culture, (b) of the size of the problem and time required to cope with it, (c) of the need for wiser council than that furnished by the growing body of critics who tend to incite the South's marginal folk to violent revolution.

12. Planned increase in the application of technology to the region's development.

13. Checking soil erosion.

14. Planning for new diversity and quality in crops and types of farming to take the place of diminishing cotton economy.

15. Planning for expansion of regional markets and needed regional industries.

16. Training of the people for better work and better pay through the development of skills and quality of workmen to replace the old emphasis on cheap labor.

17. With the redistribution of rural population, more emphasis on balanced ratios of population increase.

18. Further research into doubtful fields of marginal lands and population, optimum programs of production, the place of agrarian culture.

19. Planning to develop sufficient resources, standards and leaders in higher education in the South.

20. The acceptance of two six-year planning and testing periods to determine in the near future what course the Southeast is to take.

What Can the South Do?

In agriculture, the main problems for immediate adjustment will include the following: (1) some readjust-

ment of the present tenant system; (2) provisions for an adequate credit system; (3) readjustment and redistribution of the present crop land uses, with some new crops and a very large increase in ratio of food and feed crops; (4) methods for raising the standard of consumption of commodities by the Southern people, both in the rural areas and in the cities; (5) arrangements whereby interregional exchange and trade may be promoted; (6) an economy which will enable the farmer to spend his cash money for needed goods rather than for commercial fertilizer and food and feed supplies; (7) some way to increase the technical facilities whereby the production and processing of commodities may be more effective; (8) some practical means for adding to the technical comforts and conveniences of farm and home; (9) some method for the redistribution of submarginal lands and people within present subregional areas rather than wholesale retirement of lands and shifting of people; (10) new arrangements for increasing agricultural exports. If the Southern regions could devote a fourth of the science and work to their agricultural problems that has been developed in the far western regions, they would become true garden spots. Yet this can be done only through a coordinated planning program.

The kind of people and their experience and training and background must be taken into consideration before details regarding particular crops, land uses, credit, and consumption habits can be determined. The mastery of climate, home hygiene, and diet regimen is also important. Thus there will be needed a twofold planning approach. One will be a planning strategy such

as becomes necessary for the reconstruction of the whole system of commercial agriculture, of markets, production, and the like. The other will be a strategy directed toward the complete reconstruction of the system which at present crushes the tenant and the small farmer, now near peasantry or a submarginal level.

The region's education is also an important factor in planning the way on for the South. New training in physical science may eventually remake a region's agriculture; new training in social science may aid in reforming a region's culture. Here realities must be faced. In the field of higher education, it is discouraging to note the South's long record of low rankings and deficiencies. The region not only has no university of the first rank, but it lacks scholars and administrators of the topmost distinction. The one exception is to be found in the higher education for Negroes where the Southeast has in its institutions the best scholars and educational leaders of the race. Yet this condition is a result of the financial assistance from the outside plus the fact that Eastern and Western universities do not allow racial segregation nor yet appoint Negro scholars to their faculties.

If one searches the field of education for forces that will modify, for instance, the region's personality-politics, its mob excesses, or its neglect of social science and broader culture, the most promising prospects should be the teachers and the teacher training institutions. Yet what do we find? A very large preponderance of former "normal" schools, primarily for women, whose chief emphasis was on the mechanics of curriculum and methods with an added emphasis upon the

superficial vocational training of women, all well mixed with sectional patriotism and loyalties. To expect the teachers thus trained to improve standards and modify a great traditional culture is to expect the impossible. For the men teachers and administrators the region has gone to the opposite extreme of neglecting the teacher training function and of sending out the great majority of its teachers from denominational colleges, nurtured and trained in the classical and patriotic-religious tradition of the South. Here is often an extraordinarily fine record, yet it does not add stature to the teacher-training program. Moreover, there has been conflict between this body of teachers and those trained in the normal schools. Furthermore, the regional promise of one or more great teacher-training universities of the South has tended toward sectional specialization and a strengthening of the old conservative viewpoint. No notable strength, liberalism, scholarship, or boldness has emerged from the great movement of which so much was expected. And how can teachers with no basic training in social science teach the principles needed? Or how can pupils be versed in sociology or economics by football coaches who must teach something in order to be placed upon the budget?

What can the South contribute for the fulfilment of some of these great promises? When we speak of the South as contributing a considerable number of major elements to the new Americanism, we mean, of course, *if* the region and the nation can and will get together in a dynamic, vital program of appraisal and action.*

* Howard W. Odum summing up the Southern Regional Study in *Plan Age*, March 1936.

We assume that the South can and will contribute to the wealth of the nation through its increased technology, its better trained workers, and its utilization of its new resources. And we assume that it will continue to contribute of its abundance of people, as it has in the recent past with its nearly four million migrants to the other regions with their financial "worth" of billions of dollars. But in addition to this, what can the South contribute to the larger national culture in the next generation and how?

First of all, it can muster the will and the way to develop its own great regional resources, including the people and its wealth. It can sense a great motivation which looks forward rather than backward. There is ample evidence to justify the conclusion that the task of planning the "way on" for the Southeast is an extraordinarily difficult one, but that all the elements necessary for success are present provided they can be focused in the right ways and combinations. On the other hand, there is also ample evidence to warrant the conclusion that unless there is a definite change in the regional economy there will be retrogression in agriculture, in industry, and in general culture. In some ways the prospects are alarming, indicating that the South can ill afford to make many more mistakes.

In the second place, the South can contribute greatly to the new national economy by demonstrating that regional reconstruction can be successfully achieved only in relation to the nation as a whole. And that by the same token, national social planning must be based upon regional analysis and functioning, giving logical values to regional differences. The South affords ex-

cellent laboratories for regional research and planning, and in particular a regional testing field for adjustment between agriculture and industry as a basic economic goal for government, and for the more general, but equally fundamental, objective of reintegrating agrarian life in the American culture.

There remain many aspects of the South's agrarian ideal which retain reality. These include the ideals of those who not only recognize the basic man-land foundation of America but who, as Julia Peterkin points out, yearn for the peace and quiet of country places with leisure to possess their own souls and with abundance of things for the comfort of minds and bodies. "To realize the earth's generosity to those who have joy in sowing and reaping," so runs the theme, "gives a deep sense of security and a faith in the rightness of things." For such an ideal the Southeast is peculiarly well equipped by nature and awaits that new planning which will transform the poverty-breeding system of tenant and landlord into that abundant life so pictured.

Since so much of the South's material resources must depend upon science and technical advancement, and since the South must needs augment its resources and means for these ends, and since the total culture of the region is so vitally related to the possibilities of such developments, the region has a great opportunity for a closer coordinating of the physical sciences and the social sciences.

In the hands of the South may be the final destiny of the common man, symbol of American democracy. For there is a testing field for democracy among five to ten million marginal white folk and ten million Negroes.

In a graphic picture of what is economically, culturally, and morally wrong, the new achievements of scholarship may point to stable ways of attaining equilibrium and the redistribution of weal, wealth, and welfare not only among individuals but regions.

If the South, sensing its unbalance and lack of equilibrium between the lower brackets of common men and its upper brackets of resources and cultural institutions, does not will and plan for "the better ordering" of its heritage and prospect, the South may contribute to the culture of the nation in the future an extraordinary exhibit of social degeneracy, of tragic men and women, broken and depraved in the ongoings of a great nation, whose opportunities may be lost by default, as well as by purpose.

Turning back to the more hopeful side, there is yet one more important possible contribution which the South may make. It seems quite possible that the South's conservatism, its highly motivated ideologies, and its kaleidoscopic record of experiences might make an important contribution to the stability of the nation in its transitional period. Both theoretically and practically the transitional period of societies are dangerous, critical periods. The dangers of artificial society, supertechnology, undesigned and chaotic change, appear today most formidable. It may be that the regions can contribute to the poise, the stability, and equilibrium between the old and the new. Here as elsewhere, however, our conclusions indicate that unless the powers of scholarship, of science, and of education are focused upon these problems, these same regional qualities and forces may terminate disastrously.

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