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PUBLIC AFFAIRS PAMPHLETS

THE SOUTH'S PLACE IN THE NATION

BY RUPERT B. VANCE

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

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

By RUPERT B. VANCE

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"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 popular 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 committeemen of the New Deal.

The editor of a famous old South Carolina daily wrote that the South would be better off if it still belonged to the

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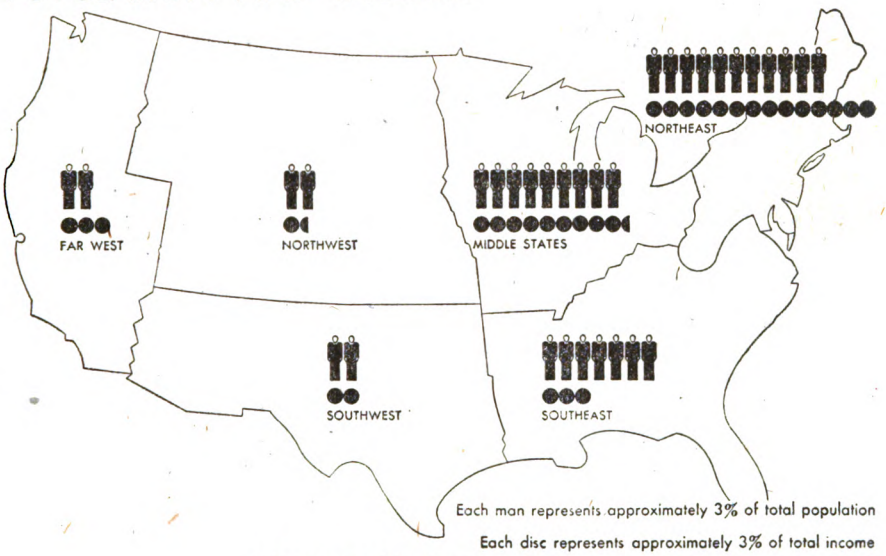
in the nation. That hope, too, has almost vanished. Economic competence has gradually moved from East to West until the Pacific Coast has our highest per capita income, but in the moving it passed by the Southeast. Here, for the majority, the

POPULATION AND INCOME



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struggle to reach an American standard of living lacks any immediate promise of attainment.

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 predepression income. The Southeast had the lowest income per capita ($365), partly because it had both the lowest farm income per capita ($183) and the

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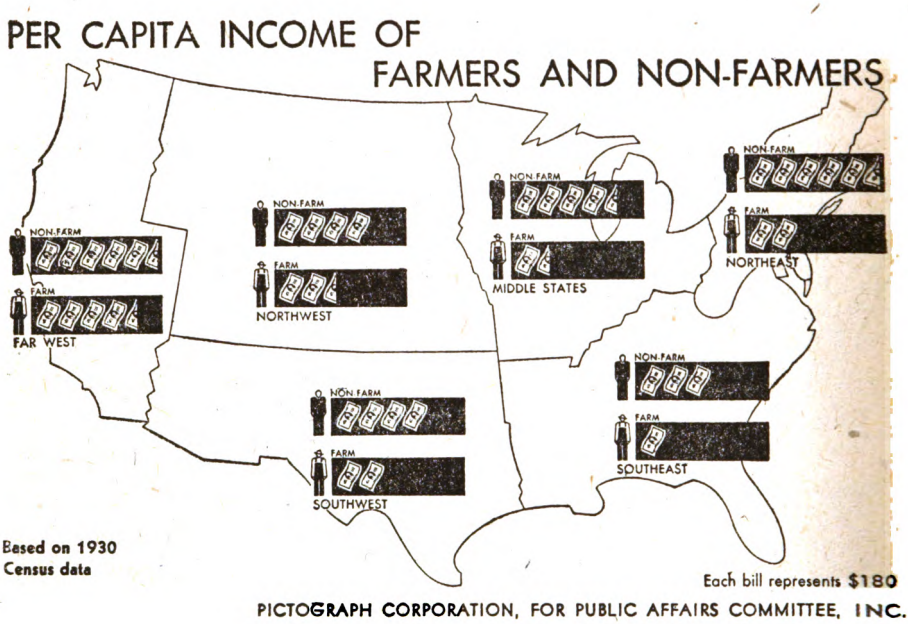
largest proportion of farm population in the country. Approximately one-half the nation's farm population is in the southeastern quarter of the United States. Yet the South is not alone with a low farm income. The Middle States includ-



ing Iowa yield only $262 per capita farm income, and the nation's average is only $273 per farm inhabitant, as compared with $908 per nonfarm dweller. Only the Far West with its famed California farms receives a farm income ($818) worth comparing with nonfarm incomes.

We will note that income and wages in the South are anywhere from 30 to 50 per cent below the national level. The differences are greatest in agriculture but they persist in even

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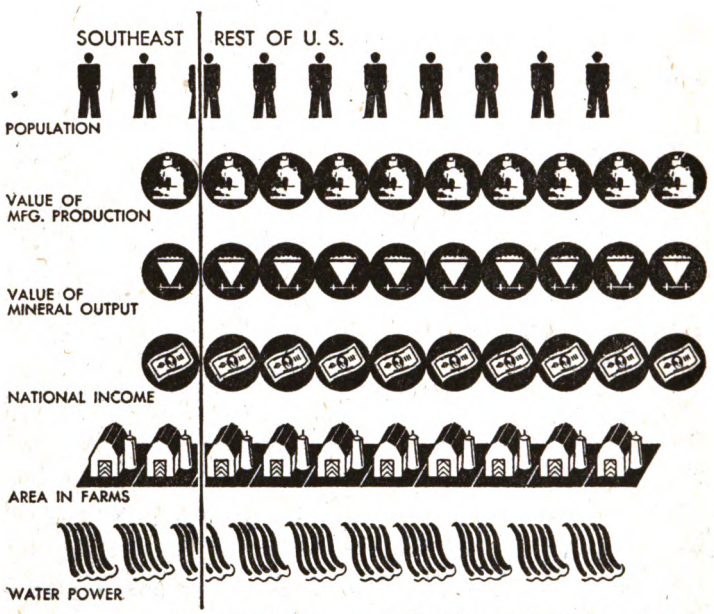
share is negligible. Not one of the nation's 168 major chain-store systems, for example, has its head office located in the Southeast. And in estimated per capita wealth, no state outside the region falls as low as the highest southeastern state.

THE SHARE OF THE SOUTHEAST



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

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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

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