

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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