
A New Negro Labor Exodus North

Negro workers are coming North, even during winter. It is the first new definite exodus since the war. The cause, of course, is the increasing demand for

labor in the basic industries, such as steel, coal, building, etc.; high wages relative to those Negroes received in the South and more freedom and more educational opportunities for their children in the northern centers. Phil H. Brown, Commissioner of Conciliation in the Labor Department, in a release of Feb. 1, says:

Payrolls of a number of districts in northern and central western industrial points are being slightly swelled by the employment of these workers who come directly from southern states, with Georgia yielding the greatest number of migrants.

Philadelphia, Pa.; Portsmouth, Akron and Youngstown, Ohio; Milwaukee, Wis.; Argo, Ill.; Indiana Harbor, Ind.; and Trenton and Newark, N. J., are specific points into which an appreciable influx of Negro labor has come for absorption into industrial life.

Note that the largest exodus is from Georgia, where the largest number of lynchings occur, the Estate of John Williams' "death farm" notoriety. Let the migration keep up. Negro labor is the basis of southern agricultural, industrial and commercial wealth. Such is the economic chain: no Negro, no labor; no labor, no wealth! Thus, by the Negroes' leaving, they are hitting southern industry a mortal blow. It will make conditions better for those that remain in the South; for the "white South" will begin making concessions to the Negroes in the form of more and better schools, higher wages—yes, even the eventual abolition of peonage, lynching, disfranchisement and the jim-crow car, in order to retain Negro laborers. *Profits are dearer to Southern plutocrats than mobocrats.* Besides, if industry is paralyzed by the lack of Negro labor, there will be no huge profits with which to finance the campaigns of such political Negro-phobists as Pat Harrison, Cole Blaise and Vardaman. Banks will fail because southern businesses of all kinds, manufacturers and farmers, will have no money to deposit with them. Money is the issue in the South as well as the North. Look at Harrison, Arkansas, where a white citizens' vigilantes committee lynched a white worker because he struck for more wages! This, by the way, is the same Arkansas. Elaine is the place where Negro share-crop-tenant farmers were murdered because they dared to hire a lawyer to protect their interest in the cotton which they produced. The white farm owners sent out the alarm that the Negro farm-tenants were planning an insurrection to murder all the white people. So did the railroad bosses in Harrison claim that the railroad strikers (white) were burning down bridges, destroying property and endangering the lives of the citizens. Capitalists frame white as well as black workers; and they lynch both. But the exodus is one of the Negroes' most effective remedies.
