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# “Back to Slavery” The New Deal Party and the Negro in Tennessee

Colored Division, Republican State Headquarters of Tennessee

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**"Back To Slavery" The New Deal Party and the Negro in Tennessee**

**By Colored Division, Republican State Headquarters of Tennessee**

Single-fold (4 pp.) heavy-stock, newsprint pamphlet with general light wear and aging with some minor, flattened creasing on corners. Overall VG. This pamphlet produced by the Colored Division of the Tennessee Republican Party goes into detail on segregationist policies of the New Deal Democrats in Tennessee, especially in regard to Civil Service positions, specifically the WPA, NYA and Census. It also mentions Democratic "Jim Crow Offices" and the cynical hiring of blacks to work in predominantly African-American areas of Nashville. The pamphlet is not dated, but since this was used as part of Wendell Willkie's campaign in Tennessee, it must date from 1940. I find no copies of this pamphlet in OCLC/WorldCat. It seems to be very uncommon and of some historic interest since it shows how our two political parties were once quite different in their appeals to African-Americans.

#16412 \$100.00 (1940) U-AfAmPaper

# “BACK TO SLAVERY”

## The New Deal Party and the Negro In Tennessee



REPUBLICAN STATE HEADQUARTERS  
OF TENNESSEE  
(Colored Division)

415½ FOURTH AVENUE, NORTH  
NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

## BACK TO SLAVERY

In Tennessee W.P.A. and N.Y.A. no Negro is employed in an administrative position, either in the State office or in the District offices. Even in W.P.A. adult education where Negro classes are well attended, and produce a fine quality of work, no Negro State or District Supervisor is employed. In rare instances local Negro supervisors help develop the program. This is a clear violation of the letter and the spirit of the laws governing both of these agencies, which specify in their National set-ups that Negroes should participate, at least, in their proportion to the population. The Negro non-relief positions are negligible. This is a very definite form of economic strangulation, because of the thousands of dollars in salaries paid by these positions, where whites get the Negro pro-rata as well as their own. The Negro relief clients are used as a basis of increased employment and opportunities for white supervisors. In every other Southern State Negroes are employed in W.P.A. and N.Y.A. administrative positions as Consultants, State Supervisors of Negro Divisions or as District Supervisors. These positions pay from \$100.00 to \$175.00 per month, plus adequate travel expenses, which is some times as much as \$100.00 per month and often more.

In the Tennessee State Employment Service, an affiliate with the U.S. Employment Service, a most effective policy of discriminatory practice is used. (1) There are separate Negro offices, designated as offices for domestic, personal and unskilled workers! These offices are manned by all-white staffs, although Negroes who have made high grades in Civil Service examinations have received no appointments. These high-ranking Negro civil service eligibles are told that there are no openings for Negroes, and if they want to be appointed to go to northern and eastern states. The Tennessee State Employment Service discriminates against Negroes in failing to serve Negro skilled, technical and white collar workers. Any Negro worker of either of these classifications, has great difficulty in even registering at a Tennessee Employment Office, because he can only register at the **Jim Crow Office** designated for domestic, personal and unskilled workers. Here he loses his classification as a skilled worker, because he must accept classification as an unskilled or domestic. Few requisitions for skilled, technical or white collar workers ever reach

the Jim Crow unskilled office. Only, when the white office designated as an office for skilled, technical and white collar workers has filled the requisition from their files as completely as possible, do the requisitions find their way to the Jim Crow office. This, of course means that only after all of the white skilled, technical and white collar workers are employed, can Negroes of these classifications, begin to hope for employment. This condition prevails in Tennessee, despite the well known fact that larger numbers of Negroes, of these classifications are available in Tennessee, than in other Southern States, because of the unusually large number of College graduates among Negroes who reside in the State. Forced un-employment is making the Negro skilled workers, lose their skills.

During the taking of the census this year in the 5th Congressional District, many dollars were spent by Negro organizations and individuals, urging local New Deal officials, as well as the higher-ups in Washington, to give Negroes in this district their percentage of the enumerators, which by virtue of precedent, should have been in proportion to the population of the races. Two or three committees of leading Negroes, representing outstanding organizations, as well as many individuals, including some whites, visited and conferred with those charged with dispensing of these positions in this district. There was a total of 261 employed, finally. Very reluctantly **Nine** Colored ladies were included among those used. It is charged, that Negroes making application for this work were not even treated with ordinary courtesy, and of the nine used, it is a well known fact that 4 or 5 of these were used primarily because it was felt that they might be useful, in the future in coralling votes. White persons were used as enumerators in the **Andrew Jackson Courts**, (Government Negro Housing Project) in the **Fisk University** area, the most thickly populated Negro section of Nashville. The number of Negroes who should have been used in this work was at least 70. Ten years ago more than 30 were used, and the total number employed was not nearly as great.

### **NEGRO SET BACK FIFTY YEARS HERE**

The records show that it has been more than fifty years since such a small percentage of the enumerators employed for this

work, were colored, and the Negro is better qualified now than ever before. **Is it fair to expect the Negro Racial Group to accept a fifty year set back without a protest?** It is general information, in the Negro residential sections, that the white enumerators sent to take the census, in many cases were not even high school students, and were absolutely unqualified, while many Negro citizens, most of them high school and college graduates, and highly qualified, were not even considered. The result is that many leading citizens doubt very seriously, that the information turned in by these enumerators can be relied upon. **A Vote for Roosevelt**, is a vote for a continuation of this **Back to Slavery** movement set in motion by this **Roosevelt New Deal Administration**.

### **CARPENTERS, BRICKLAYERS, BOYCOTTED**

Several mass meetings have been held, (one in the County Court House), with reference to special discrimination against Negro Carpenters. Only a few Negro Carpenters have been used on any Government Project since the beginning of the New Deal and they have not been used full time during the life of various jobs. The records show that they have been laid off many times, even on the **Negro Housing Projects**, while the whites were kept on the job full time. A **General Discriminatory Policy**, against Negro bricklayers is also in effect. The Roosevelt Administration, must bear the blame, for these woeful conditions, as these facts have been brought to the attention of high Washington officials many times, to no avail.

### **NEGROES, IDIOTIC?**

Unless the leaders of the New Deal Party think that Negroes are feeble-minded, and down-right idiotic, they will not expect them to vote a New Deal Ticket, and endorse this outrageous and nefarious scheme of prejudice, discrimination and racial hatred. **A Vote for Willkie is a vote against this form of "Scuttling" of the entire Negro Citizenship.**

**Republican State Headquarters of Tennessee**  
(Colored Division) 415½ Fourth Ave., N.  
Nashville, Tennessee

"Back to slavery"

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