FIGURES ON THE DISPERSAL OF THE BLACK PEOPLE FROM THE BLACK BELT SOUTH

James Allen, a theoretician of the Communist Party, USA, drew out his concept of the maximum area of black majority in the South for the year 1930. This included 321 counties in 12 states. He described this as being essentially the area of the black nation in the black belt South. At this time, he was an ardent supporter of the analysis that a black nation existed in the South.

But tracing the evolution of this area verifies the dispersal of the black people away from it, especially after World War II.

Below are the population statistics for these counties over a 110-year period. The figures for 1860 through 1940 are from James Allen (The Negro Question in the U.S., 1936, and an article in the Nov. 1946 Political Affairs). 1970 figures were tabulated from the 1970 census.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Census Year</th>
<th>Total Population</th>
<th>Black Population</th>
<th>Black %</th>
<th>% of all US Blacks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1860</td>
<td>4,362,009</td>
<td>2,461,099</td>
<td>56.4%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1880</td>
<td>5,750,410</td>
<td>3,466,924</td>
<td>60.3%</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>8,387,958</td>
<td>4,842,766</td>
<td>57.7%</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td>8,968,132</td>
<td>4,806,565</td>
<td>53.6%</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>9,525,865</td>
<td>4,790,049</td>
<td>50.3%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940</td>
<td>10,256,289</td>
<td>4,993,612</td>
<td>48.7%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>11,037,426</td>
<td>4,288,911</td>
<td>38.5%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Today it is impossible to draw a continuous area of black majority as James Allen did. Instead there are roughly five separate groups of counties with a majority black population. These are drawn up by combining counties with a majority black population with some with less than a black majority to get a continuous zone in each of the five areas. As well, commercial centers have been included such as Warren County (Vicksburg), Mississippi which is 37% black; Hinds County (Jackson), Mississippi which is 45% black; and Montgomery, Alabama which is 39% black.

Taken together the five areas include a total of 82 counties of which 74 are black majority counties. There are 1,095,727 black people concentrated in these areas making up about 51.1% of its population. The black population in these areas is about 4.1% of the total black population in the U.S. Together the blacks in these five areas number fewer than the number of black people in either New York City or Chicago. The figures below were tabulated by the MLP from the 1980 Census.

### Rough Area of Black Majority in the South in 1980

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AREAS IN</th>
<th>TOTAL POPULATION</th>
<th>BLACK POPULATION</th>
<th>BLACK % OF AREA</th>
<th>BLACK MAJ COUNTIES</th>
<th>TOTAL COUNTIES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Miss. Delta</td>
<td>875,800</td>
<td>470,500</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. W. Alabama</td>
<td>385,738</td>
<td>193,870</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. E. Ala/SW Ga</td>
<td>178,000</td>
<td>101,200</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. E. Ga/S.C.</td>
<td>448,700</td>
<td>243,875</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. NE N.C./SE Va</td>
<td>258,000</td>
<td>137,700</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>2,144,238</td>
<td>1,095,727</td>
<td>51.1%</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following three pages show this dramatic dispersal of the black people from the black belt south pictorially. They show the areas of black majority in the South for the years 1880, 1920 and 1960. Also see the discussion of this question in the section "The Dispersal of the Black People Out of the Black Belt" of the article On the Black National Question and the Right to Self-Determination elsewhere in the Supplement.
Regions of Black Majority in the South
1880

Major Cities
1. Memphis, Tennessee
2. Jackson, Mississippi
3. New Orleans, Louisiana
4. Birmingham, Alabama
5. Montgomery, Alabama
6. Atlanta, Georgia

Percentage of Black Population by County
- 75% +
- 60-75%
- 50-60%
- 40-50%
Regions of Black Majority in the South
1920

Major Cities
1. Memphis, Tennessee
2. Jackson, Mississippi
3. New Orleans, Louisiana
4. Birmingham, Alabama
5. Montgomery, Alabama
6. Atlanta, Georgia

Percentage of Black Population by County
- 75% +
- 60-75%
- 50-60%
- 40-50%
Regions of Black Majority in the South
1980

Major Cities
1. Memphis, Tennessee
2. Jackson, Mississippi
3. New Orleans, Louisiana
4. Birmingham, Alabama
5. Montgomery, Alabama
6. Atlanta, Georgia

Percentage of Black Population by County
75% +
60-75%
50-60%
40-50%