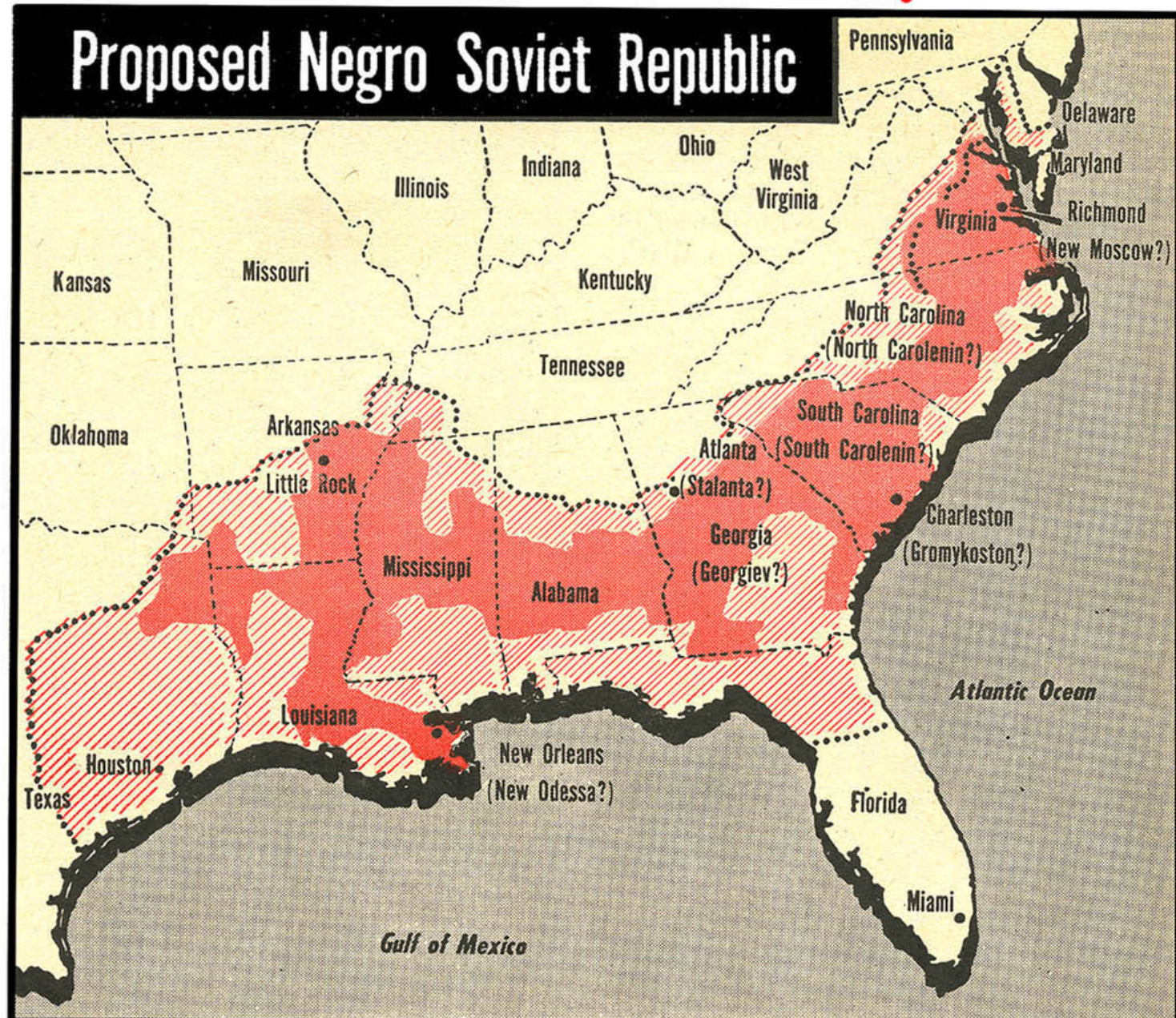


Red-Black Confederacy



Commie Dixieland? Judging by the party's plans, the state would include the red center area and much of the shaded territory, too.

Jefferson Davis would have been horrified.

Stonewall Jackson would have galloped his horse into a picket fence.

Robert E. Lee would have stamped on his grey campaign hat.

For last week came news of a plot of rebellion to carve out a southern nation, not of whites but of Negroes. At the trial of 11 U.S. Reds, approaching its 100th day, ex-Communist Negro William O'Dell Nowell testified that:

• • Eighteen years ago, his party superiors sent him to Russia to correct his "error" in opposing the creation of a colored nation in the area between Virginia and the Mississippi delta.

• • Red army and other instructors told him the success of a proposed northern Communist revolution depended upon the success of the southern revolt.

Except for an interval in 1941-45, U.S. Reds have more or less openly endorsed this plan for 20 years. They planned to build the Negro republic on a "Black Belt" framework, embracing first some 170 southern counties where Negroes outnumber whites, later adding 350 other counties to round out a state. Undisclosed were such details as the fate of the whites; whether Richmond would again become the rebel capital, possibly a "New Moscow"; and what would happen to non-Communist Negroes.

Unwelcome Cynic. To Nowell, the vague revolt plans never made sense. He told his Russian teachers so. That proved unwise. Back in the U.S., Nowell found his C.P. assignments dwindling in importance. In 1936, he quit the party. Even then, his ex-comrades wouldn't let him alone, but kept "dropping things off stockpiles" and "off cranes" in his direction. Finally, they used union influence to get him fired from Ford's Detroit plant.

Bias? Later, when former comrade Charles W. Nicodemus testified that in 1945 Russia had nearly 500,000 Siberians ready to invade the U.S., defense counsel smirked. But their over-all argument—that such witnesses are "stool pigeons" and therefore prejudiced—got nowhere.

"How are you going to detect crooks and criminals," snapped Judge Harold Medina, "if you don't have detectives and persons to watch them?" The damning implication in Medina's question that Reds and crooks are synonymous, oddly drew little defense reaction—not even from defendant Benjamin Davis, Negro New York City councilman, the man who might have become the Jefferson Davis of the new southland republic.