

**‘Croppers Union to Grow Koch Predicts
New Deal Has Reduced Farmers to Serfdom, He Reports after Visit**
[TRANSCRIPTION]

“If the present mood prevails, thousands of share-croppers in Eastern Arkansas will be organized within the next few months.” This is the prediction of Lucien Koch, director of Commonwealth, who recently returned from a 1300-mile trip through Tennessee and Arkansas.

“These share-croppers live under circumstances worse than those prevailing in feudal times,” Koch declared. “The cropper is so completely subjugated and at the mercy of the planter that he is unequivocally the most exploited worker in America.

“Before the cotton program of the New Deal was put into operation his plight was very bad but additional exploitation has been imposed upon him. According to a survey of 500 sharecropper families, made by the Memphis Chapter of the L.I.D. and the Tyronza Socialist local, the New Deal program among other things has driven from fifteen to twenty percent of the croppers from the land; it has tended to eliminate share-crop work and replace it by day labor which in a lower economic plane.

“It is because of this situation,” Koch declares, “that the share-croppers are banding together in the Southern Tenant Farmers Union. Active organization work has just begun, but thousands will join unless the planter-inspired open terror makes such actions for the moment impossible.”

Source: “Croppers Union to Grow Koch Predicts,” *Commonwealth College Fortnightly*, Vol. 10. No. 16, August 15, 1934.