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**“The Convict Lease System: A Question for the Alabama Legislature to Settle”**

This article, published by the *New York Times* in 1892, discusses the drive and desire of Alabama citizens to abolish the convict lease system in the state. The article is supportive of the move; however, it supports the legislation for economic reasons. The article describes how free laborers have been negatively affected by convict labor and their struggle to make a living. Because convict labor and output was cheaper, the free laborers had difficulty finding work and selling their additional output. Outrage erupted in Alabama over the system, and the article states that many free workers were planning to release the prison workers in order to better their own wages. Inhabitants of mining counties have complained that ex-convicts settle in their home area after their labor because they can make extra money. In addition to eliminating the convict lease system, the law called for the construction of prison facilities across the state to house inmates. If the bill passes, convicts will go into manufacturing jobs to help boost industrialism in the South. There were few industrial jobs in Alabama at the time, so there would be little uproar from the free laborers. The evidence of support for the bill for economic reasons rather than racial equality reasons shows that a high rate of prejudice ideas are still prevalent in many areas of the United States at this time.

Special to the Associated Press. "The Convict Lease System: A Question for the Alabama Legislature to Settle." *The New York Times*, November 22, 1892, p. 2.

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