

VIEWS and Reviews

By GEORGE S. SCHUYLER



This column represents the personal opinion of Mr. Schuyler and in no way reflects the editorial opinion of The Pittsburgh Courier.—The Editors.

As was to be expected, the March-on-Washington "movement" postponed its loudly ballyhooed "march" on the third (and perhaps last) time by leaving the whole matter up to its Fuehrer and his hand-picked executive committee. It would appear from the record that this "march" cry has been only a demagogue's device to try to scare the Government and panic the gullible. As such, it has been a woeful flop. The government has grown tougher rather than softer and there has been no avalanche of gold into the MOW treasury. Moreover, instead of a mass democratic movement against jim-crowism, the MOW remains a small sect organized on the fascist principle and flaunting its racial chauvinism by barring white citizens from membership.

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The loudly proposed civil disobedience program has been quietly dropped into the sewer, by leaving the "peaceful, friendly non-cooperation" up to local groups, thus permitting the national leaders to avoid responsibility for whatever may happen. In his recent "defense" in the esteemed *Chicago Defender*, St. Philip virtually scuttled the projected campaign by declaring that Negroes in the armed services and war industries would not be called upon to non-co-operate in a battle against jim-crowism. When you exclude these colored folk, you have only domestics, preachers, professionals and children left to stage the civil disobedience campaign, and among these there will be few volunteers prepared to conduct mass embarrassment of public places and institutions practicing jim-crowism, even if accompanied by "friendly whites," as Randolph suggested.

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The "movement" missed a great opportunity during its Chicago conference to test the civil disobedience campaign in a spirit of scientific inquiry. Chicago presumably would have been a soft spot. It is supposedly liberal, has thousands of establishments where Negro patronage is not solicited, desired or tolerated, and is in a State with a strong civil rights law. It would have been a much better place to test the civil disobedience program than such communities as Waycross, Ga.; Texarkana, Ark.; Jackson, Miss., and Montgomery, Ala. If the 60 delegates, led by their Mahatma, had invaded the swank lily-white downtown hotels, restaurants and night clubs enmasse and refused to leave until served, it would have literally started the program off with a bang. Instead the delegates invaded only the accustomed hotels, bars, restaurants and cabarets on the South Side. Opportunity was knocking there but got no answer. Too bad.

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But there is still an opportunity to make a dramatic and world-shaking gesture of this sort in the capital of democracy, Washington, D. C., where even the Lord Himself, if tarbrushed, could not eat or sleep outside the colored sections. How embarrassing it would be to the government if Randolph and his colleagues should turn up at the Shoreham or Willard demanding rooms and meals, and vowing to park in the lobby until same were supplied! Either jim-crowism would be promptly outlawed in the District of Columbia or the NAACP legal committee would have plenty of work to do, to say nothing of the Freedmen's hospital. In either event the publicity would be terrific.

Since the "march" on Washington has been watered down to marches on local city halls, and there seems little disposition to inaugurate a civil disobedience campaign, for what purpose does the MOW exist? Certainly it is not needed to draw "racial" lines and thus increase racial chauvinism. The Ku Klux elements are doing an effective job without it. Moreover, we have enough Uncle Tom Negroes contending that they prefer to be "among their own people" without the noted Spingarn Medalist joining the Bandana Band. To advocate jim-crowism is a mighty strange way to fight it.