

THE MARCH ON WASHINGTON, AUGUST 28,

was one of the great events in the history of our country. Those of us who were privileged to participate were stirred and inspired not only by its magnitude but by the dedication and power mobilized to give expression to the deep yearning for freedom and equality for all our citizens. As one felt the impact of that day, one was also acutely aware that its deepest meaning would not be fully realized unless the laws of our land provided guarantees for certain basic rights. The March was only the beginning of the great effort needed to secure legislation that will eliminate discriminatory practices in many vital areas of our common life. We now have the opportunity through concerted effort to get a strong Civil Rights Bill passed and thus help make Martin Luther King's "dream," as he voiced it the day of the March, a reality.

ACTION NEEDED NOW

A subcommittee of the House Judiciary Committee has reported out a strong bill which is now before the full House Judiciary Committee. It contains the Fair Employment Practices provisions and authority for the Attorney General to enjoin all civil rights violations as summarized in the enclosed Legislative Action Bulletin of the Commission on Religion and Race of the National Council of Churches. When the Bulletin was issued the subcommittee had not yet taken final action but the bill has now gone to the full committee. Those who want the best possible Civil Rights Bill passed without delay must act immediately.

WHAT CAN BE DONE

1. Write or wire all members of the full House Judiciary Committee and urge them to approve the subcommittee's bill.
2. Contact especially those Judiciary Committee members from your districts.
3. Write the Congressmen from your districts who are not on the Judiciary Committee urging them to use their influence to have the bill before the Committee approved.
4. Write to the President urging him to exert his influence in support of the bill. He announced his support of FEPC legislation in his Civil Rights message of June 19 and he voted for Across-the-Board Part III when he was in the Senate.

Because immediate action is needed, we list here all the members of the House Judiciary Committee.

Democrats

Emanuel Celler, of New York
Michael A. Feighan, of Ohio
Frank Chelf, of Kentucky
Edwin E. Willis, of Louisiana
Peter W. Rodino, Jr., of New Jersey
E. L. Forrester, of Georgia
Byron G. Rogers, of Colorado

Republicans

William M. McCulloch, of Ohio
William E. Miller, of New York
Richard H. Poff, of Virginia
William C. Cramer, of Florida
Arch A. Moore, Jr., of West Virginia
George Meader, of Michigan
John V. Lindsay, of New York

Democrats

Harold D. Donohue, of Massachusetts
Jack Brooks, of Texas
William M. Tuck, of Virginia
Robert T. Ashmore, of South Carolina
John Dowdy, of Texas
Basil L. Whitener, of North Carolina
Roland V. Libonati, of Illinois
Herman Toll, of Pennsylvania
Robert W. Kastenmeier, of Wisconsin
Jacob H. Gilbert, of New York
James C. Corman, of California
William L. St. Onge, of Connecticut
George F. Senner, Jr., of Arizona
Don Edwards, of California

Republicans

William T. Cahill, of New Jersey
Garner E. Shriver, of Kansas
Clark MacGregor, of Minnesota
Charles McC. Mathias, Jr., of Maryland
James E. Bromwell, of Iowa
Carleton J. King, of New York
Pat Minor Martin, of California

The National Council of Churches Legislative Action Bulletin suggests guides for Community action. Members of Public Affairs Committees in local Associations might take the initiative in involving community groups in efforts to support the Civil Rights legislation. Committee members could also invite friends and neighbors to letter writing bees in their homes or at the YWCA.

James Reston's challenge to Church and Synagogue members holds equally as much challenge for members of the YWCA.

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MOVING AHEAD ON CIVIL RIGHTS

The most comprehensive civil rights bill ever to receive serious Congressional consideration will undergo its second major test this week in the House Judiciary Committee. The bill, as it emerged from subcommittee, is vastly stronger than the original draft sent to Capitol Hill by President Kennedy last June. Its passage would represent an inspiring new demonstration of American democracy's ability to make the rights of its people secure through what amounts to a peaceful revolution.

Perhaps the most important innovation initiated by the subcommittee is a provision empowering the Justice Department to sue to halt breaches of civil rights by officials or others acting under cover of any local law, custom or usage. This clause would provide a powerful weapon against the police-state methods so cruelly employed against Negroes in some Deep South communities.

Also crucial in the new bill are provisions for the creation of a Federal Fair Employment Practices Commission, with power over discrimination by both employers and unions, and for the extension on a permanent basis of the Civil Rights Commission, now in a shameful state of suspended animation.

Almost every other section of the measure, including its pivotal section on Negro access to privately owned public accommodations, represents an improvement on the White House draft. The subcommittee, headed by Representative Emanuel Celler of Brooklyn, has demonstrated that Congress can supply initiative and intelligence in a great cause on the rare occasions when it is so moved.

Unfortunately, the outlook in the full Judiciary Committee is far less promising. Even though Mr. Celler is chairman of both groups, the composition of the parent body makes it almost certain that the discussion will result in a substantial dilution of the bill before it goes to the House floor. Now is the time for a clear voice from the President in support of legislation that carries forward his stated principles even more effectively than his own.

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Washington

The First Significant Test of the Freedom March

By JAMES RESTON

WASHINGTON, Aug. 29—The first significant test of the Negro march on Washington will come in the churches and synagogues of the country this weekend.

It is no good waiting for a political reaction in Congress, for if there is no effective moral reaction out in the country, there will be no effective political reaction here.

This whole movement for equality in American life will have to return to first principles before it will "overcome" anything. And as moral principles preceded and inspired political principles in this country, as the church preceded the Congress, so there will have to be a moral revulsion to the humiliation of the Negro before there can be significant political relief.

The TV Mentality

The preachers at the Lincoln Memorial here this week understood this better than anybody else, but they were not able to speak for the whole religious community of the nation.

"If," said the executive head of the United Presbyterian Church, Dr. Eugene Carson Blake, "all the members and all the ministers of the constituency I represent here today were ready to stand and march with you for jobs and freedom for the Negro people, together with all the Roman Catholic Church and all of the synagogues in America, the battle

for full civil rights and dignity would be won."

The president of the American Jewish Congress, Rabbi Joachim Prinz, put the point another way. "When I was the rabbi of the Jewish community in Berlin under the Hitler regime, I learned many things. The most important thing I learned . . . under those tragic circumstances is that bigotry and hatred are not the most urgent problem. The most urgent, the most disgraceful, the most shameful and the most tragic problem is silence.

"A great people, which had created a great civilization, had become a nation of silent onlookers. . . . America must not remain silent. It must speak up and act . . . and not for the sake of the Negro, but for the sake of the image, the idea and the aspiration of America itself. . . ."

Few people would question the validity of these points, but two misfortunes have debased the power of the church and of church opinion. Too many preachers, like too many Congressmen, are not leading but following their flock, perpetuating rather than destroying illusion and prejudice. They are "passing by on the other side." And their parishioners, even when they want to be participants instead of spectators, have lost faith in their power to influence great events.

Nothing, however, is more fallacious in American political life than the popular idea that Congressmen pay no attention to letters from their constituents. Some of them are impervious to reason and others either won't or can't read, but all of them want to be re-elected, and all of them know the political power of the church, even if they never go there except for votes.

If the preachers said what they

really thought about this racial crisis and even half of those who heard and believed them wrote their honest convictions for or against racial equality to Capitol Hill, the political balance on racial equality might easily be transformed.

If, however, the churches do not react and the march on Washington is regarded by the religious community as just another TV show, the political battle for civil rights could easily be worse off than before.

For while the politicians here are not saying much about the march, they are listening. And if such a mammoth demonstration, dramatizing the basic religious concept of equality, does not get an impressive response even from the churches, Congress could easily conclude that the nation was indifferent or worse.

'We Need Allies'

The Negro leaders were less exuberant here today than during the big demonstration yesterday. After the spree comes the hangover, and President Kennedy warned them before they left that only with strong bipartisan support could his civil rights bill be passed.

Asa Philip Randolph, who organized the march, admitted the obvious fact. "We need allies," he said. "People who are victims must take the leadership. No one but a Jew could lead the fight against anti-Semitism. No one but a man from the ranks of labor could lead the labor movement.

"But the Negro cannot win the fight alone, no more than the Jew or labor leader could win his fight alone. We need allies."

And if he cannot find them first in the churches, he's not likely to find them among the politicians.

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