

tiations with the British. But this time, the Stern gang was shooting the British. And this time the British acquiesced and helped them to wrest Palestine away from the Arabs, the rightful owners, and then the Jews set up Israel, their own country—the one thing that every race of man in the world respects, and understands.

Not long ago, the black man in America was fed a dose of another form of the weakening, lulling and deluding effects of so-called "integration." It was that "Farce on Washington," I call it.

The idea of a mass of blacks marching on Washington was originally the brainchild of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters' A. Philip Randolph. For twenty or more years the March on Washington idea had floated around among Negroes. And, spontaneously, suddenly now, that idea caught on.

Overalled rural Southern Negroes, small town Negroes, Northern ghetto Negroes, even thousands of previously Uncle Tom Negroes began talking "March!"

Nothing since Joe Louis had so coalesced the masses of Negroes. Groups of Negroes were talking of getting to Washington any way they could—in rickety old cars, on buses, hitch-hiking—walking, even, if they had to. They envisioned thousands of black brothers converging together upon Washington—to lie down in the streets, on airport runways, on government lawns—demanding of the Congress and the White House some concrete civil rights action.

This was a national bitterness; militant, unorganized, and leaderless. Predominantly, it was young Negroes, defiant of whatever might be the consequences, sick and tired of the black man's neck under the white man's heel.

The white man had plenty of good reasons for nervous worry. The right spark—some unpredictable emotional chemistry—could set off a black uprising. The government knew that thousands of milling, angry blacks not only could completely disrupt Washington—but they could erupt in Washington.

The White House speedily invited in the major civil rights Negro "leaders." They were asked to stop the planned March. They truthfully said they hadn't begun it, they had no control

over it—the idea was national, spontaneous, unorganized, and leaderless. In other words, it was a black powder keg.

Any student of how "integration" can weaken the black man's movement was about to observe a master lesson.

The White House, with a fanfare of international publicity, "approved," "endorsed," and "welcomed" a March on Washington. The big civil rights organizations right at this time had been publicly squabbling about donations. The *New York Times* had broken the story. The N.A.A.C.P. had charged that other agencies' demonstrations, highly publicized, had attracted a major part of the civil rights donations—while the N.A.A.C.P. got left holding the bag, supplying costly bail and legal talent for the other organizations' jailed demonstrators.

It was like a movie. The next scene was the "big six" civil rights Negro "leaders" meeting in New York City with the white head of a big philanthropic agency. They were told that their money-wrangling in public was damaging their image. And a reported \$800,000 was donated to a United Civil Rights Leadership council that was quickly organized by the "big six."

Now, what had instantly achieved black unity? The white man's money. What string was attached to the money? Advice. Not only was there this donation, but another comparable sum was promised, for sometime later on, after the March . . . obviously if all went well.

The original "angry" March on Washington was now about to be entirely changed.

Massive international publicity projected the "big six" as March on Washington leaders. It was news to those angry grassroots Negroes steadily adding steam to their March plans. They probably assumed that now those famous "leaders" were endorsing and joining them.

Invited next to join the March were four famous white public figures: one Catholic, one Jew, one Protestant, and one labor boss.

The massive publicity now gently hinted that the "big ten" would "supervise" the March on Washington's "mood," and its "direction."

The four white figures began nodding. The word spread fast among so-called "liberal" Catholics, Jews, Protestants, and laborites: it was "democratic" to join this black March.

And suddenly, the previously March-nervous whites began announcing *they* were going.

It was as if electrical current shot through the ranks of bourgeois Negroes—the very so-called “middle-class” and “upper-class” who had earlier been deploring the March on Washington talk by grass-roots Negroes.

But white people, now, were going to march.

Why, some downright, jobless, hungry Negro might have gotten trampled. Those “integration”-mad Negroes practically ran over each other trying to find out where to sign up. The “angry blacks” March suddenly had been made chic. Suddenly it had a Kentucky Derby image. For the status-seeker, it was a status symbol. “Were you *there*?” You can hear that right today.

It had become an outing, a picnic.

The morning of the March, any rickety carloads of angry, dusty, sweating small-town Negroes would have gotten lost among the chartered jet planes, railroad cars, and air-conditioned buses. What originally was planned to be an angry ripide, one English newspaper aptly described now as “the gentle flood.”

Talk about “integrated”! It was like salt and pepper. And, by now, there wasn’t a single logistics aspect uncontrolled.

The marchers had been instructed to bring no signs—signs were provided. They had been told to sing one song: “We Shall Overcome.” They had been told *how* to arrive, *when*, *where* to arrive, *where* to assemble, when to *start* marching, the *route* to march. First-aid stations were strategically located—even where to *faint*!

Yes, I was there. I observed that circus. Who ever heard of angry revolutionists all harmonizing “We Shall Overcome . . . Sunn Day . . .” while tripping and swaying along arm-in-arm with the very people they were supposed to be angrily revolting against? Who ever heard of angry revolutionists swinging their bare feet together with their oppressor in lily-pad park pools, with gospels and guitars and “I Have A Dream” speeches?

And the black masses in America were—and still are—having a nightmare.

These “angry revolutionists” even followed their final instructions: to leave early. With all of those thousands upon thousands of “angry revolutionists,” so few stayed over that the

next morning the Washington hotel association reported a costly loss in empty rooms.

Hollywood couldn’t have topped it.

In a subsequent press poll, not one Congressman or Senator with a previous record of opposition to civil rights said he had changed his views. What did anyone expect? How was a one-day “integrated” picnic going to counter-influence these representatives of prejudice rooted deep in the psyche of the American white man for four hundred years?

The very fact that millions, black and white, believed in this monumental farce is another example of how much this country goes in for the surface glossing over, the escape ruse, surfaces, instead of truly dealing with its deep-rooted problems.

What that March on Washington did do was lull Negroes for a while. But inevitably, the black masses started realizing they had been smoothly hoaxed again by the white man. And, inevitably, the black man’s anger rekindled, deeper than ever, and there began bursting out in different cities, in the “long, hot summer” of 1964, unprecedented racial crises.

About a month before the “Farce on Washington,” the *New York Times* reported me, according to its poll conducted on college and university campuses, as “the second most sought after” speaker at colleges and universities. The only speaker ahead of me was Senator Barry Goldwater.

I believe that what had generated such college popularity for me was Dr. Lincoln’s book, *The Black Muslims in America*. It had been made required reading in numerous college courses. Then a long, candid interview with me was carried by *Playboy* magazine, whose circulation on college campuses is the biggest of any magazine’s. And many students, having studied first the book and then the *Playboy* interview, wanted to hear in person this so-called “fery Black Muslim.”

When the *New York Times* poll was published, I had spoken at well over fifty colleges and universities, like Brown, Harvard, Yale, Columbia and Rutgers, in the Ivy League, and others throughout the country. Right now, I have invitations from Cornell, Princeton and probably a dozen others, as soon as my time and their available dates can be scheduled together. Among Negro institutions, I had then been to Atlanta University and Clark