

VIEWS AND REVIEWS

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What The Industrial Commission Means

By CONGRESSMAN ARTHUR W. MITCHELL

Though opportunity constantly puts itself before us, it seems that a basic part of human nature is the failure of the average human being to grasp it. This common failing is found in all races. It is true of the Occidental, it is true of the Oriental. It is true of the Indian and it is true of the Negro.

It is the possibility of our failure to recognize our opportunity that has been the occasion for this series of articles. I believe in facing the facts and after finding the truth moving toward a progressive and proper conclusion so that the best benefits to everyone interested may be obtained.

Let us now consider our problem of a race. As assets we have a common bond in the fight for a higher standard of living, and the promotion of the general welfare of our people.

What then is our opportunity? Our opportunity lies in the change that has gradually become apparent to all of us that our country has been slowly but surely undergoing a social revolution since 1929. While this social revolution is going on, the system is being remade. Therein lies our challenge.

Prior to 1929 the Negro was out-distanced in the economic race, not because of a lack of brains or ability but because of a lack of opportunity.

The social revolution now well under way has changed this. The system is being remade. This is the opportunity of the Negro. The economic race has started again.

How then can this economic competition be aided? What mechanics can be moved through legislation to stimulate and obtain advantage in proper fashion of this opportunity now opening its doors before us?

Many things have been proposed, but there is now before the Judiciary committee a bill introduced by me in this Congress just two weeks ago calling for the creation of an Industrial Commission on Negro Affairs.

The primary purpose of the commission will be to study the economic conditions of the Negro so as to better understand that greatest of all problems, the labor problem. The commission is designed to stimulate and encourage thrift and industry among the Negroes of this country. It will encourage his general up-lift and it will work out plans looking toward the solution of the different problems confronting the Negro race in this country.

The commission would consider all questions pertaining to the Negro that may be referred to it by any department of the United States government. It will report a suggested solution of any and all problems that may be presented to it by any governmental official, whether state or federal. In particular will it consider the labor problem and will recommend what may be necessary for the stability of labor in the different states.

The commission will discourage subversion of propaganda and will look to the solution of the policy for material understanding of conditions between the races.

The commission would report to Congress through the President of the United States acts and doings and make such recommendations for the solution of any problem or problems affecting the Negro that they may deem advisable.

There would be five members of the commission, at least three of

whom shall be members of the Negro race. They would be appointed by the President of the United States. This commission could easily be, with vast facilities of the United States government behind it, a tremendous fountain of information and accurate conclusions that would go far toward solving and helping to eliminate any of the race problems confronting us today.

Hearings have already been held on this measure which was introduced by me in a former bill in the 74th Congress. At that time Dr. Robert R. Moton, president-emeritus of Tuskegee institute, Tuskegee, Ala., testified favorably for it. Others included: Perry W. Howard, National Republican committeeman from the state of Mississippi; J. E. Mitchell, editor of the Argus, St. Louis, Mo.; Hon. Emmet O'Neal, a representative in Congress from the state of Kentucky; Dr. Alain Locke of Howard university, Washington, D. C.; Scipio Jones, attorney at law, Little Rock, Ark.; Hon. John D. Dingell, a representative in Congress from the state of Michigan; Dr. Kelly Miller of Howard university, Washington, D. C.; Hon. John Kee a representative in Congress from the state of West Virginia; Hon. George W. Johnson, a representative in Congress from the state of West Virginia.

The commission would aid and supplement the work of the Commission on Interracial Cooperation, whose address is 409 Palmer building, Atlanta, Ga., and the National Association of Presbyterian Students, as well as many church and interracial groups deeply interested in solving different problems.

The bill, if enacted would affect you vitally. Though the conclusions found through this streamlined model fitted to the changing times in which we live, you will be given opportunity to obtain better jobs and bigger pay. Remember we live in changing times and the opportunity is before us today as never before.

Editor's Note: Mr. Mitchell, in his next article will go into further detail concerning the need of the commission and why it is of deep personal interest to you.