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Dec. 4 1943

The Pittsba

"Schuyler Lashes I Like Mad Dog —

So Writes McKay, Adding That George Is "The Supreme Advocate of Uncle Tom Do-Nothingness".

(Conclusion)

Like a mad dog George Schuyler dashes here and there and bites everybody. He is the supreme advocate of Uncle Tom Do-nothingness. Unconvincingly he declares for a mild "cooperation between white and colored people," a kind of diluted form of Urban Leaguism, without recognizing the fact that if cooperation between white and colored is to be effective and not merely charitable patronage, the Negro group must make special efforts to lift itself up to the white standard of living.

Has Submitted Record

Schuyler's inept attempt to slander me merely discredits himself. As a traveller and a writer I have submitted my record to examination in my autobiographical travel book, A LONG WAY FROM HOME. In my book I have not been too proud to criticize myself. And I am not afraid to face criticism. Ever since I began thinking independently I have been interested in the progressive labor movement and in Socialism and Communism. But I have never aligned myself with any political party. Why? Because I believe that the approach of the writer and artist to social problems is radically different from the approach of the politician. To my mind social truth takes precedence of party expediency. Plato advocated the exclusion of poets from his model republic. Poets meant all creative writers, as it still does in Continental Europe today. I like to think that what Plato meant was the exclusion of poets and artists from active participation in politics. When I think of the performance of Maxim Gorky in Russia, the disillusion of Andre Gide of France and the recent fiasco of Waldo Frank in America, I think Plato was right. The poets and writers of today, if they know their stuff and what it implies, are merely perpetuating the traditions of the ancient prophets, philosophers, poets and even the court jesters. When they allow themselves to fall into the trap of party politics they endanger their intellectual independence and their social usefulness as interpreters and critics of life in general.

Learned Nothing

George S. Schuyler went to Africa and learned nothing, but that there Slaves (exist) Today, even as they do in America. . . . Slavery is the oldest African institution. And African slavery was introduced into Europe not by Europeans, but by Africans.

I lived for over three years in Africa. And there I learned that it is possible for different groups of people to exist side by side in social competition, without any group surrendering its soul and advocating its own extinction. Besides the lesser groups there were three major groups, native Moors, Jews and Europeans, each group preserving its own unique identity.

Appropriately, Scribe Schuyler commended the young Pharisee Powell for his miserable meandering upon my article in The Nation. From ancient times the scribes and pharisees have worked closely together in deceiving the people. Today they have made a league with death and a covenant with hell for the extermination of the Negro group.

But where are the young Negroes who once responded so bravely to Schuyler's call? Why don't they shout their denunciation of the man who led them astray, this false prophet of the Yellow Peril within the group, this falsifier of the truth, who vomits his filth upon all those who disagree with him?

No Short Cut to Salvation

I declare that there is no short cut and no easy road to social salvation for the Negro group. If our Negro communities remain neglected, if they are not built up to the standard level of all other American communities, Negroes will always be in an inferior and segregated position. There should be many Negro managers of stores and principals of schools within the Negro community, as well as many Negro teachers, clerks and policemen, etc., exactly in proportion to their white counterparts in other American communities. As soon as such a condition exists the white folk will respect us more. And that will be the biggest step towards greater interracial understanding. For example, when the Negro people discover that Negro policemen, Negro parole officers, and Negro judges, are just as good or as bad as white, they will feel less hatred towards white officials, they will lose their inferiority feeling and have more respect for educated Negroes; they will have more self-respect as a people. And that will be one big step towards ending interracial friction.

Must Build Negro Community

Segregation will be ended only by the intensive building up of Negro communities. Let those who will scoff at model dwellings for Negroes as segregated houses. We need more model dwellings. Building up the Negro community is exactly like slum clearance in a disreputable white district. As soon as fine buildings are erected, the better classes of white move in and the chronic criminal elements tend to disappear.

Negroes are not so segregated as they imagine. Right here in Harlem there are many whites living in the rear of their small establishments. When they make enough money they move elsewhere and open better businesses. There is a lesson in that for Negroes to learn.

A political party cannot alone effect the social salvation of the Negro. It is not enough for Negroes to declare that they are faithful New Dealers, Laborites or Communists. The Negro group must first develop social consciousness. It must be mobilized to take advantage of social changes and political manouvers. Otherwise in a period of stress and social change the Negro group may find itself caught in a trap.

Cites Business Example

To illustrate my point, I will cite Russia. When the social revolution occurred there the backward minorities were the problem of the revolution. Lenin had to create a special department for their benefit, of which Stalin was for a time the head. The most advanced of the minority groups was the Jewish. Perhaps because the Jewish group is so strongly imbued with social consciousness. In most of the departments which I visited I found Jews in the vanguard. They were indispensable as interpreters, managers and organizers.

I think when I advocate the development of a more advanced social consciousness within the Negro group and the build-up of depressed Negro communities to the living standard of other American communities, that my position is impregnable. Those who are opposed are the reactionary and privileged parasites of Segregation.

(The End)