

Integrate the integration march!

From the Editors
August 7, 1963

All major Negro organizations have joined in promoting an entirely legal and orderly freedom march in Washington on August 28. The National Council of Churches' Commission on Religion and Race has called for 40,000 Protestant and Orthodox church members to take part in the demonstration. Hopes that this march for integration will itself be thoroughly integrated now rise. Every consideration that impels Negro participation in this march should impel white participation. Deprivation suffered by any on account of color, creed, previous condition or ancestry diminishes our country and causes it to lose something of its democratic character. It therefore robs each citizen of an important element of his rightful satisfaction in the name American. Since "a new birth of freedom" is taking place in this centennial year of the Emancipation Proclamation, whites as well as Negroes and members of other racial minorities should march to celebrate what has been achieved and to strengthen the national will to complete what is lacking. A few members of the majority race have honorably taken their place beside their colored brothers in protests against injustice in southern streets, eating places, transportation facilities and jails. Now those of us who have believed these pioneers acted for us can act for ourselves. What if vacation plans had not included a trip to Washington? Plans can be changed! Our churches should encourage and help finance this change. If 40,000 white churchmen march down Pennsylvania avenue on August 28, along with two or three times that number of Negroes, we shall declare that freedom and justice are not of concern to Negroes alone but to all Americans. And we shall witness that the unity we have in Christ is not merely ecclesiastical.