

THE GILDER LEHRMAN
INSTITUTE *of* AMERICAN HISTORY

*Inside the Vault:
Highlights from the Gilder Lehrman Collection*

June 3, 2021

The session will start shortly. Please note:

- Your video and audio will automatically turn off.
- You can participate through the Q&A function.
- If you have technical difficulties, please email collectionprograms@gilderlehrman.org so we can assist you.

Our Team

- Sandy Trenholm - Collection Director
- Jermain Corbin - Educator at the Condon K-8 School in South Boston
- Bryson Bruce - Lafayette/Jefferson in the National Tour of *Hamilton*
- Meagan Jenkins - Curatorial Intern
- Zoya Siddiqui - Curatorial Intern

During the Session



- If you would like to ask a question, you can **use the Q&A feature.**
- We will be answering audience questions throughout the session.

For Security and Privacy

- Your microphone is automatically muted.
- Your camera is automatically turned off.

Today's Documents

- Preparation Packet from Medical Committee for Civil Rights, 1963
- Excerpt from Martin Luther King Jr.'s speech
- Excerpt from John Lewis's speech
- *In Freedom's Vanguard, Report for 1963*
- *Pacific Stars and Stripes*, August 30, 1963

Origins of the march

- 1941 - A. Philip Randolph called for a march on Washington to end segregation in defense industry
 - Cancelled when FDR issued an executive order forming the Fair Employment Practices Commission
- 1957 - 25,000 participated in Prayer Pilgrimage for Freedom
- 1958 – 10,000 people participated in Youth March for Integrated Schools



Planning the march

- Organizers knew it had to be highly organized in order to be successful.
- Over 200 people helped Bayard Rustin organize the march.
- Rustin trained marshals to help guide the crowd, created an organizing manual, raised money, and coordinated transportation.
- It took less than three months to plan.
- Sponsored by five main civil rights organizations
 - National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)
 - Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC)
 - National Urban League
 - Student Non-Violent Coordination Committee (SNCC)
 - Congress of Racial Equality (CORE)



Bayard Rustin speaking at a protest
Library of Congress

The March on Washington

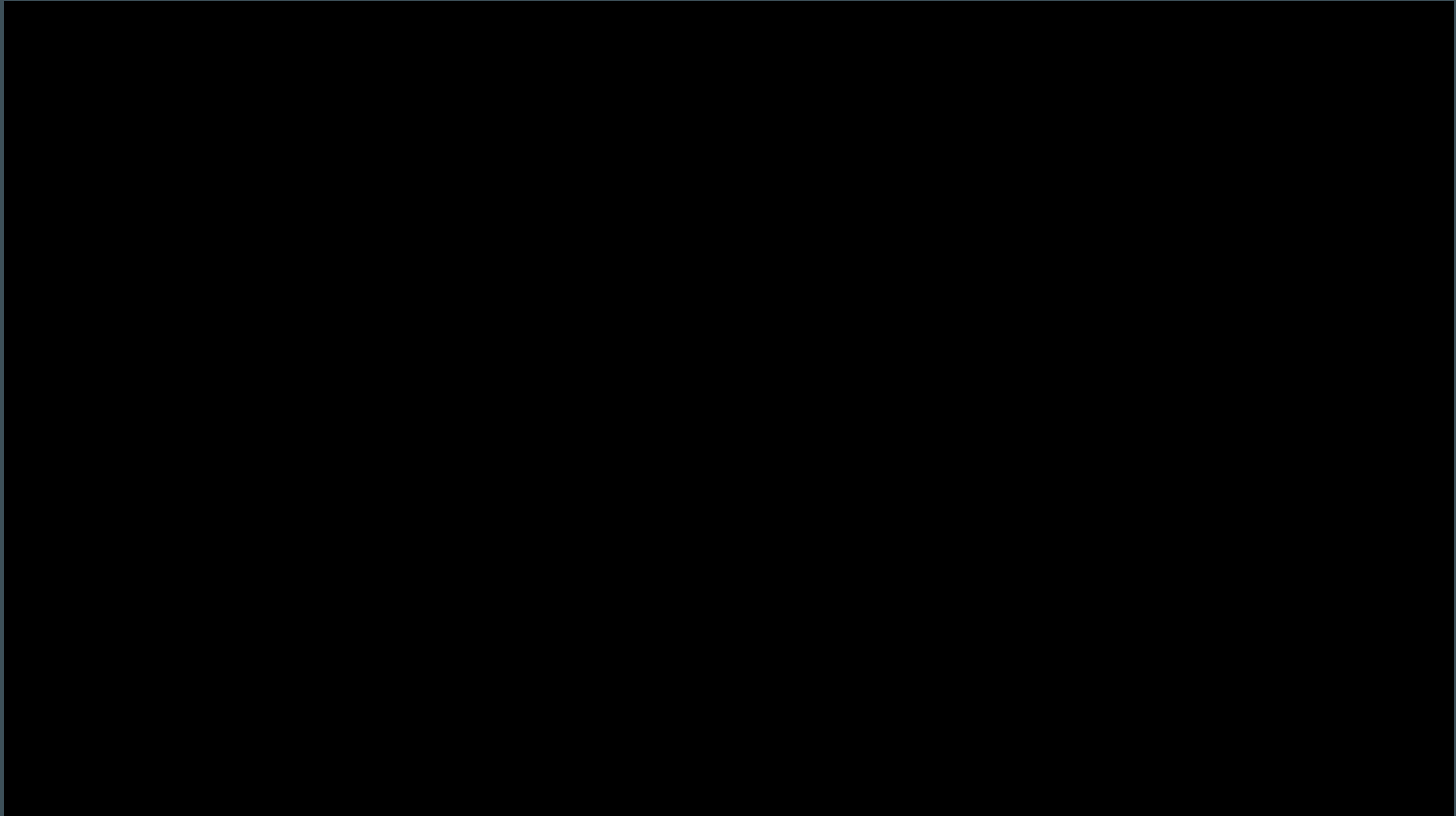
- Took place on August 28, 1963
- Combined:
 - A. Philip Randolph's march for jobs
 - MLK's march for freedom
- Over 250,000 people attended
 - Original estimate was 100,000 attendees
- Speakers included Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., A. Philip Randolph, and a 23-year-old John Lewis
- Event was peaceful
- After the march, organizers met with President Kennedy and Vice President Johnson



*Top: Marchers at the National Mall
Bottom: Organizers at the White House
Gilder Lehrman Collection*

Dr. Clayborne Carson

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Ronnie Lott Director of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Research and Education Institute &
Martin Luther King, Jr. Centennial Professor of History

Medical Committee for Civil Rights Organizing Documents

THE GILDER LEHRMAN
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PLEASE RETURN IMMEDIATELY

Medical Committee for Civil Rights
P.O. Box 499, Madison Square Station
New York 10, N.Y.

- I will participate in the March on Washington, August 28 as part of the medical group. I (will)(will not) need financial help.
- I will be accompanied by (my spouse) (one child) (___ children). (No children under 16)
- (I) (We) will attend the medical group luncheon.
- (I) (We) will travel with the MCCR train from Pennsylvania Station, N.Y.C. to Washington.
- (I) (We) will travel with the MCCR plane from La Guardia Airport, N.Y.C. to Washington.
- I am enclosing \$ _____ to help pay for the transportation costs of those who will need financial help in order to participate in the March.
- Send me _____ copies of the March information sheet and form, which I will distribute to other health workers who might like to join the March.

Number	Amount
Lunch @ \$3.00	
Train fare @ \$9.00	
Plane fare @ \$24.00	
Contribution	
Total enclosed	

(signature) (prof. deg.)

Name: _____
(please type or print)

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Please send the March information sheet and form to:

Name: _____ Name: _____

Address: _____ Address: _____

Name: _____ Name: _____

Address: _____ Address: _____

Name: _____ Name: _____

Address: _____ Address: _____

INFORMATION FOR THOSE TRAVELLING WITH THE MEDICAL COMMITTEE FOR CIVIL RIGHTS

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS CAREFULLY, THEN REFER ANY QUESTIONS TO YOUR GROUP CAPTAINS:

SCHEDULE IN BRIEF:

10 A.M. Approximate time of arrival at the Willard Hotel in Washington, D.C.
11 A.M. Luncheon at the Occidental Restaurant.
12:15 P.M. Meeting of Medical Committee for Civil Rights.
1:15 P.M. March to join the day's scheduled activities.
1:45 P.M. Rally at Washington Memorial.
2:00 P.M. March to Lincoln Memorial.
4:00 P.M. Rally at Lincoln Memorial.

1. Those marching with NASW, and who are not scheduled to lunch with MCCR, will report to the NASW headquarters in the Willard Hotel immediately upon arrival, to receive instructions for the 11 A.M. marching time scheduled by NASW.

LUNCH & LUNCHEON: Those travelling by train who have registered for the luncheon meeting will receive their reservations from their group captains. Those travelling by plane will report to the desk in our headquarters to receive their reservations.

Those who have brought their lunches and who are marching with the Medical Committee for Civil Rights may eat their lunches in the MCCR headquarters, and join the meeting at the Occidental Restaurant at noon.

2. PAPER WORK DURING TRAVEL TIME: In order to avoid registrations, etc. in Washington, your group captains will ask you to do the following: You will be given two index cards, one blank one, and one with Medical Committee for Civil Rights stamped on it. You will fill each one out with the following information: NAME, ADDRESS, PHONE NUMBER, PROFESSION. And, (famous last words), please PRINT. One set of these index cards will go to March on Washington headquarters for their mailing list, and the other will be for our records and mailing list.

MCCR HEADQUARTERS IN WASHINGTON The Willard Hotel, Pennsylvania Avenue & 14th Street, (202) NA 8-4420, will be staffed continuously from 8:00 P.M. August 27th until 8:00 A.M. August 29th. Questions may be addressed to Miss Greer Russell, or Mrs. Gertrude Barrer-Russell at the office. We will have on hand a listing of medical doctors licensed to practice in Washington, D.C., who will be available for emergency situations. Call the office if any situation comes up wherein this service is needed.

MEETING AT THE OCCIDENTAL RESTAURANT: We will discuss the future role of the health professions in the civil rights movement, and briefly describe projects both planned and in progress. Among the speakers will be: Dr. Kenneth Clement, President of the National Medical Association, Dr. Mathews, President of the National Dental Association, and representatives of the various health fields from the Medical Committee for Civil Rights. The meeting will be chaired by Dr. John L.S. Holloman, Chairman of the MCCR.

At 1 P.M. instructions will be given from the chair as to marching procedures and route. We will begin marching at 1:15 to join the first scheduled rally at the Washington Memorial.

SIGNS: We have had signs printed which have the professional designations M.D., D.D.S., and R.N., respectively. You will march under the sign which carries your professional designation. If you are not among any of these categories, you will march under MCCR signs without categorical designation. Try to stay with the group during the remainder of the day's proceedings.

SCHEDULED ACTIVITIES: Rally at the Washington Memorial, March down Pennsylvania Avenue, Main rally at the Lincoln Memorial.

We Shall Overcome

THE GILDER LEHRMAN
INSTITUTE of AMERICAN HISTORY

WE SHALL OVERCOME

1. We shall overcome, we shall overcome
We shall overcome some day.
Oh, deep in my heart I do believe
We shall overcome some day.
2. Truth will make us free, truth will make us free
Truth will make us free some day.
Oh, deep in my heart I do believe
Truth will make us free some day.
3. We are not afraid, we are not afraid
We are not afraid today
Oh, deep in my heart I do believe
We are not afraid today.
4. The Lord will see us through,
The Lord will see us through,
The Lord will see us through some day.
Oh, deep in my heart I do believe
The Lord will see us through some day.
5. We'll walk hand in hand,
We'll walk hand in hand,
We'll walk hand in hand some day.
Oh, deep in my heart I do believe
We'll walk hand in hand some day.
6. Black and white together,
Black and white together,
Black and white together some day.
Oh, deep in my heart I do believe
Black and white together some day.

REPRISE:

We shall overcome, we shall overcome
We shall overcome some day.
Oh, deep in my heart I do believe
We shall overcome some day.



*Members of the Medical Committee for Civil Rights
at the March on Washington
Library of Congress*

APPENDIX I-B Demands of the March on Washington

1. Comprehensive and effective civil rights legislation from the present Congress—without compromise or filibuster—to guarantee all Americans:
 - access to all public accommodations
 - decent housing
 - adequate and integrated education
 - the right to vote
2. Withholding of Federal funds from all programs in which discrimination exists.
3. Desegregation of all school districts in 1963.
4. Enforcement of the Fourteenth Amendment—reducing Congressional representation of states where citizens are disfranchised.
5. A new Executive Order banning discrimination in all housing supported by Federal funds.
6. Authority for the Attorney General to institute injunctive suits when any constitutional right is violated.
7. A massive Federal program to train and place all unemployed workers—Negro and white—on meaningful and dignified jobs at decent wages.
8. A national minimum wage act that will give all Americans a decent standard of living. (Government surveys show that anything less than \$2.00 an hour fails to do this.)
9. A broadened Fair Labor Standards Act to include all areas of employment which are presently excluded.
10. A Federal Fair Employment Practices Act barring discrimination by federal, state, and municipal governments, and by employers, contractors, employment agencies, and trade unions.

Martin Luther King Jr.'s Speech

“Five score years ago, a great American, in whose symbolic shadow we stand today, signed the Emancipation Proclamation. This momentous decree came as a great beacon light of hope to millions of Negro slaves who had been seared in the flames of withering injustice. It came as a joyous daybreak to end the long night of their captivity.

“But one hundred years later, the Negro still is not free. One hundred years later, the life of the Negro is still sadly crippled by the manacles of segregation and the chains of discrimination. One hundred years later, the Negro lives on a lonely island of poverty in the midst of a vast ocean of material prosperity. One hundred years later, the Negro is still languished in the corners of American society and finds himself an exile in his own land. And so we've come here today to dramatize a shameful condition.

“In a sense we've come to our nation's capital to cash a check. When the architects of our republic wrote the magnificent words of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence, they were signing a promissory note to which every American was to fall heir. This note was a promise that all men, yes, black men as well as white men, would be guaranteed the 'unalienable Rights' of 'Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.'”

John Lewis's Speech

“We march today for jobs and freedom, but we have nothing to be proud of. For hundreds and thousands of our brothers are not here, for they are receiving starvation wages, or no wages at all. While we stand here, there are sharecroppers in the Delta of Mississippi who are out in the fields working for less than three dollars a day, twelve hours a day. While we stand here there are students in jail on trumped-up charges. Our brother James Farmer, along with many others, is also in jail. We come here today with a great sense of misgiving.”

“To those who have said, ‘Be patient and wait,’ we have long said that we cannot be patient. We do not want our freedom gradually, but we want to be free now! We are tired. We are tired of being beaten by policemen. We are tired of seeing our people locked up in jail over and over again, and then you holler, ‘Be patient.’ How long can we be patient? We want our freedom and we want it now.

“We do not want to go to jail. But we will go to jail if this is the price we must pay for love, brotherhood, and true peace. I appeal to all of you to get into this great revolution that is sweeping this nation. Get in and stay in the streets of every city, every village and hamlet of this nation until true freedom comes, until the revolution of 1776 is complete. We must get in this revolution and complete the revolution. For in the Delta in Mississippi, in southwest Georgia, in the Black Belt of Alabama, in Harlem, in Chicago, Detroit, Philadelphia, and all over this nation, the black masses are on the march for jobs and freedom.”

In Freedom's Vanguard, Report for 1963

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"[The March] will be orderly, but not subservient," they said. "It will be non-violent, but not timid. It will be unified in purposes and behavior, not splintered into groups and individual competitors. It will be outspoken, but not raucous."

... called upon their members and followers to "place

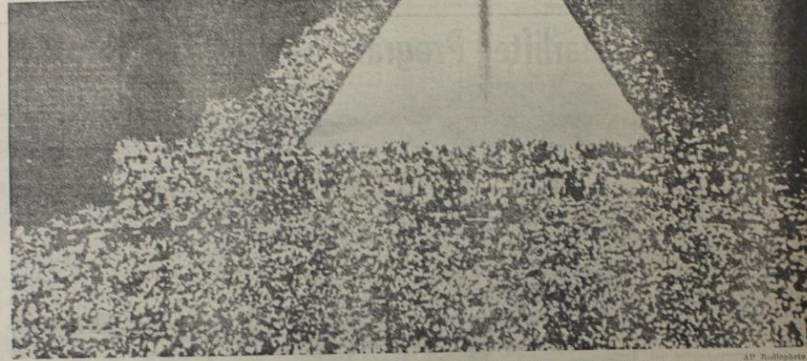
Mrs. Daisy Bates, heroine of Little Rock and NAACP Board member, paid tribute to the Negro women who have been fighters for freedom and pledged their continuing support until full freedom is won. Mrs. Diane Nash Bevel, Mrs. Herbert Lee, Mrs. Rosa Parks and Mrs. Gloria Richardson were cited for their past contributions. Mrs. Medgar Evers, widow of the slain NAACP Field Secretary for Mississippi, also cited, was unable to be present.

At the conclusion of the day's events, the 10 leaders of the March met with President Kennedy for a 75-minute conference. As with the Congressional leaders, Mr. Wilkins led the group's discussion on the legislative issue.

200,000 March in Capital

PACIFIC STARS AND STRIPES

AN AUTHORIZED PUBLICATION OF THE ARMED FORCES IN THE FAR EAST
FIVE-STAR EDITION
10¢ DAILY
15¢ WITH SUPPLEMENTS
Vol. 19, No. 241 Friday, Aug. 30, 1963



MORE THAN 200,000 CIVIL RIGHTS DEMONSTRATORS GATHER AT THE WASHINGTON MONUMENT TO HEAR SPEECHES.

7 of 25 Found Alive In Utah Mine Blast

MOAB, Utah (AP)—Seven desperate men who built makeshift barricades against deadly gases were found alive Wednesday in a 2,712-foot-deep mine where 25 miners were trapped Tuesday. Rescuers brought up two of the men 27 hours after an explosion wrecked the mine, and there were five others

alive and perhaps more. Three bodies were found.
The rescue effort was painfully slow, plagued by gas, water and mechanical trouble with a lift bucket. Four rescuers were stuck for an hour when a bucket hung up. When they finally reached

Montgomery and then myself, of course.
"No one loves him as much as I do."
The note added that she didn't want him going out with "those stupid girls."
Police Sgt. Joe Barton said Miss Wrenn worked for Montgomery and Miss Shore for eight months several years ago. Barton said Miss Wrenn apparently broke into the actor's

Maid Nearly Shoots Dinah's Ex

VAN NUYS, Cal. (AP) — A former maid of actor George Montgomery and his divorced wife, singer Dinah Shore, tried to shoot him because she was in love with him, police said.
A bullet missed Montgomery by inches Tuesday as he wrestled a pistol from her officers said.
The woman, Ruth Wrenn, 37, was booked on suspicion of assault with intent to commit murder.
Police said they found a note in the woman's purse which said:
"I am planning to kill George

friendly breeze, they walked from the Washington Monument to the Lincoln Memorial, exhorting the marble statue of the man who freed the American slaves 100 years ago.
As they went, they softly chanted the familiar civil rights hymn.
"Deep in my heart I do believe... some day we shall overcome... some day we shall overcome... some day we shall overcome."
And a forest of placards moved with them. Some placards struck a religious note:
"God of wisdom, God of power, can America deny freedom its religious note."
Others were more domestic:
"I am planning to kill George

Montgomery and then myself, of course.
"No one loves him as much as I do."
The note added that she didn't want him going out with "those stupid girls."
Police Sgt. Joe Barton said Miss Wrenn worked for Montgomery and Miss Shore for eight months several years ago. Barton said Miss Wrenn apparently broke into the actor's

Pacific Stars and Stripes

200,000 March—Quietly—in D.C.

(Continued From Page 1)
with and slogan:
"No U.S. dough to help Jim Crow!"
The estimate of more than 200,000 participants came from Washington Chief of Police Robert V. Murray. He made the assessment in mid-afternoon from a very orderly crowd, a very orderly gathering.
A holiday atmosphere pervaded the city. Many government workers took the day off and many business offices closed. Stores in the downtown area were largely deserted.
William H. Press, executive vice president of the Washington Board of Trade, said that while he had no actual figures "I imagine business is off 80 to 90 per cent... there's nobody in the stores."
The marchers had streamed into the capital in the early morning hours on trains, more than 1,200 buses, nine chartered planes, and by car and foot. One, LeDge Smith, rode 700 miles from Chicago on roller skates.
They came from hundreds of cities and hamlets to groups that represented nearly every condition of humanity from elderly white clergymen to young descendants of slaves—convinced, they said, that this was the high point of the long rights battle. Even before the close of the ceremonies they started heeding the advice of their leaders and, weary from the strains of the day, headed toward Washington's Union Station and its bus terminals for the trip home.
As the rally broke up, police

reported that 1,355 had required treatment at first-aid stations, some with serious injuries. Many fell over tent poles and down steps. There were two epilepsy seizures. Unaccounted were the hundreds who fainted in the closely packed crowd and were revived on the spot.
Four arrests were reported, none involving demonstrators. Carl Allen, deputy commander of George Lincoln Rockwell's Nazi Party, was removed from the grounds by police after attempting to speak against the rally without a permit.
Edward Shell, 20, of Arlington, Va., was fined \$10 for grabbing and breaking one demonstrator's sign. A juvenile was arrested in suburban Hyattsville, Md., on charges of throwing a stone at a bus carrying demonstrators to Washington.
Robert Dugans, 21, of Alexandria, Va., was arrested at a downtown intersection by police who said he had a loaded sawed-off shotgun on the front seat of his automobile.
These isolated incidents were completely overshadowed by the sheer size and enthusiasm of the

march itself and by the emotional demonstration before the Lincoln Memorial.
Estimates of the proportion of white people in the throng ranged from one in 20 to one in six, depending on the position of the observer. Police said it appeared to them that about one-third of the crowd was white.
Congregating at the Lincoln Memorial, the vast audience stretched far back toward the east end of the magnificent reflecting pool.
They heard many speeches, many songs and spirituals. They heard speakers demand passage

of President Kennedy's civil rights bill—and much more.
A Philip Randolph, 74-year-old prime promoter of the march, struck at those who want to amend the program to exempt little establishments from the proposed anti-discrimination ban—places like "Mrs. Murphy's boarding house."
"We must destroy the notion," said Randolph, president of the AFL-CIO brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, "that include the right to humiliate me because of the color of my skin."
A great cheer went up when Randolph announced that more than 150 members of Congress were in seats on the broad marble steps of the memorial.
Marion Brando was there, too, carrying with him a cattle prod of a type he said has been used in some places to make civil rights demonstrators move on.
"This instrument will burn you," he said, "I've seen the scars on people."
"But we must not believe that Southern people are entirely responsible. We are all responsible, East and West too."
What effect the march would have on Congress, remained to be seen. The march leaders conferred with congressional leaders Wednesday morning, apparently getting some encouraging words but no new commitments. They later met with President Kennedy.
Despite advances predictions by critics of possible wholesale disorder, the marchers—black and white, Protestants, Catholics and Jews—were studiously polite to one and all.



Tired by the walking, three civil rights demonstrators cool their feet in a reflecting pool while listening to speeches at a rally in the Lincoln Memorial area. (AP Radiophoto)

March Helped All Mankind, Kennedy Says

WASHINGTON (UPI) — President Kennedy said Wednesday's massive civil rights demonstration in Washington advanced "the cause of 20 million Negroes" and all mankind.
The President issued a statement after meeting for an hour and 35 minutes with 10 leaders of the more than 200,000 marchers.
"The President pledged that the federal government "will continue its efforts to obtain increased employment and to eliminate discrimination in employment practices, two of the prime goals of the march."
And he said the Administration also will keep up efforts to have Congress enact not only a civil rights bill but also a number of measures to strengthen the economy and to make it possible for more people to work and to get better jobs.

He praised leaders of the march and all who participated in it "for the detailed preparations that made it possible and for the orderly manner in which it has been conducted."
"History has seen many demonstrations of widely varying character and for a whole host of reasons," the President asserted. "As our thoughts travel to other demonstrations that have occurred in different parts of the world, this nation can properly be proud of the demonstration that has occurred here today."
The President said there had been remarkable progress this summer "in translating civil rights from principles into practices." But he added that "we have a very long way yet to travel."
"One cannot help but be impressed with the deep fervor and the quiet dignity that characterizes the

thousands who have gathered in the nation's capital from across the country to demonstrate their faith and confidence in our democratic form of government," the President declared.
Kennedy said that tens of thousands of Americans, Negro and white, had exercised their right Wednesday to "direct the widest possible attention to a great national issue."
"Efforts to secure equal treatment and equal opportunity for all without regard to race, color, creed or nationality are neither novel nor difficult to understand. What is different today is the intensified and widespread public awareness of the need to move forward in achieving these objectives—which are older than this nation."

Inside Today

What's behind the turmoil in Vietnam? Second in a series on Page 18.

California schools are caught in the middle of another legislative wrangle. Page 2.

Will the civil rights issue overturn Democratic hopes for a Kennedy victory next year? Page 9.

Pacific Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON (AP)—More than 200,000 Negroes and whites staged a giant, orderly “march for jobs and freedom” Wednesday—a demonstration they hoped would lead to a historic breakthrough all along the American civil rights front.

Marlon Brando was there, too, carrying with him a cattle prod of a type he said has been used in some places to make civil rights demonstrators move on.

“This instrument will burn you,” he said. “I’ve seen the scars on people.

“But we must not believe that Southern people are entirely responsible. We are all responsible, East and West too.”

Despite advance predictions by critics of possible wholesale disorder, the marchers—black and white, Protestants, Catholics and Jews—were studiously polite to one and all.

APPENDIX I-A

President John F. Kennedy's Statement on March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom August 28

We have witnessed today in Washington tens of thousands of Americans— both Negro and white—exercising their right to assemble peaceably and direct the widest possible attention to a great national issue. Efforts to secure equal treatment and equal opportunity for all without regard to race, color, creed or nationality are neither novel nor difficult to understand. What is different today is the intensified and widespread public awareness of the need to move forward in achieving these objectives—objectives which are older than this nation.

Although this summer has seen remarkable progress in translating civil rights from principles into practices, we have a very long way yet to travel. One cannot help but be impressed with the deep fervor and the quiet dignity that characterizes the thousands who have gathered in the nation's capital from across the country to demonstrate their faith and confidence in our democratic form of government. History has seen many demonstrations— of widely varying character and for a whole host of reasons. As our thoughts travel to other demonstrations that have occurred in different parts of the world, this nation can properly be proud of the demonstration that has occurred here today. The leaders of the organizations sponsoring the march and all who have participated in it deserve our appreciation for the detailed preparations that made it possible and for the orderly manner in which it has been conducted.

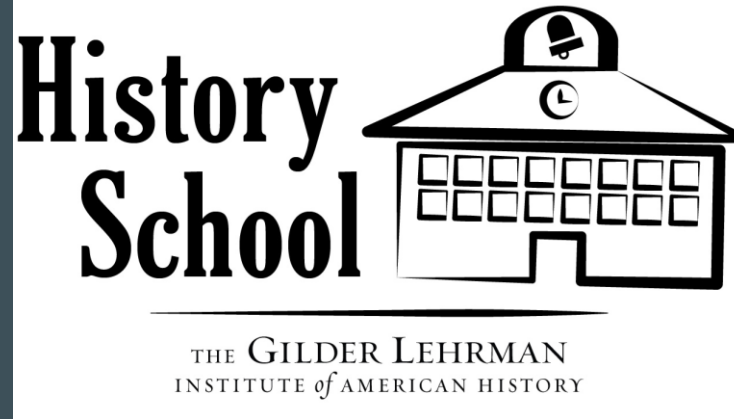
Legacy of the march

“NOW WHAT? The nation has reason to heave a sigh of relief. The massive Negro march on Washington went off in a peaceful manner, and its smaller counterpart in Austin was a mild affair. Only a handful of whites showed up in Austin for the Indignant White Citizens march. We are pleased that the white people in Austin showed good judgement. In Washington, a number of Negro speakers at the Lincoln Memorial criticized congress and even President Kennedy for not doing more towards civil rights. The crowd was estimated at more than 175,000. Those in charge of that massive march are entitled to congratulations for excellent organization. Now we'll see what good it does.”

El Paso Times, August 29, 1963

APPENDIX I-B Demands of the March on Washington

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 - access to all public accommodations
 - decent housing
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- Registration now open!
- Classes for students grades K-12
 - Hamilton Cast Read Along (elementary-age students and families)
 - History Camp: Life in Colonial Times (3rd-5th grade)
 - Immigration and the American Story (6th-12th grade)
 - History in the Making (6th-12th grade)
 - The Global Cold War (6th-12th grade)
 - APUSH: The Remix (9th-12th grade)
 - AP US Government and Politics: Foundational Documents (9th-12th grade)

Upcoming Programs

- *Inside the Vault*, Thursday, June 17 at 7 p.m. ET (4 p.m. PT)
 - We will be discussing Fighting for the Rights of Black Lives in the Founding Era.
- *Book Breaks*, June 6 at 2 p.m. ET (11 a.m. PT)
 - Carolyn Eastman discusses her book *The Strange Genius of Mr. O: The World of the United States' First Forgotten Celebrity*