

**Historical Background:**

An unprecedented number of demonstrations swept the country in the first half of 1963. Civil rights organizations demanded the right to vote, full access to jobs and education, and an end to segregated public accommodations. These demands were met with strong resistance and violence from local governments. Justice Department records list more than 978 demonstrations in 109 cities, with over 2,000 arrests and four deaths including the murder of National Association for the Advancement of Colored People leader Medgar Evers in Jackson, Mississippi.

As demonstrations and violence spread across the country in the spring and summer of 1963, interest in a march grew. On July 2, 1963, leaders representing six national civil rights organizations met at the Roosevelt Hotel in New York to announce a march demanding jobs and freedom. The group appointed A. Philip Randolph the march director and Bayard Rustin his principal deputy. In just eight weeks, they proposed to hold the largest demonstration in American history.

As the day of the march approached, no one really knew what to expect. Demonstrators across the country finalized their travel plans; others were already on the road. Organizers had hoped for as many as 100,000 participants, but would they come and would their journey be blocked along the way?

On August 28, 1963, work in the nation's capital came to a halt as thousands of demonstrators made their way to Washington, DC to participate in the largest demonstration up to that time in the city's history. The events that day helped mark the centennial of the Emancipation Proclamation and reminded Americans that the goals of the ongoing civil rights movement were united with the nation's long pursuit to fulfill its founding principles of liberty and equality for all.

By the end of the day, an estimated 250,000 people participated in the march to demand social justice.

**Assignment:** Read the question and supporting documents carefully. Using the documents, the historical background, and your own prior knowledge, write a persuasive essay that takes a position on the following question:

**Scholars of the modern civil rights movement have debated the relative importance of grassroots organizing and so-called 'charismatic leaders' in the movement. Is the March on Washington evidence of the power of grassroots organizing or of charismatic leadership?**

The essay should present a thesis statement and supporting points drawn from your knowledge of the period and incorporating evidence from at least three of the sources provided.

**Alternative activities:**

- Create a slide presentation outlining the issues.
- Create a podcast that considers the debate.
- Create a dramatic monologue that presents an argument on the issue.



## Document A: March on Washington Flier

**An Appeal to You from**

<b>JAMES FARMER</b> Congress of Racial Equality	<b>MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.</b> Southern Christian Leadership Conference
<b>JOHN LEWIS</b> Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee	<b>A. PHILIP RANDOLPH</b> Negro American Labor Council
<b>ROY WILKINS</b> National Association for the Advancement of Colored People	<b>WHITNEY YOUNG</b> National Urban League

**to MARCH on  
WASHINGTON**

**WEDNESDAY AUGUST 28, 1963**

*America faces a crisis . . .  
Millions of Negroes are denied freedom . . .  
Millions of citizens, black and white, are unemployed . . .*

**We demand:**

- Meaningful Civil Rights Laws
- Massive Federal Works Program
- Full and Fair Employment
- Decent Housing
- The Right to Vote
- Adequate Integrated Education

In our community, groups and individuals are mobilizing for the August 28th demonstration. For information regarding your participation, call the local Coordinating Committee for the

**MARCH ON WASHINGTON  
FOR JOBS AND FREEDOM**

1417 You Street, N.W.                      ADams 2-2320

**CO-CHAIRMEN**

Rev. Walter E. Fauntroy, Coordinator	Edward A. Hailes
Joseph A. Beavers	Julius W. Hobson
E. Charles Brown	Sterling Tucker

National Museum of American History, Division of Political History

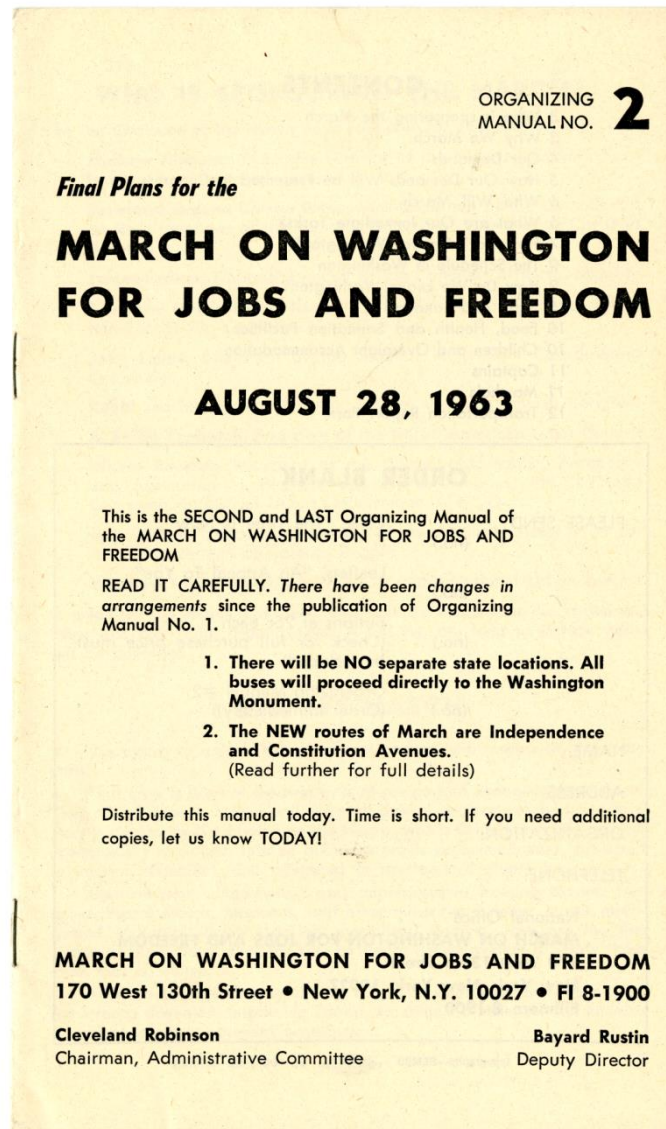
1. What does this document suggest are the goals of the movement?
2. What organizations are included on this document?
3. How might this document help you to address the central question?



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## Document B: March on Washington Organizing Manual



March on Washington Organizing Manual, National Museum of African American History and Culture

1. Review the document carefully. Who produced this document?
2. What is the purpose of this document?
3. How could this object help you to answer the central question?



## Document C: Draft Budget, Loan from Rachele Horowitz

<u>DRAFT BUDGET</u>				
<u>I. Salary</u>				
Bayard Rustin				
Deputy Director	(Beginning June 24th)	10 wks @ \$135.00	\$1,350.00	
Carl Maynard	( July 8th )	7 wks @ 65.00	450.00	
Bookkeeper				
Pat Morris	( July 15th )	6 wks @ 65.00	390.00	
Receptionist				
Peter Graham	( July 29th )	5 wks @ 40.00	200.00	
Mail				
Tom Kahn	( " )	5 wks @ 100.00	500.00	
Ass't to B.R.	( " )	5 wks @ 65.00	325.00	
Sandy Leigh	( " )	5 wks @ 65.00	325.00	
Stenographer	( " )	5 wks @ 33.00	165.00	
Evelyn Fosu	( " )			
Typist	( " )			
			7,380.00	
			7,880.00	
<u>II. Travel and Expenses</u>				
Speakers Bureau--key leaders to specific meetings		2,250.00		
Frank Montero		1,250.00		
Norman Hill		2,250.00		
Rev. Thomas Kilgore and Ted Brown		1,250.00		
			8,000.00	
<u>III. Rent</u>				
Two months @ \$350.00		700.00		
Caretaker		200.00		
			900.00	
			11,250.00	
			12,150.00	
<u>IV. Telephone</u>				
		6,000.00		
<u>V. Office Materials and Supplies</u>				
(Tables, typewriters, lamps, office furnishings, etc.)			3,000.00	
			2,500.00	
<u>VI. Postage</u>				
			6,000.00	
<u>VII. Signs</u>				
Banners, placards, and window cards			7,000.00	
<u>VIII. Printing</u>				
Manuals, calls, throwaways, etc.			18,000.00	
<u>IX. Volunteers</u>				
Expenses for approx. 5 volunteers @ 1.00 per diem for				
food and carfare		150.00		
Transportation for errands within city		350.00		
			500.00	
con't				

1. Review the document carefully. What can this document tell you about the timeframe in which the March was organized?
2. How might his document help you to answer the central question?





**Document D:** ABC News Footage:



[www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZA9TJCV-tks](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZA9TJCV-tks) to 1:17

1. Watch the video footage carefully and record what you see.
2. How could this document help you to answer the central question?



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**Document E:** Transportation List, Loan from Rachelle Horowitz. Note that this document lists the number of potential demonstrators using organized transportation, and does not include those who came on their own. An estimated 2,500 people participated in the march.

August 22, 1963

Mem To: Bayard Rustin  
From: Rachelle Horowitz  
Re: Planes, Trains, and Buses definitely coming to Washington

<b>I PLANE</b>		<b>B. South</b>	
Los Angeles	2	Virginia	20
Seattle	1	Mississippi	7
Denver	1	Georgia	12
New York	1	N. Carolina	25
Minneapolis	1	Texas	2
Cleveland	1	Oklahoma	2
Boston	1	Maryland	59
Buffalo-Syracuse, Rochester	1	Louisiana	3
Flint	1	Arkansas	5
Gr. Rapids	1	Tennessee	10
Chicago	3	Alabama	8
<b>total.....</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>total.....</b>	<b>133</b>
<b>II TRAINS</b>		<b>C. Midwest</b>	
Chicago	2	Milwaukee	5
Pittsburgh	1	Minnesota	2
Detroit	1	Minneapolis	2
Cincinnati	1	St. Louis	2
Savannah	1	Indianapolis	1
Jacksonville	1	Cleveland	8
Philadelphia	1	Cincinnati	2
Connecticut	1	Columbus	1
New Jersey	1	Yellow Springs	2
New York	11	Kansas City Mo.	1
<b>total.....</b>	<b>21</b>	Kansas City Mo.	1
<b>III BUSES</b>		<b>D. West Coast</b>	
<b>A. East Coast</b>		<b>B. West Coast</b>	
New York City	564	San Francisco	3
Philadelphia	100	<b>total.....</b>	<b>3</b>
New Jersey	75	<b>GRAND TOTAL BUSES</b>	<b>1,004</b>
Boston	30	<b>People:</b>	
Pittsburgh	17	Planes	1,400
Ithaca	1	Train	20,500
Syracuse	2	Bus	45,180
Vermont	3	<b>GRAND TOTAL PERSONS</b>	<b>67,080</b>
<b>B. total.....</b>	<b>812</b>		

- Examine the document closely. From what regions of the country are the protestors traveling? How large might the crowd become?
- How could this document help you to answer the central question?



**Document F:** Sample Locations of Civil Rights Demonstrations in 1963. Justice Department records list more than 978 demonstrations in 109 cities in 1963.

Danville, Virginia, June 13, 1963



Seattle, Washington, June 16, 1963



Also:

Birmingham, Alabama  
May 3, 1963

University of Alabama,  
Tuscaloosa, June 11, 1963

Detroit, Michigan  
June 23, 1963

1. In which regions of the country were civil rights protests recorded in 1963?
2. For what are protestors marching in the image from Seattle?
3. How might these images and dates help you answer the central question?



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**Writing Support:**

Define grassroots organizing in your own words:

What is the main question being asked, in your own words?

What position do you take on the question? What is your thesis statement?

What are the three strongest pieces of evidence in support of your argument?

- a.
- b.
- c.

What evidence does not support your argument? How can you address it?

- a.
- b.
- c.

