

Background: In 1941, Black union and civil rights leader A. Philip Randolph called for a march on Washington against discrimination and segregation in the military. A week before the march was scheduled to take place, President Roosevelt issued Executive Order 8802, banning employment discrimination in war industries. Randolph agreed to cancel the march. Now, in 1963, Randolph has once again called for a March on Washington. Randolph and Bayard Rustin, Randolph's long-standing socialist ally and fellow civil rights organizer, began approaching various civil rights organizations at the beginning of 1963. After almost a year of planning and organizing, nearly all national civil rights groups have endorsed the march. Thousands are expected to show up on August 28, 1963 to demand civil and economic rights for African Americans.

March on Washington Solidarity Meeting Questions

You've been invited to a meeting a week before the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom with anti-racist organizers from across the country. The goal is to develop a set of demands to present to Congress and the President, as well as share insights from your struggle and learn about others. In your role, answer the questions below to prepare for the meeting. As you meet with other groups and learn about their situations, share your answers and think about what the similarities and differences are between your struggles.

1. What are the injustices in your community that have brought you to the March on Washington? What are you fighting against?
2. What are some of the actions you've taken to remedy injustice in your community? What should others know about your struggle?
3. What are the top two demands you want to bring to Washington?

March on Washington Part 1 Debrief Questions

1. The Civil Rights movement is often remembered as a struggle exclusively against Jim Crow laws in the Southern United States. How does learning the stories of those who attended the March on Washington challenge that narrative?
2. Based on this role play, what was the Civil Rights Movement fighting for/against?
3. Why do you think struggles outside of the South are left out of the popular narrative?

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