

MEMORANDUM

TO: Active workers in the Civil Rights and Labor Movements, Community, Religious, and Youth Groups

FROM: Washington Office - Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC)

SUBJECT: Proposal for an Unemployment Demonstration in Washington, D.C., on or about February 1, 1964.

The purposes of the proposed Washington Unemployment Demonstration is to bring the issue of massive unemployment directly before the public eye, and to project the issue of massive unemployment into the forefront of the political arena in the Presidential Election Year 1964 - with a view of demanding broad and effective Federal measures to solve the problem of massive and sustained unemployment and general economic deprivation among millions of working people.

In view of the statistics - 6% (4½ million workers) of the American labor force is unemployed; 15% of all American youth (16-24 years old) cannot find work, and a total of two-fifths (77 million) of the American people live in economic deprivation - and considering the even more tragic statistics which show unemployment among Negro workers to be more than twice that of the national rate (12% among Negroes) and the plight of Negro youth unemployed even more acute (30-35%) * the urgency of a Washington Unemployment Demonstration and the initiation of an effective campaign to raise issues and stress demands of the unemployed is starkly clear.

The date of February 1, 1964, has been proposed for the Washington Unemployment Demonstration because that date is the 4th Anniversary of the Student Sit-in Movement, which began in Greensboro, N.C., February 1, 1960, and it is hoped that the imagination, initiative, and direct action of the youth can spark the struggle for jobs in America, as they so dramatically sparked the Negro Freedom Movement in the South.

The activities proposed for the Washington Unemployment Demonstration are five-fold, and will take up the major portion of one day.

- 1) Public mobilization at a church in downtown Washington.
- 2) Mass march to the Presidential offices to present President Johnson with a petition for a public employment program .
- 3) March and picket to a point near to U.S. Congressional grounds.
- 4) Groups of approximately 5 persons each will go to as many Senators and Congressmen of local constituency or national leadership as possible, with specific legislative demands.
- 5) Mass rally in the evening to hear reports of the day's activities, speeched from prominent leaders in Civil Rights and Labor, and to project further action in the area of Unemployment.

(* Sources of statistics: Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Dept. of Labor. And Conference on Economic Progress, Washington, D.C.)

It is proposed that the general public be invited to participate in all aspects of the day's activities. However, it is proposed that all major mobilization efforts be directed to getting the unemployed, and especially unemployed youth, to participate on a large scale, along with the membership of Civil Rights, Labor, Community, Religious, and Youth organizations.

It is also proposed that, even though major efforts of mobilizing the unemployed and youth should be concentrated in Washington, D.C., industrial Baltimore, Virginia, and Maryland, that all other areas of the nation be invited to participate in the Washington Unemployment Demonstration by sending a delegation of five or more unemployed and youth (by auto or bus) to march, picket, rally, lobby and petition.

It is further proposed that beyond the major task of mobilizing the unemployed for the Washington Unemployment Demonstration, that individuals and organizations come forward with personnel, funds, and other facilities to implement this proposal. Funds are especially needed, since the unemployed themselves have no means for transportation etc., necessary to demonstrate for their right to jobs.

The issue of full employment being at the center of the struggles for Freedom, Labor Rights, and Peace, this proposal is urgently pressed upon all who will respond, so that the issues and demands of the unemployed can be at the forefront of all political activity in this crucial year of the Presidential and Congressional elections - 1964.

Submitted on behalf of
Washington Office of
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by the Ad Hoc Coordinating Committee
for the Washington Unemployment Demonstration:
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December 13, 1963

APPENDIX I
to SNCC Memorandum 12/11/63
concerning Proposed Washington Unemployment Demonstration

SUGGESTED POINTS OF LOBBYING

- 1) Constituent Congressmen and Senators
- 2) Congressional Campaign Committee Members of both parties
- 3) Members of House and Senate Ways and Means Committees
- 4) Members of House and Senate Labor, Education and Welfare Committees
- 5) Organizational members of House and Senate (i.e.: Speaker of House, President of Senate, Majority and Minority Leaders and Whips)
- 6) Republican and Democratic National Headquarters
- 7) District Commissioners
- 8) Secretaries and Undersecretaries of Departments of Labor and Commerce
- 9) Seek appointment with President Johnson

Wherever possible to arrange an appointment in advance. Otherwise going to respective offices and waiting until there is a chance to address and petition the respective legislator.