

THE WHITE HOUSE HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

Classroom: Grades 9-12

President and Public Pressure: "For a Redress of Grievances"

Activity - Try this Quiz

Using the Student Text portion of Lesson 4, choose the best answer.

1. President John F. Kennedy made a public address about the need for civil rights legislation on June 11, 1963. On that day he had been engaged in a confrontation with:

- a. Governor George Wallace of Alabama, who was defying the authority of the federal government to desegregate a state university.
- b. Governor Ross Barnett, who was refusing to cooperate in protecting James Meredith from registering at the University of Mississippi.
- c. Malcolm X, who believed the national government had not done enough to bring true freedom to African-Americans.
- d. southern senators, who thought he was moving too rapidly in making changes related to integration.

2. Primarily, the bill proposed by John F. Kennedy was intended to:

- a. desegregate the U.S. Air Force.
- b. end literacy tests in all federal elections.
- c. desegregate public accommodations such as hotels and restaurants.
- d. provide federal protection of civil rights marchers.

3. Which of these factors contributed to the decision of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and other civil rights leaders to have the March on Washington occur in the summer of 1963:

- a. The brutal confrontations in Birmingham had raised the issue of civil rights to prominence.

- b. The timing was right because the march could dramatize black support for the passage of a civil rights bill that had been introduced in Congress.
- c. King believed it was time to step up the pressure on the federal government, broadening the protest from its focus on the South to problems blacks faced throughout the nation.
- d. All of these factors played a part in the decision to march in the summer of 1963.

4. In a June 22, 1963, meeting with civil rights leaders at the White House, President Kennedy opposed their decision to announce the date of the planned March on Washington. One reason was that he:

- a. thought it was bad timing to announce a march to pressure for the passage of a bill that hadn't even been sent to committee.
- b. believed it would distract Congress from a current crisis involving its responsibilities for the conduct of the Vietnam War.
- c. thought that the influence of Malcolm X within the March on Washington movement was dangerous.
- d. couldn't gather enough federal police officers to protect the marchers.

5. Which of these methods was not used to finance aspects of the March on Washington:

- a. Each civil rights group participated in a nationwide telethon during which celebrities, both black and white, entertained and solicited contributions.
- b. Each civil rights group was given black and white "handshake" buttons to sell to their respective members.
- c. Local civil rights groups were encouraged to raise money to provide bus transportation to the march for its members.
- d. Civil rights workers who were employed were encouraged to finance at least three unemployed participants who had no other way to pay for the trip.

6. Which of these were precautions taken by civil rights groups and federal officials to ensure the safety of the marchers:

- a. The march would be short -- just from the Washington Monument to the Lincoln Memorial -- so crowds would be more easily controlled.

- b. The march was held midweek, so that most participants would need to leave town quickly and thus the possibility of confrontation would be minimized.
- c. All leave would be cancelled for D.C. policemen so they could be available if needed;
- d. All of these security measures were taken.

7. John Lewis's planned speech in front of the crowd at the Lincoln Memorial was criticized on at least two counts: He:

- a. made negative references about the Black Panthers and the Muslim leader, Malcolm X.
- b. stated that he couldn't support the president's civil rights bill and made references to a "scorched earth" approach to civil rights.
- c. invited the listeners to join him at the Capitol after the march to stage a second mass protest against Congress.
- d. severely criticized Randolph and Rustin's approach to the March on Washington and called for SNCC not to participate in demonstrations planned by more moderate civil rights groups.

8. Early on the day of the March on Washington civil rights organizers:

- a. were very worried about sparse crowds in the city early that morning.
- b. were amazed and gratified to see a large number of marchers were already at the Lincoln Memorial at 8:00 a.m.
- c. had a severe crisis, since trains were not allowed to come into Washington's Union Station because of limits imposed by the D.C. government;
- d. were concerned about assassination threats received by the police of the District of Columbia.

9. The outcome of discussions between the government, civil rights leaders, and John Lewis, president of SNCC, over his controversial speech was that:

- a. he left Washington, refusing to participate in the march.
- b. in the interest of unity, he moderated his speech slightly.

- c. he used a different speech altogether.
- d. though he participated in the rally at the Lincoln Memorial, he refused to give his speech.

10. Which of these statements is not true of the March on Washington:

- a. Both civil rights groups and the federal government cooperated to see to it that the march would take place nonviolently and without serious incidents.
- b. The march attracted well over 250,000 participants of both races.
- c. Though the march attracted many people, and was considered inspirational to those who attended, the news media gave it little attention.
- d. Though John F. Kennedy invited civil rights leaders to meet with him after the march, he declined to be a speaker at the Lincoln Memorial rally.

11. Which of these groups was not among "the big ten" civil rights organizations participating in the march:

- a. The Black Muslims
- b. The Congress of Racial Equality (CORE)
- c. The National Council of Churches
- d. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP).

12. Which of these statements is true of the civil rights bill proposed by President Kennedy:

- a. It became law within six weeks of the March on Washington.
- b. Shortly after the march a new, more vigorous civil rights bill replaced the Kennedy version.
- c. The bill "died" in a House committee, and a new version was not introduced until 1965.
- d. The bill became law, but not until after the assassination of President Kennedy.

QUIZ ANSWERS

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