

The March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom

On August 28, 1963, more than 250,000 people came to the Reflecting Pool and the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C., for the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom. This march has become famous for the “I Have a Dream” speech presented by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and for the theme of ensuring the economic and civil rights of African Americans.

Primary sources from the Library of Congress can help students learn more about the March, including the fact that it was also a labor protest for a higher minimum wage, job training for the unemployed, and broadening the Fair Labor Standards act.

...Labor leader A. Philip Randolph wrote to NAACP director Walter White suggesting a mass protest against discrimination in defense industries and the armed forces. To attempt to stop the march, Franklin D. Roosevelt scheduled a meeting with White, Randolph, and several other government officials. After that meeting, Roosevelt signed Executive Order 8802, which banned discrimination in defense industries receiving government contracts. In addition, the Fair Employment Practices Committee was set up to monitor hiring practices.

Sources and to Learn More: Library of Congress

<http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/naACP/the-civil-rights-era.html?loclr=blogtea#obj23>