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May 11, 1971

MEMORANDUM

TO: J. C. Turner, President, Greater Washington Central Labor Council
 FROM: Archie Green

Permit us to propose a 1971 Labor Day Songfest (a song program reflecting labor history and goals) to be presented by the Greater Washington Central Labor Council and the AFL-CIO Labor Studies Center. We also think it would be appropriate to involve the AFL-CIO Council of Scientific, Professional and Cultural Employees (SPACE) if you agree.

The program, of course, would be open to the general public and would relate to our traditional Labor Day observances: parade, picnic, religious mass, media-gearred statement. Further, the program would lead to skills and techniques possibly useful in a national bicentennial labor celebration during 1976.

A possible model for our Labor Day Songfest might be the highly successful Lincoln's birthday theatre program presented at Ford's Theatre on February 14, 1971. This event was jointly sponsored by the National Park Service and the Folklore Society of Greater Washington. It was narrated by Joseph C. Hickerson of the Library of Congress. Mr. Hickerson has indicated privately his willingness to participate in and help plan a Labor Day Songfest.

A suggested format follows: (A) Singers to come mainly from the Washington area (such as Joe Glazer, Mike Seeger, Hazel Dickens, John Jackson) with a few special guests invited from a distance. (B) Songs to be divided equally between general work material, and specific items of trade union content. Songs to be selected in such a manner as to display the widest range of people and styles in the American labor movement. (C) The event is perceived of as a not-for-profit happening with a minimal payment to the Folklore Society of Greater Washington for research, script preparation, transportation, and, possibly, nominal fees to performers. (An initial budget might be based on the Lincoln's birthday event.)

AG:jms
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