

SOLIDARITY NOW!

1968 POOR
PEOPLE'S
CAMPAIGN

EXHIBITION PROSPECTUS

☀ Smithsonian



**HONOR
KING:
END
RACISM!**

The Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service (SITES) and the National Museum of African American History and Culture present *Solidarity Now! 1968 Poor People's Campaign*

In the 1960s, reports estimated that 35 million Americans of every race, age, and region of the country lived in poverty. In response, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference organized a Poor People's Campaign to confront poverty as a national human rights issue. As a multiethnic movement, the six-week, live-in protest on the national mall attracted demonstrators from across the nation.

Ideal for history and culture museums, historical societies, and university museums, among others, the exhibition is a moving combination of objects, photographs, art, and graphic design. In addition, the exhibition includes videos with historic film footage, oral histories with campaign participants, a 3-D model of the protest site 'Resurrection City,' and a digital map of caravan routes that demonstrators traveled to get to Washington. This is an unknown story of the civil rights campaign which redefined social justice and activism in America.

(Left)

Smithsonian's National Museum of African American History and Culture, Gift of Arthur J. "Bud" Schmidt.

(Right)

Smithsonian's National Museum of African American History and Culture, Gift of Linda and Artis Coso.



“We’re going to build this city ... a community of love and brotherhood. The American Indians, Puerto Ricans, Mexican-Americans, white poor Americans from the Appalachian area of our country and black Americans will all live together here in this city of hope.”

— Ralph Abernathy, May 13, 1968, Resurrection City



“La Tierra Es Nuestra Herencia” picket sign, 1968. Smithsonian’s National Museum of American History Right: Smithsonian’s National Museum of American History, Gift of Clara Watkins

**I Have A
Dream...
ONE
AMERICA**



EXHIBITION AT A GLANCE

OBJECTS AND GRAPHICS

- Approximately 30 objects, including original artifacts*
- Over 60 framed photographs*
- 19 historic poster reproductions
- Mural-sized digital photographs of Resurrection City for venues to print
- 3D-printed model of Resurrection City
- Additional graphics, text panels, and labels

MEDIA

- Mechanical interactives, ambient audio, and interactive video with interviews from Campaign participants
- Digital map showing nationwide caravan routes to Resurrection City
- Six video presentations: two brief historical documentaries and four video installations

Educational Assets

- Set of 18 educational posters
- Facilitated Dialogue Toolkit
- Ideas for community engagement activities and programs

TOUR DETAILS

- 3,000 square feet
- Moderate security**
- \$25,000 for 12 weeks including shipping
- Tour Begins April 2022
- Now Available for Booking

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO BOOK THE EXHIBITION, CONTACT:

Ed Liskey (booking)

liskeye@si.edu | 202.633.3142

Saul Sopoci Drake (content)

drakes@si.edu | 202.633.3115

**Objects and photographs from the National Museum of African American History and Culture.*

***This exhibition has been designated moderate security and will be offered to those institutions able to meet the Smithsonian's key requirements regarding exhibition space, fire protection, environmental controls, light levels, security, and handling.*

African American minister with a young white man, singing at a rally in Boston Common, Boston, Massachusetts, 1967. Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture, Gift of Robert and Greta Houston, © Robert Houston





*Woman between tents, Resurrection City, Washington, D.C., 1968.
 Man, woman, and a child with a bottle, 1968. Both photos: Robert Houston, born 1935
 Smithsonian's National Museum of African American History and Culture, Gift of Robert and Greta Houston, © Robert Houston*



In the 1960s, as the United States emerged as a global model of wealth and democracy, an estimated 35 million Americans lived in poverty.

POVERTY IN AMERICA

From the elderly and underemployed to children and persons with disabilities, poverty affected people of every race, age, and region of the country. Although President Lyndon B. Johnson declared a “war on poverty” in 1964, racial injustice, gender disparities, and unequal access to opportunities left many Americans struggling in a land of plenty. Millions of Americans lived without access to livable wages, adequate housing, nutritious food, quality education, and healthcare.



*Southern Christian Leadership Conference
Poor People's Campaign poster.
Collection of the Smithsonian National
Museum of African American History and
Culture, Gift of Susan J. Helm*

MOBILIZING COMMUNITIES

Seeing this as contradicting the ideals and guarantees of America's democracy, Martin Luther King Jr., the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), and other civil rights organizations organized the Poor People's movement as a national human rights campaign. Traveling to cities across the country, the SCLC began promoting the campaign and recruiting participants to rally in Washington, D.C., to demand an Economic Bill of Rights that guaranteed equal opportunity for every citizen. The SCLC worked with local communities to organize bus and caravans to bring protestors to Washington. As thousands of demonstrators traveled across the country to protest poverty, they attracted the attention and support needed for a national campaign.





Jesse Jackson at a press conference at Resurrection City, 1968. Robert Houston, born 1935 Collection of the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture, Gift of Robert and Greta Houston, © Robert Houston



(Left)
Mule Train from Mississippi going through the city of Washington, D.C. June, 1968. Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture, Gift of Laura Jones, © Laura Jones

(Right)
National Museum of American History,
Gift of Timothy D. W. Connelly in
memory of Gordon Montgomery Connelly



(Left)
 Man with young woman and child, 1968.
 Smithsonian National Museum of
 African American History and Culture,
 © Robert Houston

(Bottom)
 Aerial view of Resurrection City, 1968.
 Smithsonian National Museum of African
 American History and Culture,
 Gift of P. Kenneth Jadin, © P. Kenneth Jadin

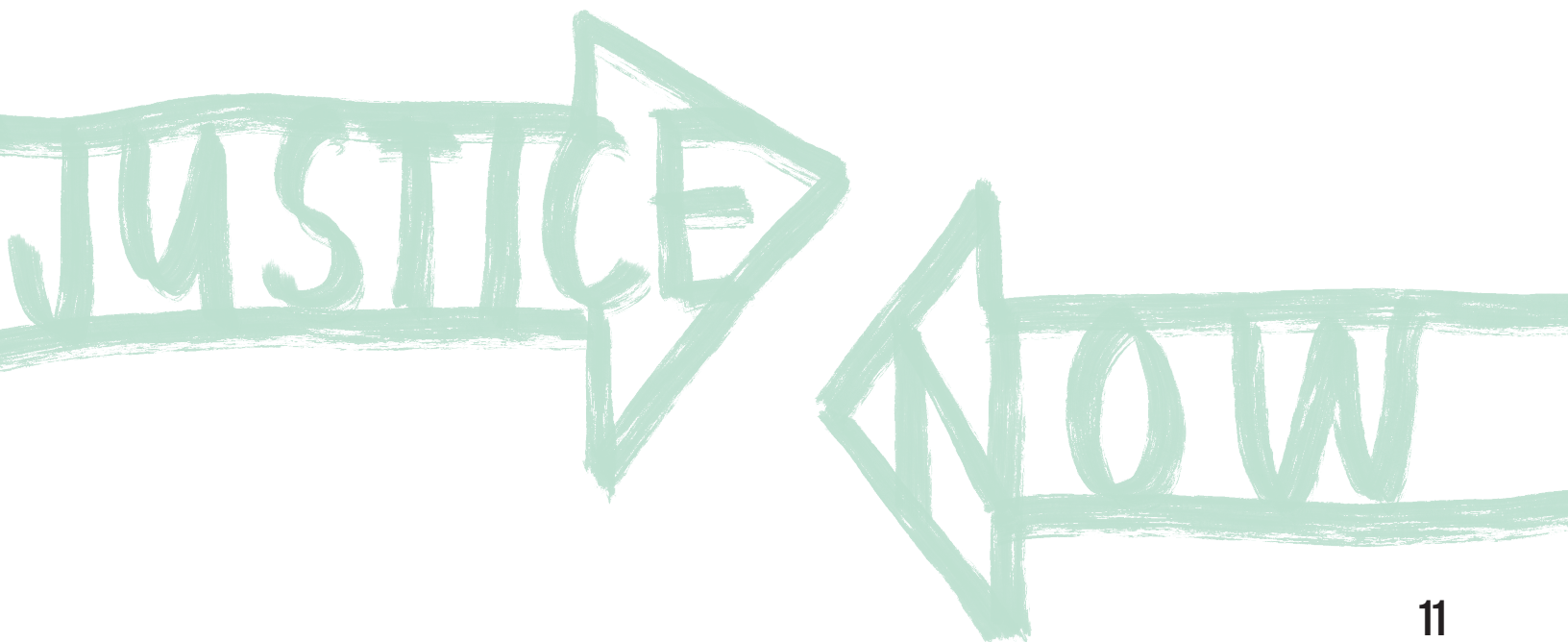


Poor People's Campaign protestors built a tent city on the National Mall in Washington, D.C.

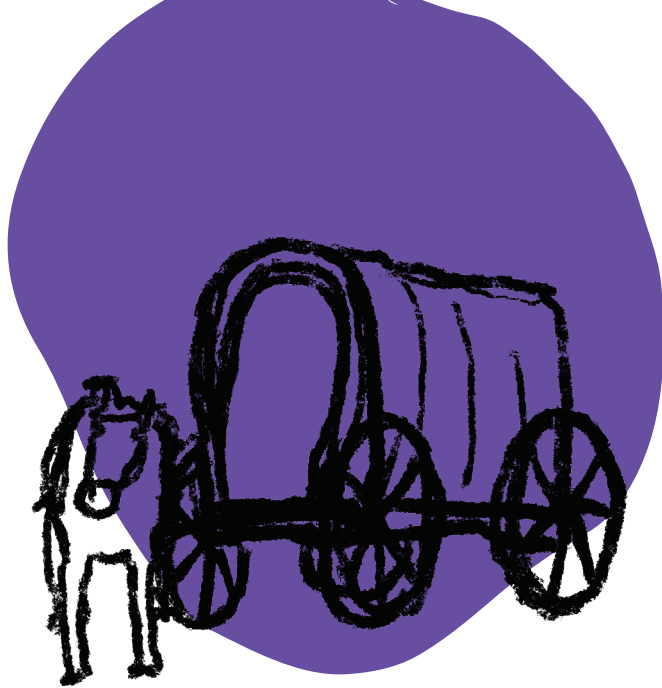
RESURRECTION CITY

The encampment housed thousands of demonstrators, which the government could not ignore. Organizers chose the 15-acre site between the Lincoln Memorial and the Washington Monument along the National Mall as the place to build their protest encampment known as Resurrection City.

A multicultural coalition representing communities nationwide presented the movement's demands and objectives. Among the demands were jobs and livable wages, family support and childcare, food programs, healthcare, and access to decent housing.



RESURRECTION CITY

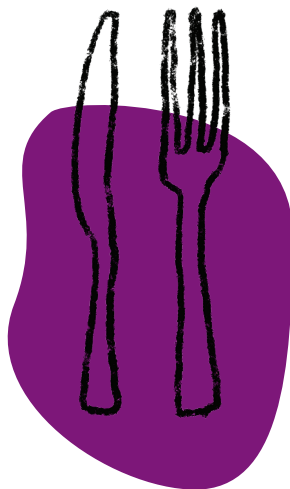


**13,000
MILES**

TRAVELED BY NINE
REGIONAL CARAVANS
TO WASHINGTON, D.C.

**50,000
ATTENDEES**

PARTICIPATED IN SOLIDARITY DAY PROTEST



185,000 MEALS

SERVED IN THE DINING TENT

3,840 VISITS

TO THE FREE MEDICAL AND DENTAL FACILITIES

337 PEOPLE

ARRESTED ON THE LAST DAY
OF RESURRECTION CITY

BY THE NUMBERS

3,000 PEOPLE

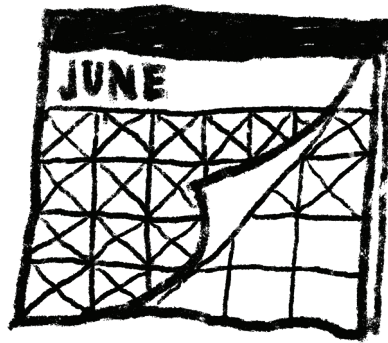
LIVED IN RESURRECTION CITY DURING FIRST THREE WEEKS

43 DAYS

OF OCCUPATION

2 WEEKS

TO BUILD



15 ACRES

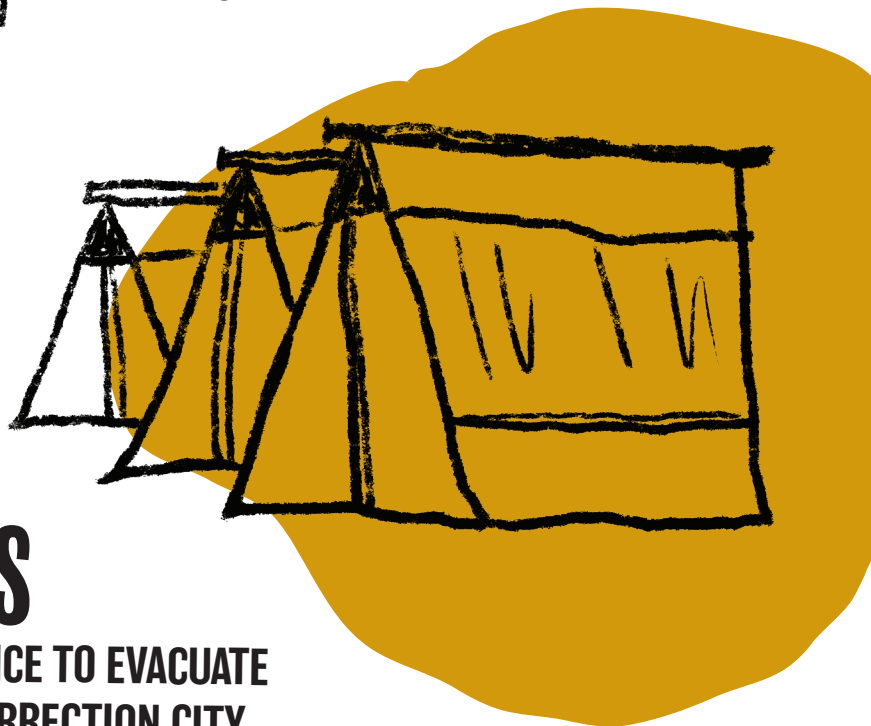
COVERED

7.36 INCHES

OF RAINFALL

540 TENTS

BUILT



90 MINUTES

TIME IT TOOK FOR POLICE TO EVACUATE
AND SHUT DOWN RESURRECTION CITY

IMPACT

By the end of the campaign, the extension or creation of federal programs helped reshape the nation's economic and cultural landscape.

By bringing thousands of people together to demand equal economic opportunities and security for all Americans, the Poor People's Campaign introduced new strategies for activism and social change. Equally important, the movement also sparked national discussions on race, gender, class, and the American dream.



(Left)

Pete Seeger and Bernice Johnson Reagon, 1968. Diana Davies, born 1938. Diana Davies Photograph Collection, Ralph Rinzler Folklife Archives and Collections, Smithsonian Institution

(Right)

Ministers' March, 1968. Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture, Gift of Laura Jones, © Laura Jones

The exhibition is only a portion of what SITES delivers. As a host of *Solidarity Now! 1968 Poor People's Campaign*, venues will also receive:

- Comprehensive curatorial and registrarial resources and guidance
- Complete shipping, handling, and installation instructions
- Wall-to-wall fine arts insurance coverage under the Smithsonian's policy
- Access to a full range of educational and programming resources, including:
 - Toolkit for facilitated dialog programs
 - Collection of Smithsonian Learning Labs, an interactive website for the discovery, creation, and sharing of Smithsonian digital resources
 - Collection of oral histories from the Smithsonian
 - Promotion through SITES website and social media
 - Public relations materials including publicity images, logos, sample press releases, templates for advertisements, posters, and other promotional materials, and advice on promoting the exhibition and hosting special events
 - Guidelines for local fundraising



Solidarity Now! 1968 Poor People's Campaign

Solidarity Now! 1968 Poor People's Campaign is organized by the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service in collaboration with the National Museum of African American History and Culture. The exhibition is made possible through the support of the Aetna Foundation.

PROJECT PARTNERS

The Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service (SITES) has been sharing the wealth of Smithsonian collections and research programs with millions of people outside Washington, D.C., for more than 65 years. SITES connects Americans to their shared cultural heritage through a wide range of exhibitions about art, science, and history, which are shown wherever people live, work, and play. For more information, including exhibition descriptions and tour schedules, visit sites.si.edu.

The National Museum of African American History and Culture is the only national museum devoted exclusively to the documentation of African American life, history, and culture. It was established by Act of Congress in 2003, following decades of efforts to promote and highlight the contributions of African Americans.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

To book the exhibition:

Ed Liskey

liskeye@si.edu | 202.633.3142

For content inquiries:

Saul Sopoci Drake

drakes@si.edu | 202.633.3115



(Top)

A caravan bus from Newark, New Jersey, 1968. Robert Houston, born 1935
Smithsonian's National Museum of African American History and Culture, © Robert Houston

(Bottom)

Manuscript for "An Outline of Resurrection City as Used," by John Wiebenson, 1968. Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture, Gifts of Abigail Wiebenson & sons, John, Derek & Sam in honor of John Wiebenson

