

AN EDITORIAL BROADCAST BY WMAL/AM/FM/TV, BROADCAST DURING THE WEEK
OF MAY 5, 1968

BONDS FOR DEMONSTRATIONS

We again urge that Congress pass legislation requiring that bonds be posted to cover possible damage caused by demonstrators within the District of Columbia.

Such legislation was opposed this week before a House subcommittee by Assistant Attorney General Stephen Pollak. Pollak argued that such legislation might violate the First Amendment guarantee of peaceable assembly and the right to petition Congress for redress of grievances. Pollak contended that poor people might be deprived of these rights simply because they could not afford to post bond.

Constitutionality is, of course, a matter for courts to decide. We note, however, that no large demonstration can be organized without substantial money. The estimated cost of the so-called Poor People's Campaign is \$2 million. The amount of bond to be posted should certainly be scaled to the size of a demonstration.

Furthermore, Congress has the Constitutional responsibility to ensure the general welfare. Destruction of property—public or private—is certainly not in the general welfare.

OPINION OF CORPORATION COUNSEL RE PARTICIPATION IN POOR
PEOPLE'S CAMPAIGN

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA,
OFFICE OF CORPORATION COUNSEL,
Washington, May 10, 1968.

To: WINIFRED G. THOMPSON, Director, Department of Public Welfare.
From: CHARLES T. DUNCAN, Corporation Counsel, D.C.
Subject: Request for Corporation Counsel's Opinion: Participants in the "Poor People's March."

By memorandum, dated April 30, 1968, you inquired concerning the granting of public assistance, of various types, to the participants in the "Poor People's March". Due to the pressures of time and the desirability of responding to your inquiry as quickly as possible, we have not given the questions posed a detailed legal analysis and are, therefore, providing you at this time primarily with our conclusions in order that you may prepare to meet the demands upon the Department of Public Welfare posed by the forthcoming March. Since most requests for assistance during this period will be made by those applying for regular public assistance, about which you inquired in Question 1-c of your memorandum, we shall deal first with that issue.

Question 1-c: *Regular Public Assistance Programs.*

In Question 1-c you inquired whether the Department of Public Welfare may authorize assistance and services for persons who make application for one of