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June 3, 1970

DEMOCRATIC CONGRESSIONAL LEADERS URGE SHRIVER TO
HEAD NATIONAL CITIZENS CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE

Washington, D. C. - June 3 --- House Speaker, John W. McCormack, Senate Majority Leader Mike Mansfield (Mont.), along with Majority Leader Carl Albert (Okla.), and Assistant Senate Majority Leader Edward M. Kennedy (Mass.) today joined over 100 other Democratic Senators and Congressmen in calling for the establishment of a National Council for Congressional Leadership and in urging Sargent Shriver to accept its chairmanship.

The Democratic spokesmen said the new Council would seek to assist in the election of Democratic candidates to the Senate and House in this fall's campaign.

The request that Shriver assume leadership of a national citizens' effort, started last fall by a group of Democratic Congressmen, culminated in a petition signed by more than 100 Democratic Members of Congress.

The petition urged Shriver, former U. S. Ambassador to France, and first Director of the Peace Corps and Office of Economic Opportunity, to "set aside at this time any personal interest in seeking public office" and to work with and for Democrats in the fall campaign.

The proposed Council would be composed of men and women representing a broad spectrum of American social, economic, political, ethnic, age and regional groups.

The Council's principal functions would be:

(1) To provide assistance to Democratic Senate and House candidates, particularly in marginal areas. The Council would supply speakers and speech material, do research, and provide campaign counsel to candidates.

(2) Serve as a clearing house for assistance being offered Congressional candidates by a variety of citizens committees and organizations. The National Council for Congressional Leadership would seek to coordinate the efforts of such citizens groups to provide campaign workers and funds to Democratic candidates.

(3) The proposed Council would have a small staff to prepare research and speech materials for Members of the Committee and for the Congressional candidates.

The new Council would be independent of the Democratic National Committee and the House and Senate Congressional Campaign Committees and State party organizations, but would coordinate its efforts with theirs, said the Democratic Congressional leaders.

The proposed Shriver Council, they added, would be self-supporting, raising its own funds to meet the expenses of its programs.

The Congressional petition to Shriver said in part, "At a time of growing division between young and old, students and workers, black and white, rich and poor, he knows how to bring people together in action for a common purpose."

Joining in the statement calling for the establishment of the Council and for Shriver to head it were Senate Democratic Campaign Committee Chairman, Daniel Inouye, and acting Co-Chairmen of the House Democratic Campaign Committee, Congressmen Ed Edmondson (Okla.) and Thomas P. O'Neill (Mass.).