

MEMORANDUM FOR JEN KLEIN

Date: June 9, 1997

From: Abby Hendel

RE: Phone Conversation with Anne Harrison-Clark at Delta Project

The Delta Project's mission is to build a communication infrastructure at the local level. This network will share successful community project strategies and solutions to community problems between different communities.

The Project operates on two levels. On the DELTA Process level, the Project assists communities which request aid in targeting problem areas in the community and then helps create a long-term strategic plan of action to combat the problem. For example, in East Palo Alto, California, the Delta Project was asked to work with city officials to devise a strategy to remedy the city's murder rate, the highest per capita murder rate in the country in 1992. Between 1993-1994 the murder rate dropped by 85%. Delta Project is now working with East Palo Alto to increase its tax base. Once the Delta Project helps design an appropriate plan for the community to follow, it is that community's responsibility to implement the plan and create results.

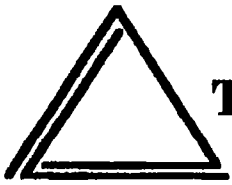
Delta Project's second level of operation, Community Works, is its community networking. The Project is committed to spreading one community's success story to other communities. For example, if community X needs a better school system, the Project will put X's leaders in contact with a community that has a successful education system. Delta Project facilitates this contact and new relationship.

The Project has worked with Desha County, Arkansas, East Palo Alto, California, and has begun to work with twenty-one counties in rural Mississippi.

Ms. Harrison-Clark was very enthusiastic about a possible meeting.

On the side, I think that Emil Williams of Jonesboro, AK (letter) should be referred to the Delta Project when you call him about an AK network of community health centers. The Delta Project may know of similar local programs.

FACSIMILE TRANSMISSION**The DELTA
Project***What Works! - Community Programs in Action***Date:** June 5, 1997**To:** Abby Hendel
Office of the First Lady
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500**Office of External Affairs
7200 Denton Road
Bethesda, MD 20814****Telephone: 1-301-913-9540
Fax: 1-301-656-2134***A project of the TIDES Center***From:** Anne Harrison-Clark
Director of External Affairs**Subject:** Requested Information on the DELTA
Project**Fax Number:** 202-456-6244**Number of pages:** 7
(including this one)*Hello Abby -**Here's the additional information on the DELTA Project requested in our telephone conversation of yesterday afternoon. If the First Lady wants more material, please let us know. We have lots!!**We look forward to hearing from you and would appreciate confirmation of receipt of this FAX.**Thank you very much -**Anne Harrison-Clark*



The DELTA Project

What Works! - Community Programs in Action

June 5, 1997

The First Lady
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mrs. Clinton:

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Anne Harrison-Clark

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In a conversation yesterday with Abby Hendel of your staff, I was asked to share some additional information with you on the DELTA Project. It is with pleasure that I do so. The DELTA Project is a new non-profit organization whose mission is to enable and encourage local communities to learn from one another about the strategies and programs that have proved successful in solving the difficult and complex social and economic problems they face.

The enclosed letter to President Clinton describes both the urban and the rural initiatives undertaken by the DELTA Project since its inception. This letter, by the way, led to a request from the White House for several meetings on our work with the Domestic Policy staff which took place last February and March.

Briefly stated, it is our firm belief that community development at the local level is best accomplished when driven and managed by the community itself, and carried out through a long range strategic plan that reflects a community-wide consensus on social and economic needs, goals, objectives, priorities, strategies and initiatives. To support communities undertaking such a "community-centric" development process the DELTA Project has established two principle operating components: **the DELTA Process** and **Community Works**. **The DELTA Process** assists communities to create a shared understanding of the social and economic problems and priorities facing that particular community, and to develop successful strategies and partnerships to solve them. The result is a strategic plan for community development that serves as the basis for implementing, coordinating and managing community development initiatives over the long term. This is what our work in East Palo Alto and Desha County described in the letter to President Clinton is all about.

Community Works, when fully operational, will support communities in their planning and implementation efforts. It is comprised of a set of "Help Desks" - small teams of experts in specific problem areas who have access to a broad range of existing databases and resource centers that address their area of expertise. They can then offer a requesting community detailed information on the efforts of other communities throughout the country to address similar types of social and economic problems, plus access to those who conceived and implemented these programs. Community Works serves as a link between what is already known about successful community problem-solving and DELTA's client communities.

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A project of the TIDES Center

Hillary Rodham Clinton
The White House
June 5, 1997
page 2

The DELTA Project grew out of my own professional experience involving years of grass roots organizing nationally for the March of Dimes. Indeed, I had the pleasure of meeting you and the President at the State Capitol Day you hosted for the March of Dimes in Little Rock in 1988. From that grass roots organizing experience came the realization that a great deal is happening at the local level which successfully addresses this country's social needs. Bill Moyers puts it well: *"If you travel the country as I do you will be astonished at the vigor of local action . . . It is almost everywhere at the local level . . . But it will take political leadership, coalition building and information sharing to help these people realize that they are not alone."*

What is missing is an infrastructure which promotes and facilitates the transfer of information and the provision of technical assistance from one community to another, and allows them to learn from each other about what is working and what is not working in their respective "backyards." *The DELTA Project has been created to address this need.* At a recent presentation on the DELTA Project a member of the audience put it well by saying: "Oh, you specialize in what works!" That is exactly what we do.

We have developed pilot projects in several areas since DELTA's inception. Mrs. Rosalie Gould mentions in her recent letter to you that we are currently carrying out a project in Desha County, Arkansas. It is the first county-wide cooperative effort the citizens of that county have ever undertaken. In addition, we are very excited about our work with East Palo Alto, California, where in one year (1993) that small city reduced its record homicide rate by 85%. **And in all of last year, East Palo Alto had only one homicide!** The enclosed letters of thanks from both communities attest to the need for the kind of service offered by the DELTA Project.

Since our letter to President Clinton and the presentations to the White House Domestic Policy Council last year, other communities have asked us to work with them - and many of these are "Champion Communities." Please recall that the "Champion Communities" are those which competed for the 1994 Empowerment Zone/Enterprise Community designation, but were not designated. Despite lack of designation, a sizeable number of these communities continue to work through the strategic plans they developed for the 1994 competition, but with a strongly stated need for peer networks. Indeed, 89% of the rural Champion Communities surveyed by a researcher for USDA wanted "information from other communities." For this reason, the DELTA Project is often asked to provide outreach to the "Champions."

In addition, we are very pleased with our work with the National Association for the Southern Poor (NASP). There, the end result of a new form of grassroots organizing known as the Assembly has been the development in Surry County, Virginia of a school system which has risen from the bottom to the top fifth percentile of academic achievement in Virginia, sends 94% of its high school graduates on to higher education, and boasts the astonishingly low drop-out rate of 1.7% for K-12. The community has become so vibrant that the jail system is no longer needed!

It is our hope that you will be interested in the DELTA Project and its mission. Indeed, we would like a chance to discuss it with you in person, and hope that such a meeting can be arranged.

We look forward to hearing from you soon regarding this possibility, and send best regards in the meantime.

Sincerely,



Anne Harrison-Clark
Director/External Affairs

Delta Project

mission - Build communication

infrastructure

local level success

shared by all

communities

Series of materials -

Active in Deshae
Canty Arkansas

active East of
San Jose Palo Alto

21 counties in
rural
Miss.

Process Piece - Deshae
now.

once plan built community on own.

Delta then collects stories &
brings other communities
into contact w/ them.

Deshae needs great educ system -

Delta puts them in
contact w/ community
that has one

in process of putting together conference

Copy of Report
190

fox
6-6244

Delta 252
was helping it
build strategic plan
term of action
to homicide now
want to base

E. Palo Alto
story -
highest per cap murder rate
1992 btw 193-94
last 6 by 855.

National
Reports / Studies



KIDS THESE DAYS: WHAT AMERICANS REALLY THINK ABOUT THE NEXT GENERATION

Summary of Findings

FINDING ONE: The Moral Meltdown

Americans are convinced that today's youth face a crisis -- not in their economic or physical well-being but in their values and morals. Most Americans look at today's teenagers with misgiving and trepidation, viewing them as undisciplined, disrespectful, and unfriendly.

FINDING TWO: It's Not Just Teens

Public dissatisfaction and disapproval extend beyond the nation's teenagers. Even young children are viewed in a negative light. Many Americans think children are spoiled and out of control, not friendly, helpful, or engaging. And people apply these criticisms to children across a broad economic spectrum, to children from disadvantaged backgrounds as well as children from the middle and affluent classes.

FINDING THREE: Careless Parents

Americans believe that parents are fundamentally responsible for the disappointing state of today's youth. People say parents fail to teach youngsters right from wrong and pass on the values children need to learn in order to become productive members of society. Too often, people say, today's parents have children before they're ready; give them presents instead of guidance and attention; and fail to provide necessary discipline. Even parents themselves from all income, ethnic, and racial backgrounds agree.

FINDING FOUR: Mitigating Circumstances

Americans acknowledge it is tougher to be a parent or a child in today's world. They recognize that more than ever, parents -- and especially mothers -- must work hard and sacrifice for their children. Americans also believe today's youngsters face threats from society that can undermine their parents' best efforts. People are extremely concerned about ubiquitous threats endangering all kids: drugs and crime; sex and violence in the media; and public schools that often fail to deliver education in a safe and orderly environment.

FINDING FIVE: Never Give Up

Notwithstanding their extensive criticisms of young people, Americans refuse to give up on kids. They care deeply about their well-being and believe that tackling the issue is of paramount importance to our society. Most encouraging, they are stubbornly optimistic about the chances of reclaiming the lives of even the most troubled teens.

FINDING SIX: Solutions That Miss the Mark

Government programs aimed at improving the health and economic circumstances of young people miss the mark in three important ways as far as the public is concerned. First, Americans define the children's issue as predominantly moral in nature, not one of money or health. Second, people believe the crux of the problem is parents, not a lack of government programs. And third, welfare has left a legacy of skepticism about government intervention on behalf of the family. Even when it comes to low-income, at-risk kids, Americans doubt that such programs could help. They suspect that parents who need such programs will fail to take advantage of them.

FINDING SEVEN: Solutions That Show Promise

Because they define the problem as one of values, Americans gravitate toward solutions that help develop young people's character. People believe the schools should help teach kids discipline, honesty, and respectfulness toward themselves and others. They believe community centers and volunteer organizations like the Boy Scouts could be effective because they lend moral structure to youngsters' lives.

FINDING EIGHT: Will Individual Americans Help?

Americans are convinced that young people need adults in their lives who will help guide them to responsible adulthood. But will Americans -- as individuals -- help in the task? People say all the right things about helping, but they also have concerns. Many are not sure that their efforts will be well received. They fear embarrassing those they are trying to help. They want to make sure that they themselves are not taken advantage of. Finally, many Americans believe that those who receive help should show their appreciation, return the favor when they can, and take responsibility for helping themselves. As it is, only about a third of Americans volunteer regularly, although most say they could find extra time to do so.

SPECIAL FOCUS: The Views of African American, Hispanic, and White Parents

In order to compare the views of African American and Hispanic parents to those of white parents, supplementary interviews were conducted with 300 black and 300 Hispanic parents. The results: regardless of race and ethnicity, all three groups of parents are critical of how teens and children are turning out, of the job parents are doing, and for the most part, all are concerned about the same social problems threatening youngsters. Where there are differences, these are usually differences in degree, not in kind. African American and Hispanic parents are sometimes more critical of today's youth than are white parents, for example, and black parents are more attracted to government child and health care programs.

SPECIAL FOCUS: What Kids Have to Say

Teenagers surveyed as part of this study generally describe themselves as happy and say they have warm relations with their parents and other adults in their lives. But large numbers also say they have plenty of time on their hands and describe an environment filled with hazards and potential trouble. A third say there is no adult in the house when they come home and about a quarter admit they have engaged in risky behavior such as smoking cigarettes or drinking alcohol.

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Public Agenda is a non-profit, non-partisan organization that seeks to raise the level of public discussion about critical policy choices facing the nation.

Kids These Days was made possible by a grant from **Ronald McDonald House Charities** and was conducted in partnership with **The Advertising Council**, both organizations are committed to efforts to improve the lives of children.

Copies of *Kids These Days* are available from Public Agenda, 6 East 39th Street, New York, NY 10016. Tel: 212/686-6610; Fax: 212/889-3461; e-mail: paresearch@aol.com. Copies are \$10.00 each, or \$5.00 for 10 or more copies. (For all orders, please add \$2.50 shipping and handling on one book; \$5.00 for 2-5 books; or \$10.00 for 6-25 books.)

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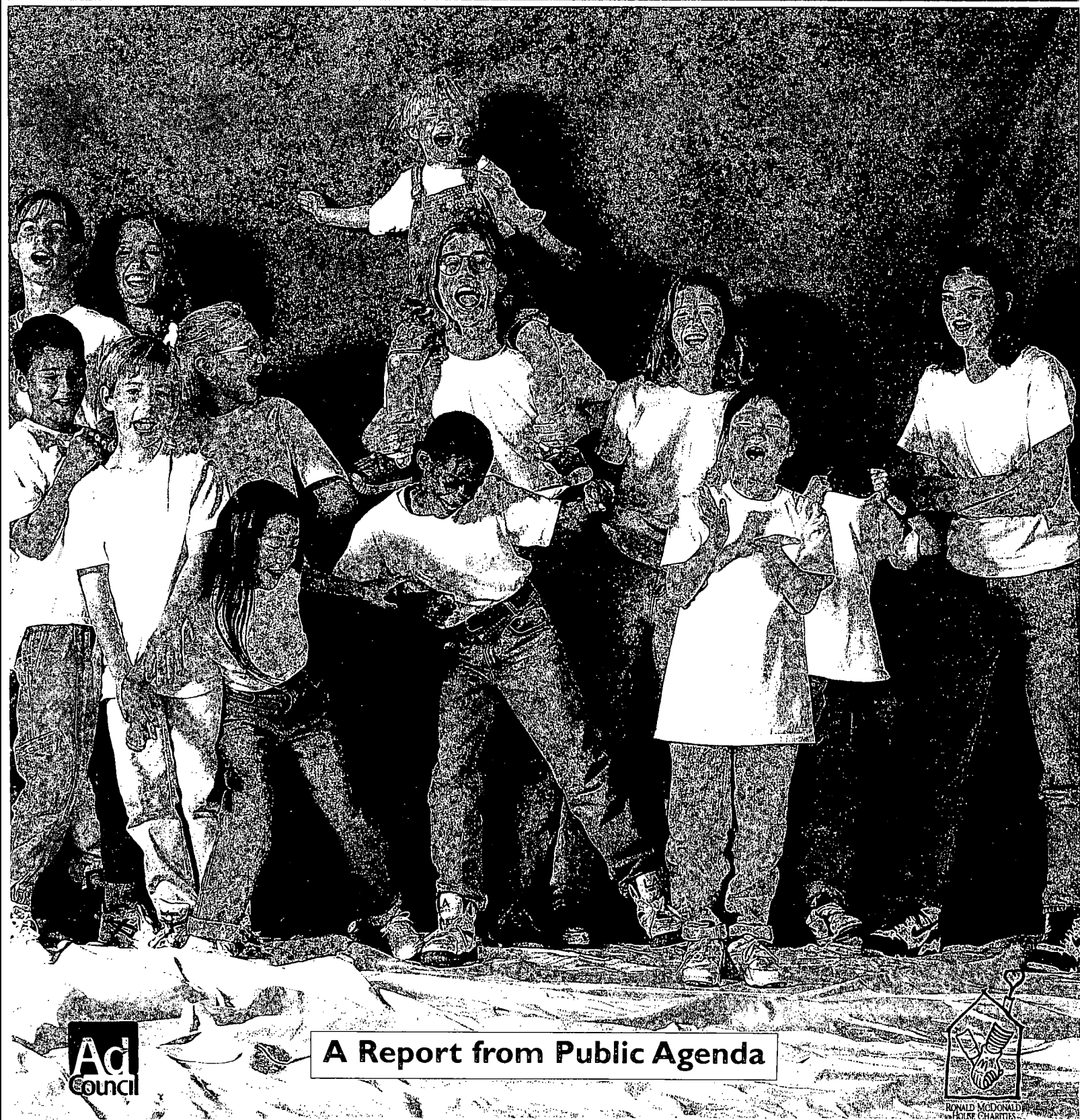
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KIDS THESE DAYS:

WHAT AMERICANS REALLY THINK ABOUT THE NEXT GENERATION



A Report from Public Agenda

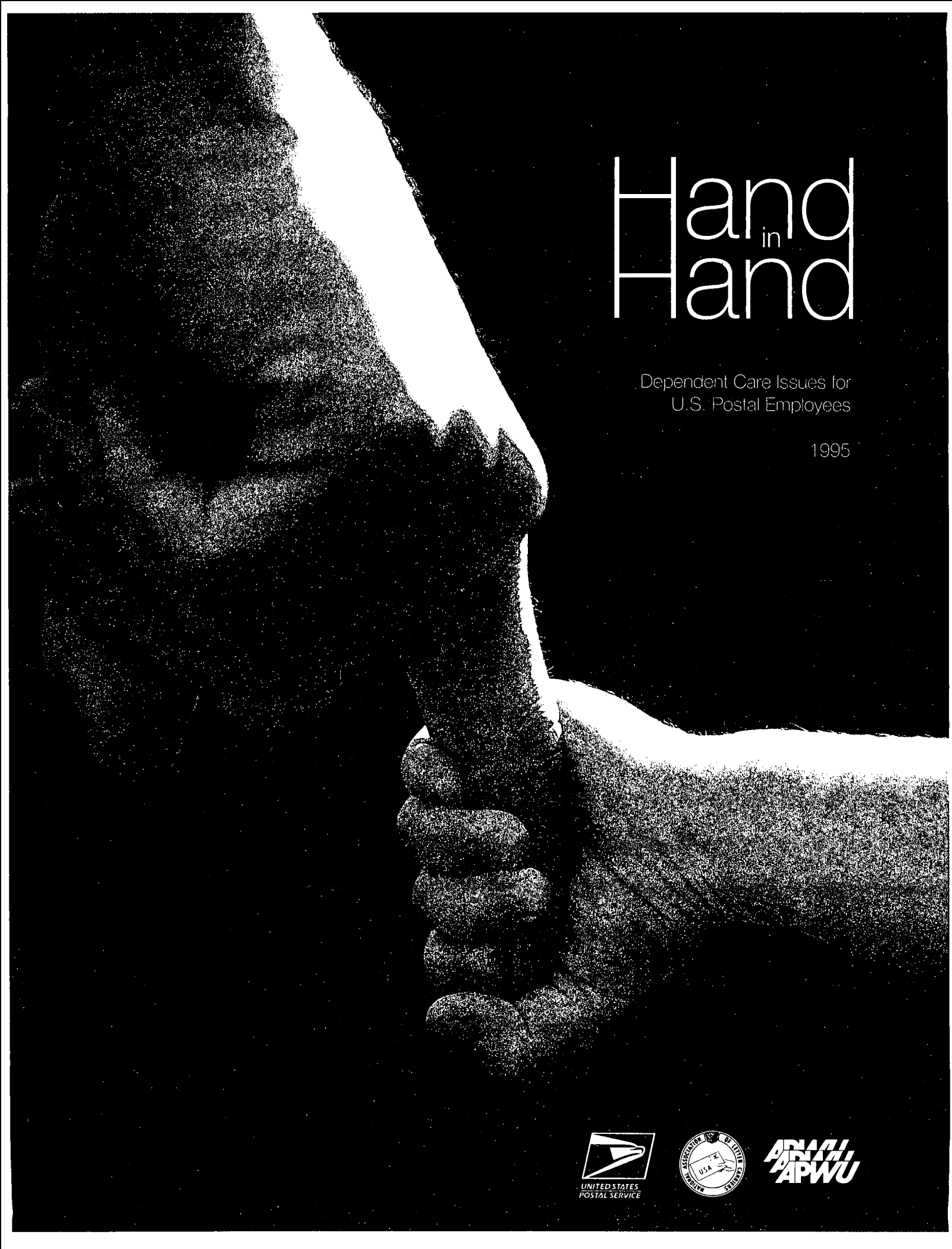


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Hand in Hand

Dependent Care Issues for
U.S. Postal Employees

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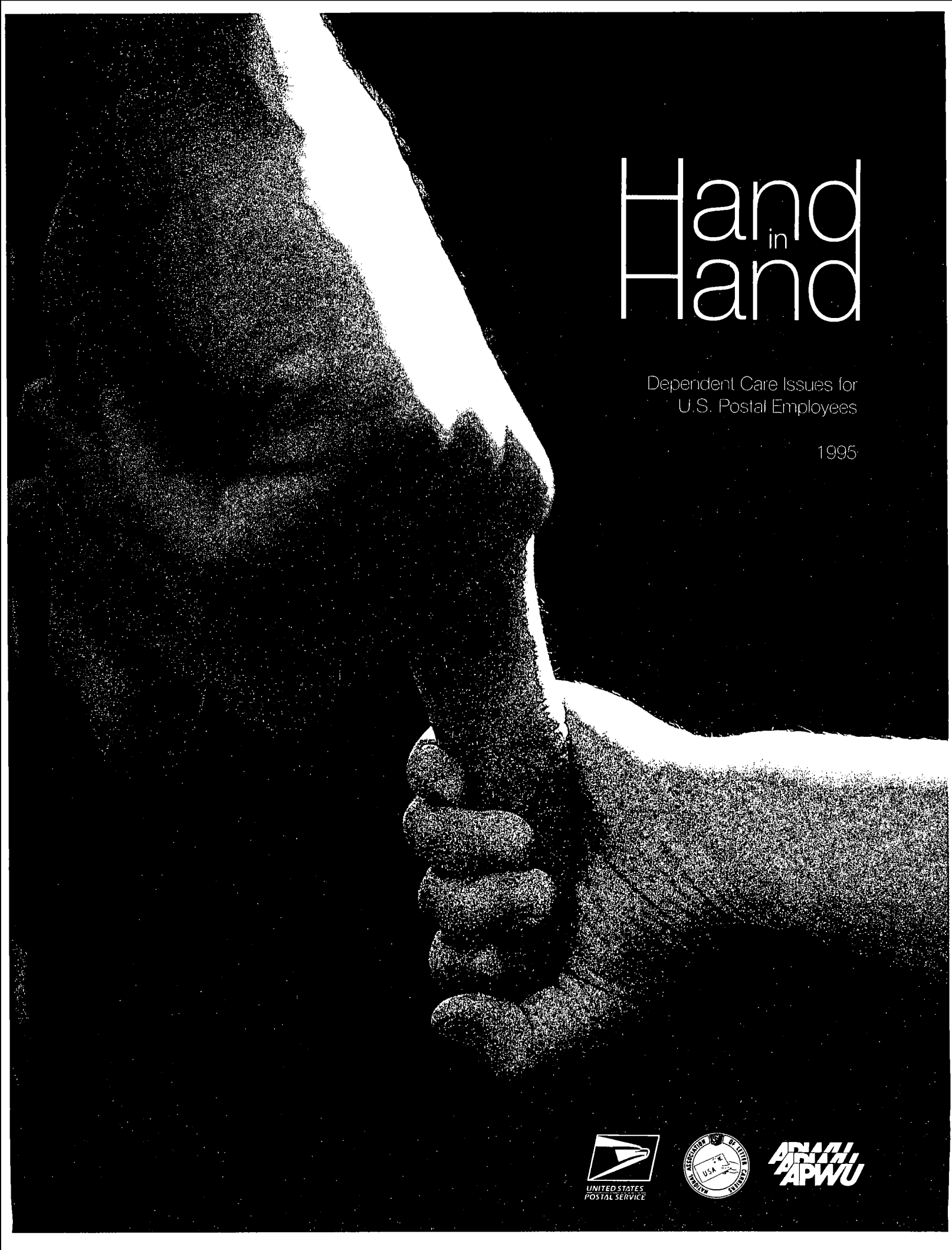
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