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[Proposed Introduction to Suzanne Goldsmith's A City Year by Eli Segal & Rick Allen] [loose]

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THE WHITE HOUSE

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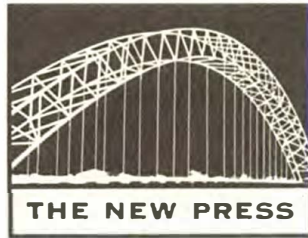
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COMMENTS: Here's our piece for your comments.

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Publishers in the Public Interest

Diane Wachtell

July 28, 1993

Rick Allen
Office of National Service
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Rick,

I'm sorry to report that, after a great deal of consideration, we've decided to do A City Year without an introduction.

I really do appreciate all the time you put in on the project, and I'm particularly sorry that the whole thing happened at a point when your life was too full to consider our suggested changes.

I think we all still share a firm commitment to the idea of national service, and I hope that through Suzanne's book and otherwise we will be able to work together over the coming months to bring national service to a wide national audience.

In any case, I'm very grateful to you for all your efforts, and I look forward to sending you a finished copy of the book when it appears -- perhaps there will be some venue for you to make use of the piece you wrote at that point.

With all best wishes,

Sincerely,

Diane

INTRODUCTION TO SUZANNE GOLDSMITH'S
A CITY YEAR
BY ELI SEGAL AND RICK ALLEN

"Since the days of Greece and Rome when the word *citizen* was a title of honor, we have often seen more emphasis put on the rights of citizenship than on its responsibilities. And today, as never before in the free world, responsibility is the greatest right of citizenship, and service is the greatest of freedom's privileges."

-- Robert F. Kennedy

Bill Clinton routinely received the most sustained applause on the 1992 presidential campaign trail when he called for national service. He asked students and faculty at Notre Dame to "...[j]ust think of it. Millions of energetic young men and women serving their country by teaching the children, policing the streets, caring for the sick, working with the elderly, or people with disabilities, building homes for the homeless, helping children to stay off of drugs and out of gangs -- giving us all a new sense of hope and real limitless possibilities."

The new President wasted no time in echoing that theme upon taking office: on a crystalline blue Inaugural day, the forty-second President of the United States declared, "I challenge a new generation of young Americans to a season of service; to act on your idealism by helping troubled children; keeping company with those in need; reconnecting our torn communities. There is so much to be done -- enough, indeed, for millions of others who are still young in spirit to give of themselves in service, too."

"In serving", the President continued, "we recognize a simple, but powerful truth. We need each other, and we must care for one another."

President Clinton had another Inaugural very much in mind when he took the oath of office; for him and many of his generation, memories of another brilliant January morning thirty-two years before and of another young President bringing change to an expectant nation, remained vivid. In January, 1961, John F. Kennedy issued an individual challenge "to ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country." When later that year he launched the Peace Corps, thousands of Americans jumped at the chance to help our country by working in some of the world's most impoverished lands.

John Kennedy and Bill Clinton both used the attention focused on their inaugurals and the language of their eras to summon their fellow citizens to action. But the challenge to service has been issued to and answered by each generation in turn, since that extraordinary group of colonists backed the dare penned by 32-year old Thomas Jefferson and wrested a new nation from what was then the world's most awesome military power.

Far more often than any American would have desired, the challenge to service throughout our history has been to a call to military arms, to defend our nation and often freedom itself from those who would destroy it. And yet repeatedly Americans have faced the danger and opportunity of crises at home. The Declaration of Independence may have been a bold bearding of the British lion, but the Constitution was a challenge that the citizens of the new nation issued to themselves, to fuse the fierce independence of their frontier individualism with a commitment to the common good.

Our Constitution has survived for two centuries, and the country it still guides faces problems undreamt of by Madison, Hamilton and their colleagues. We have in our own time learned that even a powerful and well-financed federal government, driven by the best of intentions, could not conquer all of our ills -- and we have also seen that a government scorned as "the problem" deprived a caring people of a potent tool. When we learn that the country we love, the richest and most powerful nation ever known, watches its babies die at the rate of lands we consider "primitive", we must feel outrage -- but we also had better renew our commitment to do something about it. No one else is to blame if our nation includes children who are needlessly sick, adults who cannot read, or elderly people who are unsafe in our streets. These are our neighbors and our neighborhoods, and we alone can make things right again.

This realization led Bill Clinton to offer a plan of national service which ultimately will give hundreds of thousands of Americans new opportunities to help revitalize our local communities -- and re-knit our national fabric.

And the realization of personal responsibility was also part of the motivation of two new American heroes, Alan Khazei and Mike Brown, who passed up the road to easy wealth that their Harvard law degrees offered them, to create an American experiment nearly as revolutionary as the Constitution: City Year.

Like most radical ideas that prove truly transformational, City Year reflects certain simple but powerful truths: what makes a city into a community is not common dwelling but common effort -- what makes a people into a nation is not an absence of problems, but a shared devotion to solving them. Michael and Alan knew what Washington's most powerful pundits never seem to learn: that power is a transitive verb -- one has the power *to do something*.

What the two City Year founders did do with the organization is give a growing group of young people, and in a very real sense the entire city of Boston, the power to change their community and transform their lives. As Suzanne Goldsmith artfully proves in this fine book, City Year delivers on the central promise that always has made America such a beacon to people around the world: that people can unite across lines of race, class, education and gender -- and that in doing so they can forge deep friendships, change the way they view themselves and others, and make a real difference in conditions they may have been told were intractable. That is, as President Clinton said at his Inaugural, "the very idea of America, an idea born in revolution and renewed through two centuries of challenge; an idea tempered by the knowledge that, but for fate, we, the fortunate, and the unfortunate, might have been each other; an idea ennobled by the faith that our nation can summon from its myriad diversity the deepest measure of unity; an idea infused with the conviction that America's long, heroic journey must go forever upward."

Viewed through the eyes of normal expectations, the twelve individuals who comprised Ms. Goldsmith's City Year "family" for nine months were hardly headed "upward": they were "misfits", as one of the members characterized the group the day they were selected together. There seemed nothing in common among a white prep school graduate and a Burmese immigrant, or an ex-con and a college student, but City Year provided the necessary crucible. Through the program, the group -- joined by Ms. Goldsmith, who picked up shovels and tutorial books as often as her reporter's pad -- became a true team in the way most lasting bonds are formed: common effort and shared experiences.

They also learned the truth of Martin Luther King Jr.'s immortal phrase, often quoted by President Clinton, that "everyone can be great because everyone can serve."

These words do not mean simply that the seeds of greatness are within each of us as individuals. They also mean that greatness through service is not a scarce commodity -- that great people, unlike great scientists or great basketball players, are not measured by the distance between themselves and ordinary people. Great people -- people shaped by experiences like City Year -- are measured by the lack of distance between themselves and others.

Although *A City Year* is at its heart the story of the team, it also demonstrates the power of service to change communities. The baker's dozen on the "Reebok Team" regard their nine months experience as life-changing -- but so will the young students they helped teach at Blackstone School in Boston's South End; and so will the elderly woman in the all-white neighborhood of Charlestown, who found common ground with Charles, a young African-American ex-con; and so will Dorchester's Monadnock neighborhood, after the team reclaimed a small park that had been abandoned to weeds and hypodermic needles.

It is also vital to realize how aggressively City Year has worked to improve its program in the years since Ms. Goldsmith joined the Reebok Team. In the best entrepreneurial tradition, City Year is in the process of constant evaluation and change. And City Year is expanding the venues for its experiment, opening a program in Columbia, South Carolina this summer, and in Providence, Rhode Island in the fall. City Year intends to have programs in as many as 10 cities in the next two years. And if President Clinton has his way, there will be many more City Years, and literally hundreds of programs which share its commitment to excellence and diversity.

In the end, this book also shows how difficult service is. Those who are timid and fearful in the face of bold projects and new experiences -- and those who are just plain unwilling to face hard work -- will be left behind, as this generation answers the traditional American call to service. But as Robert Kennedy told students in South Africa 27 years ago, "this world demands the qualities of youth; not a time of life but a state of mind, a temper of the will, a quality of the imagination, a predominance of courage over timidity, of the appetite for adventure over the love of ease." And today, as ever before, those who seek that adventure will find the richest rewards a free people can desire: fuller lives and healthier communities.

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Boston resident *Eli Segal*, after a lengthy and successful career in business, served as Chief of Staff of the Clinton-Gore campaign, and accepted his long-time friend Bill Clinton's request to serve as Assistant to the President and Director of the Office of National Service. *Rick Allen*, formerly a Los Angeles-based businessman and co-author of *RFK: Collected Speeches*, is Mr. Segal's Deputy and a Deputy Assistant to the President.

July 11, 1993



Publishers in the Public Interest

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Diane Wachtell

July 13, 1993

Rick Allen
Office of National Service
The White House
FAX: 202-456-6420

Dear Rick,

Thanks so much for your effort in getting the Goldsmith introduction to us so quickly.

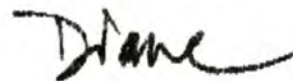
I'm faxing back with this letter an edited draft that I hope very much will meet with your approval. (Sorry about dropping your name and the author descriptions -- the format we've used is pretty standard practice on a piece of this length.)

My only other request is that you consider one more "quotable" sentence of praise for the book, maybe in the last paragraph. I'd like to be able to pull something out of the introduction and put it along with the other advance praise we have from Nicholas Lemann, Harris Wofford and others on the back of the jacket. As the introduction stands, while you say nice things about the book in passing, it's tough to pull anything out.

In any case, I hope to hear from you as soon as possible about whether the edit is ok. Feel free to fax us back any comments you may have.

With many thanks again for your time and help,

Sincerely,



Since the days of Greece and Rome when the word citizen was a title of honor, we have often seen more emphasis put on the rights of citizenship than on its responsibilities. And today, as never before in the free world, responsibility is the greatest right of citizenship, and service is the greatest of freedom's privileges.

--Robert F. Kennedy

Upon taking office as the forty-second president of the United States, Bill Clinton declared, "I challenge a new generation of young Americans to a season of service; to act on your idealism by helping troubled children, keeping company with those in need; reconnecting our torn communities. There is so much to be done--enough, indeed, for millions of others who are still young in spirit to give of themselves in service too."

The president continued, "In serving, we recognize a simple but powerful truth. We need each other, and we must care for one another."

Far more often than any American would have desired, the challenge to service throughout our history has been a call to military arms. Yet, repeatedly, Americans have faced the danger and opportunity of crises at home. When we learn that our country, the richest and most powerful nation ever known, watches its children die at a rate comparable to that of countries with

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far fewer resources, we must wonder what has gone awry--and we must renew our commitment to change. No one else is to blame if our nation's children are needlessly sick, many of our adults cannot read, and our elderly people are unsafe in our streets. These are our neighbors and our neighborhoods, and we alone can make things right. No

That realization led President Clinton to propose a plan of national service that ultimately will give hundreds of thousands of Americans new opportunities to help revitalize our local communities--and reknit our national fabric. That same realization also led two new American heroes, Alan Khazei and Mike Brown, to pass up the road to easy wealth that their Harvard law degrees offered them, and to create an American experiment known as City Year.

Like most radical ideas that transform the way we think, City Year reflects certain simple but powerful truths: What makes a city a community is not common dwelling but common effort; what makes a people a nation is not an absence of problems but a shared devotion to solving them.

What City Year has done since its founding in 1989, is give a growing group of young people--and, in a very real sense, the entire city of Boston--the power to change their community and their lives. As Suzanne Goldsmith skillfully proves in this fine

book, City Year delivers on a crucial American promise, uniting people across lines of race, class, education, and gender--so that they can forge deep friendships, change the way they view themselves and others, and make a real difference in conditions they may have been told were intractable. City Year encourages young people to act, as President Clinton urged at his inaugural, "on the faith that our nation can summon from its myriad diversity the deepest measure of unity."

Viewed through the eyes of normal expectations, many of the twelve individuals who comprised Ms. Goldsmith's City Year "family" for nine months were hardly headed "upward". There seemed nothing in common among a prep-school graduate, a Burmese immigrant, and an ex-con, but City Year provided the necessary crucible. During the program, the group--joined by Ms. Goldsmith, who picked up shovels and tutorial books as often as her reporter's pad--became a true team in the way the most lasting bonds are formed: through common effort and shared experiences.

They also learned the truth of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s, immortal phrase, that "everyone can be great because everyone can serve." These words mean both that the seeds of greatness are within each of us and that greatness through service is not a scarce commodity--that great people, unlike great scientists or great basketball players, are not measured by the distance

between themselves and ordinary people. Great people--people shaped by experiences like City Year--are measured by the lack of distance between themselves and others.

Although A City Year is at its heart the story of a year in the life of one national service team, it also demonstrates the power of service to change communities. The baker's dozen on the Reebok Team regard their nine months' experience as life changing--but so will the young students they helped teach at the Blackstone School in Boston's South End; and so will the elderly woman in the all-white neighborhood of Charlestown, who found common ground with Charles, a young African-American ex-con; and so will Dorchester's Virginia-Monadnock neighborhood, after the team reclaimed a small park that had been abandoned to weeds and hypodermic needles.

It is also vital to realize how aggressively City Year has worked to improve its program in the years since Ms. Goldsmith joined the Reebok Team. In the best entrepreneurial tradition, City Year is in the process of constant evaluation and change. And City Year is expanding the venues for its experiment by opening a program in Columbia, South Carolina, this summer and another in Providence, Rhode Island, in the fall. City Year intends to have programs in as many as ten cities in the next two years. If President Clinton has his way, there will be many more City Years

as well as literally hundreds of programs that share its commitment to excellence and diversity.

In the end, this book also shows how difficult service is. Those who are timid and fearful in the face of bold projects and new experiences--and those who are just plain unwilling to face hard work--will be left behind as this generation answers the traditional American call to service. But it will also be an adventure. Those who seek that adventure will find the richest rewards a free people can desire: fuller lives and healthier communities.

Eli Segal

Director, White House Office
of National Service

July, 1993