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Peace Corps Studies

Social responsibility, appropriate technology, multicultural understanding — these are some of the buzz words of the 90s. And these are the subjects you'll explore in the classroom and the field. Topics include:

- Local and global development
- Strategies for community leadership
- Multicultural communication and leadership
- Community-based economic growth



The most rewarding aspect of this whole experience was getting to know people from other cultures.

JOSEPH H. SIEGLING
Volunteer in Spain

Tuition Assistance Available

Students may receive up to \$5,000 in low-interest loans as participants in the Norwich Peace Corps Program. These loans will be forgiven after a student serves two years in an approved service organization. If a student does not choose to serve, repayment of the loan begins two years after graduation.

One University— Two Campuses

Norwich University's two campuses, Vermont College and the Military College of Vermont, offer a diverse blend of disciplines, teaching styles and viewpoints which make us unique. Our two campuses, set in the beauty of Vermont's Green Mountains, offer clearly different lifestyles—traditional and military. But both share a commitment to service: to the community, the nation and the world.

Whichever lifestyle you choose, you may participate in the Norwich Peace Corps Program during your junior and senior years. Students in the Military College corps of cadets may substitute the Peace Corps Program for their last two years of ROTC training.

For more information about the Norwich University Peace Corps Program, contact: Director, Peace Corps Program, Vermont College of Norwich University, College and Ridge Sts., Montpelier, VT 05602.

CALL 802-828-8801

I am glad I was in the Peace Corps Program. What we are doing here is exactly what we covered in our community survey semester.

ANDREW CLARKE
Peace Corps volunteer in Mauritania, Africa

PHOTO: COVER



ADVENTURE AND SERVICE

*The Norwich University
Peace Corps Program*



COMBINE ADVENTURE AND SERVICE IN THE NORWICH UNIVERSITY PEACE CORPS PROGRAM

The Norwich University Peace Corps Program, founded in 1987, was the first in the nation to offer students the chance to receive college level preparation for service in the Peace Corps and other volunteer organizations. If you'd like to combine adventure with service to others, then consider spending two years in the Norwich Peace Corps Program. Here's what the program offers:

- Travel
- Leadership training
- Multicultural experiences
- Service
- Peace Corps studies
- Tuition assistance

Travel Around the World

Students in the Norwich Peace Corps Program may spend part of the summer between their junior and senior years on a volunteer internship. Whatever your interest, there's a place through the Norwich program where you can learn to lead as you serve others. Recent internships include:

- Working on nature trails in Spain
- Organizing a wheelchair marathon in Alaska
- Working with children at a Sioux Indian YMCA in South Dakota
- Reforesting a river valley in Costa Rica

I have never learned more in any course than this one.

JENNIFER SULLIVAN
Peace Corps studies student



...[a] wonderful, exciting and most exhilarating experience! You have my gratitude for opening this door.

AMY TWOMBLY
Volunteer in rural
West Virginia

Build Leadership Skills

During the summer preceding the junior year, students in the Norwich program have the chance to develop the skills to be leaders during an outdoor leadership experience in northern Vermont. Discover strengths and abilities you never knew you had through activities such as:

- Team building exercises
- Forestry and environmental projects
- Rope obstacle course

Promote Multicultural Understanding

In the Norwich Peace Corps Program, you'll meet people from other lands and cultures both during your summer internship and through lectures and workshops on campus.

Recent visitors included:

- Jake Swamp, traditional chief of the Mohawk nation
- Yaya Diallo, drummer from Mali, West Africa
- Kiflu Kidane and Seleshe Damessae, Ethiopian performers



I experienced a completely different world—different language, different foods, different priorities on just what is important in life.

ROBERT KERNS
Volunteer in Costa Rica

Serve as a Volunteer

Students in the Norwich program also gain volunteer experience in the Vermont community. During the school year, you'll be learning and serving too. Recent projects include:

- Building a home through Habitat for Humanity and renovating low-income housing
- Helping youngsters through Big Brother/Big Sister groups
- Maintaining community nature trails and monitoring environmental quality

file: VT
higher ed

SerVermont

Students in Community Service

9 February 1993

Eli Segal
Office of National Service
The White House
Washington, DC

Dear Mr. Segal:

We have four federal military academies to train selected young people for service in the Air Force, Army, Coast Guard, and Navy. **We need a United States Peace Academy.** One which not only trains selected cadets for required short-term national and international service, but trains the professional officers and administrators in peace service.

Beginning a USPA early in the Clinton administration would verify our intention to broaden the meaning of national service to include care for our fellow-men around the world.

Vermont is an ideal location for the USPA. Perhaps we could start with conversion of Norwich University which already incorporates a peace program within its syllabus. (See enclosed brochure of The Norwich University Peace Corps Program.)

If I can be of any assistance in helping with the establishment of the United States Peace Academy please let me know.

Yours sincerely,



copies: R. Todd, former president, Norwich University
M. Kunin, Assistant Secretary of Education
J. Jeffords; P. Leahy, U.S. Senators

file:
serpentine



The Vermont Schoolhouse Press

Susan:

3/13/93

For someone working so hard
a day, you look great —

For national service to go from
talk to reality, couldn't be
more pleased that it's ~~you~~ you who's
doing the "senior advising"

Cynthia

MANAGING NATIONAL SERVICE

Position Paper
July 1985

Cynthia Parsons
Chester, VT 05143

MANAGING NATIONAL SERVICE

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Position Paper
July 1985

Cynthia Parsons
Chester, VT 05143

Cynthia Parsons' year-long study of national service is
funded, in part, by the Edwin Gould Foundation for Children

MANAGING NATIONAL SERVICE

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MANAGING NATIONAL SERVICE  
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* INTRODUCTION *

"If it ain't broke, don't fix it."

Mindful of that bit of Vermont wisdom, I will argue that both our public schools and our level of citizen involvement are in dire need of fixing. That the health of our political democracy depends on the success of our schools to meet the twin goals of excellence and equity, and on the commitment to democratic ideals of our citizen-soldiers.

Further, I will posit that we should not fix one (the schools) without the other (citizenship).

Our republic needs more than taxpayers; it needs small "d" democrats.

We owe every young person in this great nation free schooling to reach his/her potential as a learner/worker. And we owe each one instruction in and opportunities for direct involvement in both representative and participatory democracy.

Steven Muller, president of Johns Hopkins University, has addressed the issue of national service and stated the problem we face as succinctly as anyone:

"Our democracy profoundly needs public spirit, but the economy of our labor system encourages self-interest."

I do not wish to slander our labor system, or capitalism, or entrepreneurship. I do not favor a welfare state.

I am a democrat and an entrepreneur; a teacher and a citizen-soldier.

I also am a reformer. I want our schools to be more conscious of their responsibility toward the preparing of youth for full citizenship, and I want not only a nationwide commitment to service opportunities for youth, but a management system which will make this community activity possible for all who so desire it.

I agree wholeheartedly with former President Lyndon B. Johnson who said Sept. 14, 1966:

"I hope to see a day when some form of voluntary service to the community and the nation and the world is as common in America as going to school; when no man truly has lived who only served himself."

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* THE NATIONAL SERVICE AGENCY MANAGEMENT CHART *

DIRECTOR
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PERSONNEL UNIT  
~~~~~

COMPUTER UNIT
~~~~~

EVALUATION UNIT  
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* Personnel Unit

Director

Recruitment & Hiring Staff

40,000 Agents & 120,000 Volunteers

* Computer Unit

Director

Small Technical Staff

* Evaluation Unit

Director

Small Technical Staff

State Liaison Officers

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* DESCRIPTION OF THE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM *

Basic Elements

- * Service positions for approximately 4 million volunteers between the ages of 16 and 26:
 - 1,000,000 (25%) in some branch of the armed forces;
 - 800,000 (20%) as school aides;
 - 600,000 (15%) in health & hospital services;
 - 600,000 (15%) in social services;
 - 400,000 (10%) in conservation corps;
 - 200,000 (5%) in special residential programs;
 - 200,000 (5%) as police & fire department aides;
 - 200,000 (5%) in cultural & "other" services.
- * Forty thousand (40,000) former volunteers serving as paid national service agents located one to a secondary school throughout the US. Assisted by 120,000 of the eight hundred thousand school aides.
- * Computer network system linking all 40,000 agents.
- * Evaluation teams to monitor service agents, service programs, and service outcomes.
- * Fifty-one (50 states + DC) governor-appointed state employee liaison officers.

* A national agency with four major responsibilities:

- a) To recruit and payroll the 40,000 agents.
- b) To choose a computer network system using approved competitive bidding procedures.
- c) To choose research teams both to evaluate the 10-year experiment, and to watch-dog for fraud and other illegalities.
- d) To maintain contact with all Governor-appointed state-level national service liaison officers.

* A ten (10) year trial period exploring such issues as:

- a) Should national service be mandatory, not voluntary?
- b) What training, if any, seems necessary and "best" for the 40,000 agents?
- c) For every young person in military service there would be three in civilian service. Is this 3:1 ratio optimum?
- d) Should there be federal regulations governing "approved" service programs?
- e) Should the 40,000 agents be located outside the nation's public secondary schools? And if so, where?
- f) Should this nationwide management system continue on after the 10-year trial period?
- g) ???

What Constitutes Service?

- * Paid or unpaid, residential or non residential work in a not-for-profit agency.
- * With or without earned bonuses and/or entitlements.
- * Completed after the age of 16 and before the age of 27.
- * Giving 1,000 hours within a two-year period.

The Computer Network

Just as each travel agent across the US is linked to all travel services, so each national service agent (or advisor) would be linked to all service openings, both military and civilian.

The network of information should be built by non government contractors. And as a companion to the computer program, there should be a monthly publication detailing major service openings nationwide. This should resemble the present publication available to all travel agents which provides pertinent information about all passenger airline carriers.

Designing the computer program to handle every available service opportunity -- including all permutations of military service -- is a straightforward technical task.

But the enormous first task will be to locate and to catalogue all available service programs.

It is recommended that each community start with its United Way participants, asking one of the UW voluntary organizations to help in "mapping" all services, including stimulation of new service opportunities in schools, local government offices, hospices, nursing homes, etc., as well as expanded service opportunities for 16 to 26 year olds in established programs.

Of course, once the major service opportunities have been located, and their details noted, it becomes a relatively simple operation to keep the information current. But it's the building of the system, and the establishment of fresh opportunities, which will require enormous influxes of energy and funds.

The 40,000 National Service Agents

- * Location: 1 per public secondary school throughout the US.
- * Pay level: G.S. 5, 6, 7.
- * Background: Ex military, ex Peace Corps, ex Vista, ex Conservation Corps; present AAUW or Junior League or YW or YM board members, etc.

The 120,000 National Service Volunteers

- * Three each, recruited by the agents.
- * Unpaid. Nonresidential.
- * On the job 5 hours a day, 5 days a week, for 40 weeks.
- * Completed service earns \$5,000 education entitlement.

The NSA Evaluation Unit

A small cadre of technical experts whose job it is to both hire and monitor evaluation teams. The need will be to find -- through competitive bidding -- an evaluation organization with the expertise to handle some of the overarching questions touching on the sensitive issues of equity, excellence, and obligation.

And further to hire, on an infrequent basis, but again through competitive bidding, specialists to evaluate specific programs as the need arises. Particularity with an eye to reducing, if not eliminating, exploitation and fraud.

But key to all is the main question: Should national service continue after a 10-year trial? If that answer is "NO," then documentation of why not is required.

If that answer is "YES," then the answers to why and how is essential.

State Liaison Officers

The governor of each state should appoint someone within state government (e.g., the commissioner of education or one of his/her deputies) to coordinate all service activities within the state and to work closely with the NSA evaluation unit director.

The success of this national service management plan is unquestionably dependent upon the numbers and types of service activities which would be available locally to each state's young adults.

The great majority of young people are going to want to volunteer on a part-time basis while living at home. Further, they are going to want their service jobs to help further educational and/or career aims.

Therefore, it's going to take massive efforts at the state level to overcome initial resistance to accomodating volunteers on the part of each state's public school districts, towns, counties, state agencies, and charitable organizations.

Start-up costs in both time and money will be large, but by the 4th or 5th years of the 10-year trial, this commitment should have levelled off.

Accountability

If national service is managed and directed by a national service agency, then it is at the federal level that final accountability should be placed.

By calling only for volunteers for both military as well as civilian service, this eliminates the time, cost, and money required to discipline those who would try to avoid serving if national service were mandatory.

To serve or not to serve -- that accountability is within the conscience of each 16 to 26 year old.

But the federal government would be accountable for providing;

A sufficient number of service openings;

A sufficient number of caring and helpful agents;

A sufficient computer system detailing jobs and openings.

A competent evaluation of the entire program.

Funding

This 10-year experiment in obligatory (not mandatory) nationwide service cannot be carried out solely by redistributing existing funds. New monies will have to be appropriated. But the following are three suggestions for redistribution of current funds:

- * The military would need fewer recruiting agents, hence this is an immediate source of NSA funds.

- * The schools could give up their \$736 million in vocational/technical aid; instead offer all interested students a cooperative education program, and could turn voc/tech facilities into pay-as-you-learn adult training and retraining centers.

- * A significant portion of the more than a billion dollars given out annually in student aid could be channeled, instead, into education entitlements as payment for completed service assignments.

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WHY NATIONAL SERVICE ? ~~~~~

* BACKGROUND *

Schooling

Our public schools play a very special role in our republic. It's not just that they are supposed to provide reading and writing skills basic to an "informed electorate," but they are expected, as well, to instill in our young people an understanding of how the democratic process works, and why it is we eschew every other political form of governance.

We're supposed to teach citizenship as part of the curriculum; our youngsters are supposed to learn the sharp differences between such political forms of government as oligarchies, monarchies, dictatorships, and democracies.

Somehow, we've concentrated too much on the "form" of how our republic is governed, and too little on the concepts which underlie the democratic principles so vital to the health and success of the United States.

One indication that our public schools have been failing of late to teach our young how to discharge their rights and responsibilities as citizen-soldiers, is revealed in the voting records of specific age groups. The smallest percent of voters in local, state, and even federal elections are in the age bracket 18 to 25. That is, the most recent attendants at our public schools, appear to have the least understanding of all citizens of the importance of the vote -- particularly in governance by representation.

And I know, after appealing to every history and social studies textbook publisher for material while I was education editor of The Christian Science Monitor, that there is almost nothing in the standard texts used in the elementary grades which deals in anything but the most superficial manner with such fundamental concepts as: "the pursuit of happiness;" the equality of rights, opportunity, and treatment; the art of compromise; the reasons for impeachment; and so forth.

And even though most US public schools have school elections and some form of student governance, it is almost always representative, and not participatory. This teaches pupils more about how an oligarchy works than how a democracy operates.

Town meetings, where a majority vote settles an issue, is direct participatory democracy. Public schools have every reason to use the town-meeting format for discussion and settlement of a host of school-related issues, yet they seldom do.

Throughout a US citizen's lifetime it is the jury system which offers clear opportunity for direct participation in our political democracy. "Innocent until proven guilty," with guilt established by a vote of one's peers, is a magnificent democratic principle.

Our schools should use the jury system for adjudication of as many school-related disputes as possible.

We learn by doing. And a controlled environment such as is native to all our public schools, is an ideal setting to provide basic lessons in participatory (as well as representative) democratic governance.

Unfortunately, our schools have almost dropped the teaching of civics and citizenship from the curriculum, at the same time they have been oligarchial -- and not democratic -- in their own governance. This has, obviously, so impressed our young people of voting age that when they are questioned why they have not registered or voted in key elections, have answered with a question of their own: "Why bother?"

Probably nowhere in our democracy do we not carry out in practice what we preach in principle in any more dramatic way than in the way our schools deal with the fundamental rights of excellence and equity.

Writing in the June issue of Harper's Magazine, Walter Karp states: "The great ambition professed by public school managers is, of course, education for citizenship and self-government, which harks back to Jefferson's historic call for 'general education to enable every man to judge for himself what will secure or endanger his freedom.'

"What the public school's practice with remorseless proficiency, however, is the prevention of citizenship and the stifling of self-government."

He continues, "Consider how effectively America's future citizens are trained not (his emphasis) to judge for themselves about anything. From the first grade to the twelfth, from one coast to the other, instruction in America's classrooms is almost entirely dogmatic."

For example, a study directed by John Goodlad which included visits to 1,000 classrooms, found that less than 1 percent of instructional time was given to consideration of concepts, -- to discussing and exploring students' opinions. In other words, dogmatism is what's offered in the schools 99 percent of the time; and excellence, perhaps, 1 percent.

Equity fares no better. Again Mr. Karp:
"Public schools stamp out republican sentiment by
habituating their students to unfairness, inequality,
and special privilege."

The toll on our children is devastating.
Those who need the best teachers -- those struggling
with how to learn -- get the worst. Those who most need
encouragement and tutoring from a peer who is more
skilled, are grouped with only those, who like
themselves, have failed.

In the upper grades, a small percentage of
students are given courses which will prepare them for
college; another handful are taught a precise (often
dead-end) skill. While the majority nationwide are
placed in academically unsound classes.

The favored few, then, end up espousing
oligarchial government; the bored majority accept what
is not true -- their inferiority -- and hence despise
themselves and the government which has tricked them
into believing in inequality. By not voting, they
further nullify their rights as citizens.

If ever there was a time for drastic change
in what and how we teach because of why we offer free
schooling in the first place, it is now.

It is no wonder that talk of national service always brings forth deep interest and attention, but not commitment. Nothing in our 12 years of schooling prepares us for the demands as well as the joys of service and hence for an understanding of self-government as a sound basis for strong national government.

Morris Janowitz, in his "Reconstruction of Patriotism: Education for Civic Consciousness," decries how little awareness, generally, there seems to be that we are members of a national community; that we must give as well as take. He cites a 1979 study which asked high school and college students to rank in order rights and responsibilities of US citizens.

The students ranked their right to a trial by jury very high; and placed their obligation to serve on a jury very low. Yet, democracy is shared government. It's that message the schools are failing to convey.

I am under no illusion that including service in school programs, or that better teaching of the concepts of democracy, or the placing of national service advisors in every secondary school will instantly reform our public schools. Or that attention to service will, on its own, replace mediocrity with excellence or eradicate long-established inequities.

But I will argue that without service there will be neither excellence nor equity. Also, that without discussion of democratic principles, and without participation in democratic governance, we'll perpetuate a school system which favors the few and crushes the majority.

At the very least, every school should ask each pupil each day to do a chore; i.e., to be of service to the school community. Also, each school should have a service project to be carried out in the immediate community. (More about these later in this paper.)

Part of my management plan for nationwide year-long service for all 16 to 26 year olds, calls for national service agents to be placed (along with three service volunteers) in every secondary school across the US. These agents (or advisors) would not be carried on the school budget, but on a national or state budget. Yet, they would be a vital part of the school community.

The very nature of their work would help immeasurably with school reform. Problem now is that there is no follow-up of secondary school graduates. We do not have in place any system for tracking what happens to dropouts, to graduates who leave vocational programs, to those who enter training programs, or even to those who are accepted at the college of their choice.

Nothing is known of the majority of high school leavers (both dropouts and graduates) who seek immediate employment.

How do they rate their guidance counselors? How do they rate their English teachers? Their math teachers? The program which was supposed to direct them how to find that first job?

Did they vote? Have they been active in their community's volunteer programs? How often do they make use of the public library?

We don't know the answers to these questions, nor is there any mechanism in place for schools which seek reform to know what their former students think they should reform, what they should eliminate, and what they should add.

But a national service program, tracking all 16 to 26 year olds, would not only know what employment and educational paths had been taken, but be in a position to ask the kinds of questions of deep interest to school reformers.

To summarize: Civic consciousness comes from civic participation, and from discussions with sound thinkers about the deeper meanings of citizenship in a democracy. Yet our public schools are failing to teach much about the rights or the obligations of democrats.

Certainly by involving themselves actively in the obligations of citizenship, the entire school community would be vitally interested in a study of the rights which come from being a United States citizen.

Charles C. Moskos, who is currently at work on a book about national service, categorizes the school/community/citizenship problem thusly:

"There was a time when the process of growing up was assumed to be a form of civic education, and resulted in the development of a sense of civic obligation. Today, civic obligation may be a necessary condition of civic education and, in turn, of growing up."

Volunteerism

If one candidate for a teaching position has volunteered to teach literacy in a community center for immigrants, and another has never participated in a volunteer service project, and both have similar academic qualifications and otherwise seem equally appealing, shouldn't those doing the hiring look at what I would call the "democratic dimension" and hire the literacy volunteer?

There's much talk of the publishing requirement leading to professorial tenure at a college or university. But most institutions look at three areas.

They are interested, of course, in the academic qualifications and in the amount and impact of published materials. But, in addition, they evaluate seriously what service a professor has rendered the larger community -- not just the campus.

Curiously, this aspect of tenure in higher education has seldom played any part in awarding tenure to public school teachers. An oversight which, I would argue, has contributed to the lack of good citizenship training throughout the curriculum and the extra-curricular school programs.

But even more curious is the fact that volunteerism and community service and people helping people is a cornerstone of our republic. Boys Clubs, Girl Scouts, Masons, Chambers of Commerce, Red Cross, Elder Hostel, Candy Strippers, Garden Clubs, Conservation Corps, City Foundations, National Guard, Junior League, Coast Guard, the YW & YM, Church Charity Organizations. The list of voluntary helping organizations and philanthropic foundations active across this land would fill a good-sized telephone book.

The success of our way of life is dependent upon our sharing. So is our civic consciousness. So is the health of our republic.

Hence, it is incumbent upon us, the experienced citizens, to offer service learning to our younger citizens.

It must be obvious in the extreme that our young people can learn about volunteerism only by volunteering. And although this has not been seen as one of the duties of our public schools -- providing for community service and requiring in-school duties -- this is the obvious organization to be entrusted with the development of good citizenship.

"Be all you can be." So goes the recruiting slogan for the armed forces. No appeal there to giving; a direct enticement for getting. I don't fault those in the military who approve this advertising copy. There are many interested in community service who use the same self-centered motivation to attract recruits.

In a way, they are correct. Service does teach job skills and does develop good work attitudes.

But there's another dimension to service, and it's that glow of inner satisfaction which comes from taking what we've gotten (earned or inherited), and sharing it with another.

Disasters tend to bring out this spirit of giving and intuitive understanding of civic responsibility. Let the river start to rise, and we all want to place sand bags where they will stop destruction.

Let us hear of someone whose belongings have been consumed in a fire, and we hasten to share what's in our closets.

A ship lost at sea, hikers stranded on a fog-shrouded mountain, a child who wanders away from a family picnic...the number and dedication of the volunteers who come to help is staggering.

Yet equally staggering are the reports about those who turn their backs when the need for help is greatest, and refuse to give aid or to become involved.

To quote again from Dr. Muller: "Our democracy profoundly needs public spirit, but the economy of our labor system encourages self-interest."

It's that "public spirit," which national service addresses. And oh, how I would like our schools, to be the centers for the development of such spirit! If we are not careful, and national service does become, as I am sure it will, a vital part of the American fabric, then national service boards -- totally separate from the schools -- will be set up in each community; just as draft boards were organized to place all eligible young men in military service.

Free public schools, though, are the obvious and Constitutional tax-supported organizations whose mandate is the training of citizens; or as Dr. Moskos calls them, citizen-soldiers.

The 3 Rs and a C,-- reading, writing, arithmetic, and citizenship.

Employment

Jack Kemp is credited with expressing the sentiment that young people between the ages of 16 and 26 need to be starting to climb their career ladders, and not "picking up cans in Yellowstone."

Unfortunately, he speaks for many. Yet, the law student who takes a year off to serve in a public defender's office might, through that work, gain a clearer sense of the direction he/she would like to take.

The budding entrepreneur, who serves with a VISTA program or on the staff of a not-for-profit enterprise, might discover just which business seemed "best" for him/her.

And possibly those young people who chose to serve by picking up cans in one of our local, state, or national parks would learn needed lessons of consistency, patience, cooperation, alertness, integrity, promptness, and so forth.

Britain's Alec Dickson advocates service which he categorizes as "useful work which would otherwise not be done."

Congressman Paul Tsongas, in 1979, sponsored a National Volunteer Service Corps as a "vehicle for solving high unemployment among young people and for teaching them discipline and other values."

Margaret Mead, in a speech given in 1966, asserted: "If every child knew he/she would some day serve, incentive from knowing one's skills are useful, would be universal and not selective."

Service and economic self-interest are not mutually exclusive. Learning how to work and learning how to serve can be done at one and the same time.

Also, what's becoming increasingly clear is that most of the new jobs available to those who will be leaving our secondary schools in the coming decades will be in the service sector, and not in industry or manufacturing. Service is the growing economic market in the US. The health and strength of our economy is going to depend, in increasing measure, on how well we teach our young people how to serve.

Today, within the industrial market, many skills are so job-specific that most employers don't want entry-level workers trained in a specific skill, but trained to be willing and understanding employees. They want workers who are loyal, prompt, courteous, conscientious, supportive, etc. And they will do the skill training.

There were 2.1 million 18 year olds in 1980; there are some 1.8 million this year (1985); and that figure will drop to 1.6 million in 1995. Demographers expect the numbers to start to rise again early in the 21st Century.

Which means that we'd do well to begin the enormous task of organizing service programs nationwide now annually for about 4 million 16 to 26 year olds, expecting that about one-fourth of them will choose some activity associated with the armed forces, leaving some 3 million young people a year to seek alternative service programs.

The unemployment levels among this age group are very high: 16% for whites, 24% for Hispanics, and 43% for blacks. Therefore, paid service -- even that which is compensated below the minimum hourly wage -- provides an added incentive for participation in national service.

Whether we're offering service in a daycare center (essential), or picking up cans in Yellowstone (unessential but aesthetic), or taking a meal to the homebound (vital), or emptying bed pans in a hospital (distasteful), or clearing weeds in a vacant lot to create a playground (fun), we're teaching job skills, job attitudes, and service knowhow.

General Volney F. Warner, an advocate of national service, has stated: "The younger generation's lack of identity with our nation frightens me."

It frightens me, too. And when I listen to those who greet a year or two of service for all citizens before the age of 27 as though it were some form of punishment instead of an essential part of learning how to be a productive citizen, I fear for the health of our democracy.

On January 31 of this year, Congressman Leon C. Panetta, provided the following remarks to the Congressional Record supporting legislation to create the Voluntary National Youth Service Act.

"Personal growth and self-esteem, a sense of participation in one's community as well as useful on-the-job training and experience are valuable products of public service."

And on June 6, in an op ed piece in the New York Times, Franklin Thomas, president of the Ford Foundation, argued, "National service could be more than a repair shop for social damage or a means of keeping youngsters occupied: it could help them sort out their identities, build lifetime principles, and develop a greater respect for self and society."

Mr. Thomas addressed, as well, those who consider service a detour to economic growth. He alluded to a few of the service projects now underway, and concluded:

"Not only do these programs help develop values and attitudes that go with responsible adulthood, (but) studies show that work experience -- even part-time jobs -- together with education and skill training can significantly improve a young person's long-term employment and earnings prospects."

Perhaps youth attitudes have changed drastically, but in 1970, Purdue University surveyed 2,000 high school students across the US, and found that an astounding 91 percent said they were "willing to defer their own personal plans and interests to donate a year's work to help solve the nation's problems."

The Christian Science Monitor, in an editorial citing the Purdue study stated: "It is increasingly recognized that many of America's problems can best be solved, not through impersonal federal service from afar, but through local, on-the-spot effort." And then the Monitor concluded:

"What more effective way to obtain such effort than to use youth's enthusiasm for helping others?"

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