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UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Twin Cities Campus

*Hubert H. Humphrey
Institute of Public Affairs*

*Humphrey Center
301-19th Avenue South
Minneapolis, MN 55455
612-625-9505
Fax: 612-625-6351*

November 15, 1993

Memo

To: Jennifer Pratt, USDA 202-720-2080

From: Harry Boyte

Re: USDA and Citizenship efforts

It was a pleasure to talk yesterday.

I'm sending several materials. The first is the memo we did for Galston on broad areas of potential collaboration between the New Citizenship and the administration.

We have followed up this proposal especially in the first two areas listed in the Galston memo, on service and USDA/Extension.

To begin with the latter, this idea took the form of a proposal for a citizen action/citizenship initiative through USDA, building on our own work with Extension Services. Attached here is Bob Nash's letter after our first meeting, and memos that I prepared on possible forms such an initiative might take. If there is any way to get Bob's attention to this -- for instance, if we could organize a small meeting to explore it in more detail, or to look at alternative approaches to a citizenship campaign through Extension/USDA -- that would be very useful, indeed. Let's talk about this later in the week.

The second area has been our work over the last nine months with the Office of National Service and the Commission. Building on that, we've talked about a possible proposal for a service and citizenship initiative with Extension. I'm also enclosing a memo I did for Pat Borich, Dean of Minnesota Extension, to show other state Extension directors. This might overlap to some extent with USDA's interest in Americorps, as we discussed.

I look forward to continuing this conversation, Jennifer. Many thanks for your help.

The State Department, A.I.D., USIA, and Defense all now have new positions and/or money appropriated "for the promotion of democracy abroad." They are still struggling to work out ways to use funds and programs wisely, and this resolution is full of evident political importance.

At the heart of democracy, in our view, is the understanding of citizenship not simply as voting and paying taxes but also as claiming responsibility for dealing with public problems, including the resolution of internal conflicts. Through experiences with the Dartmouth Conference forums among Americans and Soviets (the longest continuing off-the-record, high level exchange), as well as other venues, we have seen how citizen-to-citizen projects can be vital complements to government-to-government initiatives, first in conflict-resolution and now in building civil societies.

5) Citizenship and Television: We are exploring new television formats for civic education and discussion of citizens' roles and responsibilities that emphasize lateral communication among citizens, rather than vertical communication between citizens and their leaders (Perot's "town meetings"). There are important dimensions of interactive telecommunication that have been insufficiently exploited; we plan to develop a pilot in concert with Kettering, the Markle Foundation and other parties.

These five items suggest a range of concerns that groups associated with The New Citizenship are addressing. In the meeting, we could address all, or focus in on a few.

call Peter +
Trudy
Johnson-Lenz
Awakening Tech
503/635
2615
OR



DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20250

APR. 20 1993

Harry Boyte
147 Hubert H. Humphrey Center
University of Minnesota
301 19th Avenue South
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455

Dear Harry:

I enjoyed talking with you regarding your concept of democracy and citizenship. I agree with you regarding the potential for the Cooperative Extension Service to play a new and major role in rural development.

As Secretary Espy moves forward with his reorganization plans, I will make sure the issue of the Extension Services's role in this effort is seriously considered.

If there is any specific action you think I should take at this point regarding our discussion please let me know by a telephone call or letter. Again, I enjoyed talking with you. When you see Governor Winter, please tell him I said hello.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Bob Nash", is written over the typed name.

BOB NASH
Special Assistant

P.S.: Thanks for the information.

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Twin Cities Campus

Hubert H. Humphrey
Institute of Public AffairsHumphrey Center
301 19th Avenue South
Minneapolis, MN 55455
612-625-4505
Fax: 612-625-6351

April 29, 1993

Memorandum

To: Patrick Borich, Dean, Minnesota Extension Service

From: Harry C. Boyte, Co-Director, Center for Democracy and Citizenship

Re: Concept of a National Citizenship Campaign

This memorandum responds to your request to detail further the concept that we have discussed of a major national campaign to strengthen citizenship and civic education and action in Cooperative Extension Services; it is prepared in anticipation of your meeting with the Extension Committee on Organization and Policy next week.

The concept of a citizenship campaign builds on the highly successful work that we have done in partnership with Minnesota Extension Services over the past three years through Project Public Life, our theory-building and civic education initiative at the Humphrey Institute's Center for Democracy and Citizenship. As you know, we understand citizenship to include strong, practical dimensions: in America historically, the citizen has been understood not only as a voter or rights-bearing member of the nation, but also as an effective, public-spirited agent in practical problem-solving. Today, the nation has storms of controversy over who is included in citizenship and the scope of civic rights. Yet it neglects discussions of what citizenship means. But the view of citizen as public contributor, now virtually absent in policy-making environments dominated by narrow expertise, is crucial to the challenges we face.

The context for such a campaign is the perception that the nation badly needs a renewal of education and public action aimed at civic problem-solving. We need to tap the energy, common sense, and talents of our citizenry to address our daunting problems. Moreover, there is a changing climate in which to initiate such an effort: heightened civic interest throughout the 1992 elections; signs that Americans of many backgrounds and views are deeply concerned about the nation's future; the call by the new Administration for partnership with the American people in addressing our problems.

The result of our collaboration with Extension has been the strengthening of citizenship dimensions of a variety of Extension programs, ranging from 4-H Community Pride and the Ambassadors Program to new initiatives such as Youth and Families at Risk. Substantial program improvement and increased public participation have occurred. Against the background of this experience, we are convinced that Extension Services is a sleeping giant of civic renewal. A strong citizenship initiative, with support from USDA and from ECOP, could significantly shape the character of rural and community development in the nation.

The goal of this campaign would be to enhance the capacity of Cooperative Extension Services to educate volunteers, community members, agents and other staff to think and

to act in more public, civic terms. Such a campaign would employ, develop further, and continuously evaluate the conceptual citizenship education framework created by Project Public Life. "Conceptual training" involves the development of an open-ended yet carefully designed framework of broad, related civic themes that can be integrated into institutional practices and continuing education. The curriculum builds, in part, on the Citizenship Education Program of the Southern Christian Leadership in the 1960s civil rights movement, which taught thousands of low-income blacks citizenship and public problem-solving; advances in citizen and community training over the past three decades; and the theory-building and practical experiments of Project Public Life.

A citizenship campaign could be undertaken with several elements:

- * A national citizenship campaign committee, associated with ECOP, to help coordinate and organize the overall initiative;
- * The development of a major civic training resource, perhaps in the form of an Action Center on Citizenship associated with the University of Minnesota's Center for Democracy and Citizenship. The Center would direct training efforts especially toward the mix of leaders who can bring about strengthening of practical citizenship: e.g. on-the-ground agents and volunteer leaders working with diverse publics; key positional leaders with skill and knowledge of Extension culture and committed to the strengthening of the system's civic mission; those responsible for continuing education, staff and curriculum development.
- * An RPF process that generates proposals for creative initiatives to develop and institutionalize practical citizenship within Extension Services program areas and continuing education and staff and curriculum development.

The initial impetus for the citizenship campaign concept has been our conversations with the administration that stem from The New Citizenship, a long-term effort to strengthen citizenship in our nation's social infrastructure launched by our Center for Democracy and Citizenship at the University, in concert with the Council for the Advancement of Citizenship, the Whitman Center at Rutgers, Minnesota Youth and Families at Risk/Extension Services, and endorsed by civic leaders such as Andrew Young, David Mathews, Raul Yzquierre and others. One of the priority areas we advanced as part of The New Citizenship has been such a campaign, working closely with the office of the Under Secretary for Rural and Small Community Development in USDA. Former Governor William Winter in Mississippi, a counselor to The New Citizenship effort as a whole, has held several positive conversations with Secretary Espy about the concept; I have met with Bob Nash, Under Secretary-Designate, who also expressed strong interest in this concept and has asked for specific, concrete ideas for the next steps. Our own strategy meetings with Extension here have also been very helpful.

We are enthusiastic about the potential for such an effort. Please let me know how I can be of any further assistance in your conversations with ECOP.

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June 7, 1993

Hubert H. Humphrey
Institute of Public Affairs

Humphrey Center
301 19th Avenue South
Minneapolis, MN 55455
612-625-9505
Fax: 612-625-6351

Memo

To: Bob Nash, Under Secretary for Small Community and Rural Development, USDA

From: Harry C. Boyte, Co-Director, Center for Democracy and Citizenship

Re: Citizenship/Citizen Action Campaign

1) Goal

The goal of this campaign is to enhance the capacity of Cooperative Extension to educate volunteers, community members, agents and other staff to think and to act in more public, civic terms. The results envisioned include

- 1) a marked improvement in problem-solving outcomes -- over the long run, large numbers of citizens involved as responsible partners with government in a variety of initiatives, from economic development to service redesign;
- 2) a strong, visible, high-profile example of "reinventing government" in positive ways.

The concept of a citizenship campaign builds on the successful work that we have done in partnership with Minnesota Extension Services over the past four years through Project Public Life, our theory-building and civic education initiative at the Humphrey Institute's Center for Democracy and Citizenship. As you know, we understand citizenship to include strong, practical dimensions: in America historically, the citizen has been understood not only as a voter or rights-bearing member of the nation, but also as an effective, public-spirited agent in practical problem-solving. Today, the nation has storms of controversy over who is included in citizenship and the scope of civic rights. Yet it neglects discussions of what citizenship means. But the view of citizen as public contributor, now virtually absent in policy-making environments dominated by narrow expertise, is crucial to the challenges we face.

The context for such a campaign is the widespread perception that the nation badly needs a renewal of education and public action aimed at civic problem-solving. We need to tap the energy, common sense, and talents of our citizenry to address our daunting problems. There is a changing climate in which to initiate such an effort: heightened civic interest throughout the 1992 elections; signs that Americans of many backgrounds and views are deeply concerned about the nation's future; the call by the new Administration for partnership with the American people in addressing our problems.

The result of our collaboration with Extension has been the strengthening of citizenship dimensions of a variety of Extension programs, ranging from 4-H Community Pride and the Ambassadors Program to new initiatives such as Youth and Families at Risk. The process has not been simple or without tension, but nonetheless significant improvement in program outcomes has occurred. Moreover, civic education has significantly aided

the "reinvention of government" theme in extension itself.

Against the background of this experience, we are convinced that Extension Services is a sleeping giant of civic renewal. A strong citizenship initiative, with support from USDA and from ECOP, could significantly shape the character of rural and community development in the nation.

2) Structural mechanism

o **Training Resource:** We need to create a major civic training resource at the University of Minnesota's Center for Democracy and Citizenship that can provide needed training across the Extension system. This resource should be linked to two or three other regional civic training centers as well. The civic training center should also be able to impact on developments like the National Service Trust initiative. For a system-wide training capacity (15,000 agents), our rough estimate is \$500-600,000 a year).

o **RFP:** We could envision grants for creative civic action/community development projects in the range of \$200-300,000 each (for 15, this is approximately \$3 - 5 million). This is somewhat below the Pew Partnership grants for mid-size city revitalization (which are in the \$400,000 range). These grants aim, especially, at two goals: First, they would prompt the creation of innovative, cross-institutional partnerships on civic action and development themes. Second, connected to action plans, the projects would include training in conceptual knowledge and practice. Leaders' learning the conceptual language of citizenship and the practice of conceptual reflection is key to their being able to achieve lasting institutional change.

The size of the grants needs more discussion, but it should be noted that this is an initiative where scale of funding is almost inversely proportional to potential payoff. Grants would initiate a training and planning year, with more funds for an implementation phase. The grantees would

- 1) Create a working group, with extension playing an important leadership role, in developing a civic education and action project, using a critical issue (eg teen pregnancy; community or economic development; school reform) to develop a broader collaboration. From the beginning, the issue is not the exclusive "point": the initiative uses the issue as a means for capacity building around civic education and action.
- 2) Hire a staff coordinator or director.
- 3) Get training in civic categories and concepts.
- 4) Do a civic inventory, looking at resources that can be adapted for civic education (like continuing education/ conferences/ curriculum).

- 5) Undertake curriculum development.
- 6) Develop a set of working relationships, with strong local cross connections across normal lines of policy and institution, and ties to larger national institutions.
- 7) Work on translation of lessons into public policy.

Other elements: We need to look at how to pyramid examples so that people can learn from each other (perhaps a phased-in series of re-grants makes sense: some the first year, some the next, etc.) This envisions a longer term project. Similarly, we need to figure out how to give key roles to grassroots leadership, perhaps through building a network of civic educators to teach subsequent generations of grantees.

Scenario One

Brown County, a fictitious county, is a largely, racially diverse rural area with high levels of poverty. Brown has high rates of teen pregnancy, linked with other problems as well such as high welfare rates; lack of teen educational opportunities for school drop-outs; and uncertain economic prospects.

Yet Brown County has a number of strengths to build upon for a Citizenship/Citizen Action project that combines action on teen pregnancy with civic education, including several innovative political and civic leaders interested in a shift from a focus on "youth as problems" or "youth as leaders of tomorrow" to approaches that develop youth potential for civic contribution and that involve teens and young as serious participants in decision-making. Moreover, many local leaders have come to recognize that expert-determined approaches to problem-definition and problem-solving are simply too narrow to address successfully many-faceted issues like teen pregnancy.

The mayor and the local 4-H agent both receive an RFP through designated networks of potential institutional applicants and organize a working group to draft a proposal for a grant request to support action on teen pregnancy connected to civic education. The working group also includes the 4-H Extension Agent, the director of Public Health, who has strong ties to the Hispanic population, two local ministers from African-American churches, and a teacher in the nursing program at the local community college. Their proposal rests on a strategic plan that includes public forums on teen pregnancy; training for leaders in core citizenship concepts using the framework for public problem-solving developed by Project Public Life, which the 4-H Agent has seen at work in other state Extension Services; action teams made up of participants from different institutions that have never worked together on the issue before; continuing training in practical civic and political skills such as negotiation, strategic planning, organizing, and deliberation; and development of a new citizenship course in the nursing program at the community college, with a practicum tied to the action initiative. They secure local support.

Scenario Two

Centerville is a fictitious small town fraught with significant gang and drug problems, departure of many middle class professionals, the erosion of the manufacturing economic base, and declining social services. In Centerville, the extension agricultural agent enlists two Hispanic church pastors, who take a leadership role in putting together a plan for economic development tied to civic education. The plan, envisioning economic development that utilizes the machine tool and related skills of many workers now unemployed after the closing of a nearby manufacturing plant, has several distinctive elements. It involves training in core citizenship concepts as the basis for partnerships across customary lines of agency, institutional, and policy division. It enlists the support of a church-based community organization in the area which has the ability to negotiate with local and federal officials. It further involves African-American business and professional associations in the nearby metropolitan area -- many of whose members have roots in Centerville in earlier years -- and heads of several social service agencies willing to experiment with reworking of services in ways that involve "clients" as generators of problem-solving approaches.

The plan creates a working relationship with a local area community college to add civic dimensions -- including skills of analysis, conceptual thinking, and practical, civic action -- to a number of economic development, business and technical courses. Moreover, the strategy group creates a conversation with the business school in a major local university to think about how professors and graduate students might work effectively and collaboratively in this initiative. Finally, they work with the national Citizenship Campaign committee to explore possibilities for funding for ongoing curriculum reform and for business incubator projects, speeded through federal agencies.

Both the Brown County and the Centerville civic action plans secure seed grants through The Citizenship/USDA campaign, launching innovative problem-solving initiatives in their counties. As grantees, leaders from these projects participate on the national strategy team, whose institutional partners develop ways to build model examples of "citizen-government partnerships" that illustrate key Clinton administration objectives.

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*Twin Cities Campus**Hubert H. Humphrey
Institute of Public Affairs**Humphrey Center
301-19th Avenue South
Minneapolis, MN 55455
612-625-9505
Fax: 612-625-6351*

October 25, 1993

Memorandum

To: Patrick Borich, Dean, Minnesota Extension Service
cc: G. Edward Schuh, Dean, Humphrey Institute
Marcia Adler, Association of Land Grant Colleges and Universities

From: Harry C. Boyte, Co-Director, Center for Democracy and Citizenship

Re: A Proposal for a Multi-state Extension Service Campaign with Intensive Civic Education

This memorandum develops ideas from our discussion on October 5, and also from my discussions with staff of the Office of National Service and the Commission on National and Community Service. It also follows our Citizenship Symposium with foundations and the White House on September 1, sponsored by the Lilly Endowment.

The Corporation will have a strong interest in multi-state demonstration projects with several features:

- * They should include a planning period that enables the development of strong partnerships with community-based groups and larger institutions;
- * They should include an effective evaluation process that allows the lessons learned to be generalized nationally and taken to other service projects (in land grant terms, that includes a strong research dimension as well as outreach);
- * They should include a strong element of civic education, understood as the development of the public leadership skills of participants and others (public leadership skills include things like the ability to work with diverse groups; understand political dynamics; negotiate different interests; develop strategic plans and the like);
- * They should include strategies for internal change, so that institutions can work more effectively with citizens.

All of these elements for demonstration projects are likely to be represented in the guidelines through the language of civic education and institutional capacity-building. Those putting together the guidelines and the corporations have a strong interest in these themes, as you could see from the meeting on September 1. The new "User's Guide" just out from the Corporation argues, for instance, that "National service programs must...have an impact on their participants, developing public-spirited, effective citizens with the skills needed for life-long contributions to solving the pressing problems facing our communities and our nation." This is language taken directly from our advisory memos to the guideline team. But there is little practical experience with how to do this. Extension is well-positioned to take leadership in this area.

I would suggest that Extension consider developing a proposal for a three year service and citizenship project on one of the four designated service priorities (health and human services, environment, education, public safety) under the National Competitive grants, Subtitle C of the Act. Fifty-six million dollars will be awarded in this area (I'm enclosing the Americorps October bulletin, which describes the grant areas on the last two pages). It might be good to also seek supplemental funding for aspects of the project, from one of the foundations interested in civic education enrichment. A project on problems associated with alcohol use, for instance, would reflect the health reform concerns widespread today (shifting toward preventive medicine), while it also would link to other issues such as economic development and family violence. Possible elements include:

- * A three year multi-state project with strong staff and volunteer development drawing on the resources of several leading college-based civic training centers;
- * Development of collaborative partnerships that involve leadership from institutions such as community organizations, schools, prevention programs, economic development agencies;
- * Use of service trust positions as community-outreach and organizing staff in 20-30 communities, involving a cross-section of community leaders in developing action plans.
- * Planning for ongoing institutional capacity-building in institutions to work more effectively with citizens after the life of the grant;
- * A strong evaluation and self-evaluation plan.

A service and citizenship project of this sort can build, in part, on the work that we have done in partnership with Minnesota Extension Services and other state Extension Services over the past three years through Project Public Life, our theory-building and civic education initiative at the Center for Democracy and Citizenship, based in the Humphrey Institute. This work has borne home to us the importance of understanding citizenship as effective, public-spirited contribution to problem-solving.

We have found that real institutional change has to impact the way professionals work with other citizens -- it means reviving the tradition of "civic professionalism," in Tom Bender's phrase, that works with people rather than on them.

The first iteration of the guidelines for Subtitle C will be available in early November; final guidelines will be prepared by the first of the year. The RFPs will go out in January, with a submission date likely in March and awards announcements in late April or May. As you suggested, an MES sponsored planning meeting in December might be the best way to begin developing a proposal.