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GOP Conference on National Service, 6/23/93

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## MEMO

TO: Jack  
FR: Robert  
DA: June 23, 1993  
RE: Republican conference on national service

### Attending members

(seated around the table)  
Bob Dole (left early; returned after Gunderson)  
Bob Michel (stayed most of the time)  
Orrin Hatch (10 minutes)  
Bill Goodling (whole time)  
Steve Gunderson (left after he spoke and Roukema responded)  
Chris Shays (most of the time)  
Nancy Kassenbaum (whole time)  
Dan Miller (whole time; silent)  
Tom Petri (whole time)  
Marge Roukema (whole time)  
Susan Molinari (left after she spoke)  
Dave Durenberger (came very late)  
Paul Coverdell (briefly; silent)

There were about forty people in the audience.

### Panel

Joshua Abromowitz (The Public Interest)  
Doug Bandow (Cato Institute)  
Denis Doyle (Hudson Institute)  
Robert Jones (now with RJR Nabisco; former CETA administrator)

### General impressions

*Shays*

- Durenberger's support is shaky. / *Diplomatic*
- Molinari might become supportive, though she is angry at George Miller.
- Kassenbaum doubts accommodation with Administration can be reached.
- There was a relentless flow of negative arguments. These were not coordinated and, in fact, often contradicted one another. (Egs.: Too big, too small; too Federal, too much like CETA; awards always bad, means-tested awards fine.)
- The conversation was set up so that Dole and Michel could start out saying, "Let's hear the evidence"; the evidence could overwhelmingly demonstrate that national service is a terrible idea; and Dole and Michel could say, "We gave it a fair hearing."

### Summary of conference

DOLE: "Let's look at the Clinton/Kennedy/Ford approach and the alternatives." There are four tests: meeting urgent needs; economy and efficiency; total quality management and control; and

real results. Concerned that participation will be limited; these funds could be better spent on Pell grants; and that there is no real deficit in community service that this program should meet. Glad that there was someone from the White House present, and wanted to take a fair look.

MICHEL: Goodling and Kassenbaum did excellent work in Committee. Questioned a "massive new spending program"; whether this was the best way to support either community service or educational opportunity; a \$20,000 a person a year program for few people, not limited by income; and whether any needs would really be met.

KASSENBAUM: Bill is very complicated and that there should be more time to look at it. Spoke about the importance of coordinating existing programs.

GOODLING: "This program is immoral." Tried and failed to include an amendment to limit the education aid to those with incomes \$15-\$70,000.

(Panel members gave their statements. Briefly:)

DOYLE: Service should be required in the schools. This won't do that; it will undermine the real spirit of service with money, creating a "freebie" where there should be "sacrifice." It will discourage voluntary service. And it could cost \$120-\$150 billion each year.

ABROMOWITZ: Because the matching requirements are low, local organizations will take people even if they don't need them, leading to useless work. Raise the match. "Supports national service in principle."

BANDOW: Long list of reasons this is a bad idea: too small, a pale copy of the original idea; if it's about character development, it can't be mercenary; service should be to community, not to state; public service isn't better than private service; the list of "unmet needs" is infinite and meaningless; it will become a political boondoggle; non-displacement means no real jobs; should build on existing community efforts.

JONES: This is a jobs program like CETA. Organizations will come into being solely to collect government money and will do a bad job. We are creating "a bureaucracy bigger than anything the student loan system has ever seen." There will be no net added benefits, instead displaced workers and displaced work. As an alternative, we should pay current volunteers in existing networks small amounts. "If it ain't broke, don't fix it."

MOLINARI: Said briefly that as an indication of Democrats' attitudes, George Miller attacked an amendment of hers for encouraging slavery.

GUNDERSON: "Be a little open-minded." Strongly defended President's initiative. Much change due to Republicans: such sums in out-years; lower benefit; annual debate. Talked about 8 Republican principles, some of which were: making people work for benefits; decentralization; sub-minimum wages; meeting real needs; not means-testing. Amendments he would support: increased matching requirement; trigger amendment for work-study, not Pell's.

ROUKEMA: "This program has absolutely no redeeming value... it will have nothing to do with the rural hospital you want to support.... There is no relationship between the theory of this program and Republican principles.... This is a big bureaucracy if I ever saw one."

HATCH: Agreed with Roukema. Said there are already programs working well. Called Clinton plan "elitist."

KASSENBAUM: "The ship is pulling off ... my substitute is like a barnacle ... it's probably too late ... maybe we can meld ideas and make it work, but I don't know that we can." Specifically concerned about the excessive educational awards; double benefits for AFDC recipients. Asked panel for other suggestions, which generally repeated their opening remarks. Also, had charts showing her simple system and our complex one.

PETRI: Worried about link to welfare reform. Suggested that the program was being rammed down their throats, but since no money would be appropriated, it didn't matter anyway.

SHAYS: Strongly supported Administration, saying it has been very open. "You should bring your concerns to them, they will be responsive." Too bad the Kassenbaum meeting occurred so late. People should work for their awards. "With this means-testing, you're out-Democratizing the Democrats." It's a state based program, and that's good. The ACTION program functions well.

DURENBERGER: "I was a reluctant cosponsor." Opposed "national" as against "community" service and the strong education-related pitch. "We should shape this into whatever a new Democratic proposal would be." Appreciated Kassenbaum's approach and criticisms.

KASSENBAUM: Small size of the Act is key to its success. Need to learn from failures of CETA, etc.

Shays

4 presentations week

Dole very diplomatic

Model more critical than expected

Goaling "immoral" -- need to distinguish from  
other "spending"

non-event

Republicans still funding around

Shays invite = leaving option open

Abramowitz was pathetic

Kasselsaun "flow of funds" very misleading

go to GAO