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Folder Title:
National Service

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98

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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

Mark

As per David Geagen's suggestion,
here's our summary of national
service. I've taken the liberty of
sending it to Chris Vearry &
David Wilhelm. Hope it's what you
all had in mind.

RL

Scoop

Give copy to Waldman
for our 6 month review

NATIONAL SERVICE: From Vision to Reality

When he announced his candidacy for President, Bill Clinton outlined a vision of a "domestic Peace Corps," in which young Americans would serve our country and earn money for college in return. At his Inaugural, the President called on Americans to join together in "seasons of service." Then in March and May speeches at Rutgers University and the University of New Orleans, the President laid out the details of national service legislation. House and Senate Committees reported out the President's bill with bipartisan support in June. Now, less than seven months after the Inaugural, the National and Community Service Act is poised to become the law of the land.

The service initiative is new public policy founded on the oldest American values: opportunity, responsibility, and community. The legislation embodies principles of "reinventing government" -- relying on communities instead of bureaucracies to develop programs, stimulating competition for funds rather than offering block grants, and requiring measurable performance in meeting unmet needs. But national service's central principle is the old American idea that by working together, we can improve our lives, bridge our differences, and lift up our nation.

The specific provisions of the final legislation are substantially the same as the legislation that the President proposed. The service program will:

- Create a new Corporation for National and Community Service that combines two existing agencies and allows new employees to be hired through a flexible, merit-based process.
- Enable Americans to earn an educational award of nearly \$5000 for each term of service, in addition to a small stipend and basic benefits.
- Make information about service programs widely available to Americans while leaving recruitment at the local level.
- Require measurable results in meeting clear needs: immunizing infants, tutoring children at risk, cleaning up national parks, fighting crime, and so on.
- Enable 100,000 Americans to serve our country and pay for school over the next three years.

Congress acted quickly on the legislation -- three months from introduction to final passage. The program enjoyed strong bipartisan support. A majority of Senate Committee Republicans voted favorably to report out the initiative, and in the end 26 House and 7 Senate Republicans supported the legislation. At the same time, Democrats were nearly perfectly united in support: all 56 Senate Democrats voted to end a threatened filibuster, and only 5 House Democrats opposed the program on final passage. With the swift action on the legislation, the Corporation for National and Community Service will be up and running on October 1.

MEMORANDUM

TO: see (Distribution List)

FROM: Mark Gearan 

RE: National Service Initiative

DATE: June 27, 1993

I would appreciate any ideas you have regarding the attached memo. Please respond soon. We should certainly decide before the Bill singing.

Distribution List:

Mack McLarty
Maggie Williams
David Gergen
Rahm Emanuel
Alexis Herman
Bruce Lindsey
Roy Neel
George Stephanopoulos
David Dreyer
Jeff Eller
Dee Dee Myers
Ricki Seidman
Bob Boorstin
Michael Waldman
Stan Greenberg
Mandy Grumwald
Paul Begala

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

June 23, 1993

MEMORANDUM FOR MARK GEARAN

FROM: Eli Segal *ES*

SUBJECT: Naming the National Service Initiative

The President's national service initiative is currently known simply as "national service."

This name seems less than ideal. The initiative is heavily decentralized, and we will need an evocative, easily recognizable name to give it a national, Presidential stamp. Young people should want to "join" the program. In addition, the name should make for a good t-shirt, one that college graduates from the Ivy League and high school dropouts from the ghetto can all wear with pride. Without such a winning name, I worry, national service will never achieve the easy recognition as a national program and a presidential initiative that it deserves.

At this late date, the President would need to announce the name in a way that garnered considerable media attention. I recommend either a speech or remarks at the bill-signing ceremony -- which could occur at the end of July or right after the August recess.

As to the name itself, we would like to capture the themes of the program: youth, change, patriotism, and community. We have consulted with our advertising team from the campaign, Hollywood studio heads, a Little Rock ad agency which proceeded on a pro bono basis, and many others. The names that seem most promising to me are:

- AmeriCorps (patriotic; reference to Peace Corps and CCC connects to successful past; too corporate?)
- Team America
- Common Ground (feeling of community is conveyed)
- C Force -- the Power of Change (appeal to youth; sense of energy and adventure)

We could, of course, stay with "national service" if it still seems to be the best choice. It's out there already and the President seems comfortable with it. But it's not evocative, it's not about communities, and it's not about educational opportunity.

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