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Volunteers fail to heed Clinton's call

Summit produces few results

By Brian McGrory
GLOBE STAFF

WASHINGTON - Back in April, at the volunteerism summit in Philadelphia, President Clinton stood with three former presidents and retired General Colin Powell and declared in no vague terms, "We are here because I want to redefine the meaning of citizenship in America."

While rock stars sang for the crowds and old political enemies blurred battle lines in the name of a higher cause, it appeared that Vice President Al Gore might be right when he described the gathering as the launch of a "dramatic national effort."

But nearly six months later, many leaders and front-line workers in the nation's nonprofit industry say that the highly touted summit has barely caused a blip in the number of people volunteering, nevermind a redefinition of any sort.

They complained that summit

leaders have done little to pursue their ambitious goals. They also say that Clinton has spoken on volunteerism precious few times, and in relatively low-profile settings, since leaving the klieg lights of Philadelphia behind.

"I don't think it was a failure, but I don't think it was a seminal event," said Jeremy Rifkin, president of the Foundation of Economic Trends in Washington. "The president could be using this as a bully pulpit. Reagan certainly did. Bush did. Clinton has done nothing since."

Said Julian Wolpert, a Princeton University professor and expert on philanthropy: "I don't see much follow-through."

On the streets, from the homeless shelters of Massachusetts to the mentoring programs in San Francisco, executives and activists in the nonprofit industry say they saw none of the expected surge in volunteers after the Philadelphia event.

VOLUNTEERS Page A36

Summit stirs hopes but few volunteers

■ VOLUNTEERS

Continued from Page A1

To them, the glitz of the summit failed to translate to the grinding work of volunteerism.

"It didn't have a huge impact," said Paul Denning, a spokesman at the Pine Street Inn, a Boston homeless shelter. Added John Scherer, the program director for the Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Marin County, Calif., of his post-summit recruitment: "It wasn't significantly different than what we would have in any given month."

Likewise with many large national organizations. At the United Way of America, spokesman Don Struke simply said, "I have heard nothing myself." At the highly successful Youth Service America, Steven Culbertson, one of the most enthusiastic supporters of the summit, has realized few results.

"I'm not seeing a huge jump, or hearing about people banging down doors," Culbertson said. "We run a volunteer Web site, the largest site on the Internet on volunteering. But we haven't seen our hits go through the roof since the summit."

Ann Kaplan, the research director for the American Association of Fund-Raising Counsel, said the non-profit groups represented by her organization watched the summit come and go with little impact in volun-

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JEREMY RIFKIN

President of the Foundation of Economic Trends

teers or financial contributions. She and others said that many of the highly touted corporate commitments announced at the summit had actually been promised months before.

"We have not seen a marked increase that we have noticed," Kaplan said. "The thing that makes people volunteer is being part of a community of commitment, where you care about the organization. It is not a top-down type of thing."

For Clinton, the failed expectations on volunteerism parallel another round of criticism he has received on his race relations initiative. In June, he launched what he called a year-long "national conversation" on race issues. But four months into the program, his advisory board has done little more than hire a staff. Its

one meeting with the president appeared so unfocused that Clinton left 15 minutes before his allotted time had expired, apparently for lack of anything else to say.

At the White House, aides staunchly defend Clinton's performance on volunteerism, and history supports their contention that he arrives at the issue with some authority. Clinton founded the highly successful Corporation for National Service in his first term, which includes the Americorps program.

Since the summit, the administration has completed many of Clinton's smaller volunteerism goals. They include: implementing a mentoring program at the Pentagon, a food recovery summit at the Department of Agriculture, an alliance between the Department of Health and Human Services and the Girl Scouts of America, an expanded scholarship program for Americorps volunteers, and a program that waives student-loan interest payments for a year if recipients perform volunteer work.

is a reinvigorated citizenship we are talking about. The fault, if things don't get done, will lie with those missing in action at the state and local level."

Around the country, many local activists praise Powell, who continues to travel widely and speak at many of the state summits to inspire people toward greater action.

In Washington, the spokesman of America's Promise, the 35-employee organization that Powell formed to follow up on the summit's goals, said the program was proceeding "unbelievably well." But asked for specific numbers of commitments and volunteers, he declined, saying organizers did not plan to unveil those until later this month.

The group has been quietly criticized by some in the movement as disorganized. Indeed, in less than six months, it has already seen the departures of two chairmen — one full time, the second an interim choice — is now headed by noted philanthropist Ray Chambers, who guards his privacy.

"America's Promise seems to be a one-man band at this point, with Colin Powell out talking and gathering commitments," said Paul Clery, editor in chief of the NonProfit Times, a trade publication that closely monitors the industry. "Whether they're getting those commitments I don't know."

Clinton has devoted one brief speech to volunteerism since April — a radio address in late July. And he occasionally has weaved the concept of community service into other speeches, most notably in an address to the U.S. Conference of Mayors in San Francisco in late June.

"It is a theme he believes in," said Ann Lewis, the White House communications director. "We build it into a lot of what we are doing to heighten interest."

Still, aides are acutely aware of the criticisms, which began even before the summit, when many sociologists declared the event a public relations stunt rather than a substantive policy initiative.

"He's been busy on a number of fronts," said Harrison Wofford, the chief executive officer of the Corporation for National Service, explaining the lack of attention. "I feel confident in the next three years that he will use the bully pulpit of the White House very effectively. The White House is actively working with us to plan how to do it and where and when to do it."

Around the country, many of the communities and states that sent delegations to Philadelphia are just now planning local summits, where activists said much of the real work of spurring volunteerism will take place. Massachusetts will have a summit in Boston on Oct. 26.

"There was some cynicism going into Philadelphia that it would be a cameo performance for the cameras, and a number of us were skeptical that this was more PR than substance," said Ira Jackson, executive vice president of BankBoston, one of the summit's main sponsors. "But it

problem among nonprofit groups, where budgets are often razor thin and staffs are frequently overworked. Many such groups that are the most in need of volunteers are the most inept at putting volunteers to work, organizers said, largely because they do not have strong programs with clear goals and supervision.

Without a good infrastructure behind them, many volunteers become frustrated and quit or cannot find appropriate volunteer work.

"The summit served a great service in getting the message out there," said Kathy Behrens, executive director of New York Cares, a volunteer placement group with chapters in cities around the country, including Boston. "But one thing that needs follow-up, and one thing that wasn't addressed, is where those volunteering opportunities are."

"It's not enough to say, 'Volunteer, be a mentor.' It's not enough. You have to make sure they are meaningful opportunities."

Many summit organizers, seeing no immediate surge in volunteering, now say that it will be a long, methodic process in building a culture of greater service. Wofford, for one, said he is frustrated having the summit's success measured in hard numbers. Others agree, shucking off the notion that the greatest chance for success comes in the wake of the massive publicity of the summit.

"One of the byproducts of a spectacular and unique event is the possibility of failed expectations," said Robert Goodwin, the president of the Points of Light Foundation in Washington. "I'm sure that many nonprofits hoped that an occasion such as this would result in more immediate signs of support in volunteer hours and cash donations. It would say that it is unrealistic to expect an avalanche of response."

File 6 Month Report -
Summit Follow up

A.16 NE +

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 1997

National Report

The New York Times

Push for Volunteerism Brings No Outpouring

Some Companies Raise Their Donations

By JUDITH MILLER

Lorraine Bodden did not show up for work yesterday at KPMG Peat Marwick, the giant accounting firm. Instead, she danced with patients at the Mary Manning Walsh Nursing Home's "autumn ball" in Manhattan, one of 20,000 KPMG employees in 130 offices across the country who got the day off with pay to volunteer at schools, hospitals, nursing homes, parks and youth centers.

KPMG is one of 300 companies and dozens of nonprofit organizations that have begun to fulfill their pledges, made six months ago at the Summit for America's Future, in

Philadelphia spearheaded by Gen. Colin L. Powell, President Clinton and three former Presidents, to spend \$1 billion and volunteer countless hours to help two million children by 2000.

Yet, KPMG's "World of Spirit Day" was planned more than a year before the April meeting, executives said, and the only change in plans arising from that gathering was a stronger emphasis on programs for youth.

KPMG is not alone. Many companies responding to Mr. Clinton's call for a "nation of volunteers" promised to undertake activities they were already doing or at least planning, interviews show.

But while some volunteer and social-service groups around the country report a surge of interest, there is little evidence, as yet, of masses of individuals coming forward nationwide. "I haven't noticed an outpouring of people who want to volunteer," said David Saltzman, executive director of the Robin Hood Foundation, an innovative New York philanthropy that supports smaller programs for youth and the urban poor.

And some wonder whether volunteerism is the best use of America's philanthropic resources to solve major social problems.

Jon Van Til, professor of urban studies who directs Rutgers University's Citizenship and Service Education Program in Camden, N.J., questioned whether the \$20 million that KPMG sacrificed on Monday's day off would have done more good in the form of a check. "Wouldn't it have been better if Peat Marwick went to these organizations and said, 'You've got a choice — a \$1,000-a-day accountant doing a \$5-an-hour job picking up trash, or a gift of \$1000.'" Many organizations, he said, would "quickly take the money."

Assessing the impact of volunteerism after the Philadelphia meeting is complicated by the dearth of verifiable data about what some 93 million volunteers and companies are really doing or spending, as opposed to what they claim.

"Methods of tracking what's happening in the nonprofit sector are very haphazard," said Alan J. Abramson, director of the Aspen Institute's Nonprofit Sector Research Fund in Washington. "I can tell you the employment rate. But there is no volunteer rate or Dow Jones index for the health of the nonprofit sector."

Part of the problem is that the meeting's organizers, who are supposed to insure that companies meet



Lorraine Bodden twirled Marie Frein, left, at an Autumn Ball party yesterday at the Mary Manning Walsh Nursing Home. Ms. Bodden and Ms. Macknik had the day off from KPMG Peat Marwick.

SAMPLER

Responding To the Call

A sampling of corporate responses to the summit meeting in Philadelphia last April calling for a national campaign of volunteerism.

Columbia/HCA Immunizing one million children by the year 2000.

Microsoft Providing \$200 million in software to public libraries.

Nationsbank Opening 25 centers for school children and the elderly.

Oracle Providing \$100 million in computers to public schools; electronically linking mentors to students in California.

Pfizer Donating \$2 million more to children's health groups; \$1 million in volunteer efforts and \$2 million in pediatric medicines.

Scholastic Providing one million books by the year 2000 to reading programs for children.

VH1 Leading drive to donate one million musical instruments to elementary schools.

Sources: Named companies, America's Promise; Alliance for Youth.

their pledges, have been in some confusion. America's Promise: The Alliance for Youth, created to encourage and monitor the response to the call for volunteerism on behalf of children, has had two directors and has been hampered by problems ranging from telephones that did not work properly for four months to delays in mailing out questionnaires designed to track companies' volunteer efforts. Moreover, the group, operating on a \$750,000 budget, has no way of verifying the information companies provide.

Still, with national attention focused on volunteerism, at least a dozen major American companies, including Oracle, Microsoft, NationsBank and Timberland, have made huge new commitments of time, products and money to meet the meeting's goals, sometimes without even informing its organizers. The Philadelphia gathering has also sparked about 150 "mini-summits" at the state and local level, which experts say are likely to be important in boosting volunteerism and meeting goals in the longer term.

"Thanks to the summit, we are no longer an army of 350,000 soldiers each with his own plan for the best way to take the hill," said Raymond G. Chambers, an intensely press-shy philanthropist who helped plan the meeting. "We now have an overarching plan and quantifiable goals."

Mr. Chambers, who is now chief

executive officer of America's Promise, also said the evidence was "overwhelming" that volunteerism, and the mentoring of at-risk children, in particular, are among the most effective means of preventing drug abuse, teen-age pregnancy, truancy and delinquency.

But Mr. Abramson, of the Aspen Institute, said that managing volunteers is among philanthropy's most difficult tasks. "There is no guarantee that volunteers will show up where they are most needed," he said. "And agencies have to be prepared to handle them."

Initial response to the meeting's call for volunteerism was not overwhelming, said Anne E. Kaplan, research director of Giving USA, which monitors nonprofit giving. A July survey of 580 nonprofit organizations by the NonProfit Times, a monthly trade publication, found that only a small number had experienced an increase in the numbers of inquiries about volunteering following the summit meeting. Paul Clolery, the editor, said that while the numbers have picked up in some places, "the challenge is enabling gifts and volunteers to get into the hands of nonprofits. The delivery systems are simply not in place."

Even the successful marriage of volunteers with organizations can create problems, said Thomas M. McKenna, national executive director of Big Brothers Big Sisters of

Confusion and lack of money hamper volunteer efforts.

America. "Businesses have a much easier time helping us with people than with dollars for infrastructure," he said. "They think all we need are volunteers showing up. But we also need hard dollars to hire the staff to carry out programs."

Mary Prchal, who heads Chicago Cares, of City Cares of America, a network matching volunteers with projects, said there was no shortage of donations in her city, "but the individual is not coming out." She added, "Maybe it's a Midwest thing."

At New York Cares, meanwhile, calls increase, but staff member said a network television news report calling it a "model" program may have helped more than the meeting. And in Los Angeles, the agency saw no increase in either volunteers or donations, and none of 250 people who volunteered since April listed the gathering as a reason.

William H. Shore, the head of an anti-hunger group in Washington who helped organize the summit meeting, said America's Promise

led to 22 Year in Dec

PHOTOCOPY
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Report
mini-Follow up

National Report

The New York Times



James Estrin/The New York Times

Lorraine Bodden twirled Marie Frein, left, at an Autumn Ball party yesterday at the Mary Manning Walsh Nursing Home in Manhattan, while Nancy Macknik danced with Daisy Canzoneri. Ms. Bodden and Ms. Macknik had the day off from KPMG Peat Marwick to volunteer their services.

Volunteerism During Donations

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has tried to distinguish between new corporate commitments and merely repackaged ones. For example, the Walt Disney Company, among others, was initially told that its commitments were not sufficiently new or improved to merit special mention. So Disney expanded its effort by pledging to match 425 Disney stores with Boys and Girls Clubs in 200 cities, he said.

Stuart H. Shapiro, a physician and businessman who was the meeting's chief executive, added that the organizers had also rejected multimillion dollar donations for the \$4 million gathering from cigarette manufacturers. "The summit's message was 'children,'" he said. "You don't want to divert the message."

Mr. Van Til, at Rutgers, said much of what the companies were doing was less philanthropy than "cause-related marketing."

"Corporations don't give anything away to anybody unless they get back in public relations and advertising at least as much as the gift is worth," he said.

But Andrew M. Mecca, director of a statewide mentoring initiative in California to which Oracle Corporation is contributing, says, "If Oracle benefits by benefiting millions of kids across the country, more power to them," he said. "If a company's business grows because it's doing good things for the community, maybe that's healthy."

22 Year in Dec

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Democrat and Chronicle

Summit
F: 6 Month Report

NOVEMBER 14-16, 1997

USA WEEKEND



How to re-energize

Garrison Keillor on
putting the spirit
back in the holidays

Sexism on the golf
course? A call-in.

THE EDUCATION OF COLIN POWELL

Next week, Powell updates the nation
on progress since last spring's
volunteer summit. Here, he talks
about the lessons learned, and how
tough the battle turns out to be.

BY COKIE AND STEVE ROBERTS



SIX MONTHS after the historic volunteer summit, Powell is pushing people to keep their promises, even as he tries to fulfill his.

COLIN POWELL: HITTING A NERVE

BY COKIE AND STEVEN V. ROBERTS

MANY MORNINGS, Colin Powell looks out the window of his corner office on the seventh floor of a fancy building in Alexandria, Va., just across the Potomac River from Washington, D.C. "We can see every prominent building except the Pentagon," laughs Powell aide Bill Smullen. "And we don't miss that."

What Powell does like to look at is a group of children, all from a predominantly African-American neighborhood known as "the Burg," waiting for the school bus. Right now, those kids are more important to the former general than any monument, or office, across the river. Including the Oval Office.

They are among America's "lost children," in Powell's words, growing up in a world that lacks structure, support, security. That is why his main focus these days is America's Promise, an organization that encourages and coordinates a national volunteer effort to rescue those youngsters from a future he calls "a farm system for jails."

Six months after a splashy summit in Philadelphia kicked off this campaign, we sat down with Powell to talk about what he has learned and where he's going. The first lesson is



USA WEEKEND Contributing Editors Cokie and Steve Roberts interview Powell in his Virginia office. Cokie Roberts hosts ABC's This Week; Steve analyzes politics for CNN and ABC Radio.

a grim one: Life on the streets is much tougher and meaner than he remembered growing up in New York City's South Bronx in the 1940s and '50s. Now he realizes that he led a "very insulated, sheltered life" during his 35-year military career, a life that shielded him from the collapse of the family in neighborhoods like the Burg.

The "lost children," he says, show up at school "without structure, without discipline, without self-esteem, without language skills, without having been taught right and wrong at age 6." The reason is that "there is nobody, no adult in their family" who teaches them about guilt or shame. So the streets take over.

THE VOLUNTEER SUMMIT: PLEDGES AND PROGRESS

The Presidents' Summit on America's Future, held in Philadelphia last April, brought Gen. Colin Powell, President Clinton and several former presidents together with corporate executives and community and volunteer leaders. The goal: to boost volunteering substantially within three years, with an emphasis on helping youth. **On Nov. 25, Powell plans to report on summit progress.** An interim look at how some of the pledges made at the summit are being kept:

Highmark Blue Cross/Blue Shield. Pledge: Insure 48,000 children by the year 2000. Progress: Health coverage provided to 9,000 children so far.

Houston Reads to Lead. Pledge: Recruit more than 20,000 volunteers as learning partners by 2000. Progress: More than 3,000 volunteers recruited.

Ronald McDonald House Charities. Pledge: \$100 million in support of summit goals. Progress: Distributed more than \$19 million in grants toward at-risk youth.

USA WEEKEND. Pledge: Boost Make A Difference Day participation; follow up on summit. Progress: Increased outreach for Make A Difference Day; number of participants will be announced later. Summit follow-up includes this interview.



Presidents' Summit for America's Future, April 27 in Philadelphia (from left): George Bush, Rosalynn and Jimmy Carter, Alma and Colin Powell, and President Clinton.



Colin and Alma Powell join Gov. George W. Bush in San Antonio at September's Kickoff of the "Texas Challenge," a three-year effort to benefit that state's children.

The goal of America's Promise is only now starting to take shape. In simple terms, it is to re-create the nurturing environment Powell knew in the Bronx — and in the barracks.

Easy to say, very hard to do. Last spring's summit "struck a nerve in the country," Powell says, and offers of help have poured in. But translating good intentions into practical solutions has proven to be a more difficult challenge than mobilizing an army in the Persian Gulf.

The general's volunteer force has suffered through some "false starts," he admits. Feel-good announcements and glossy press kits are like New Year's resolutions: They fade quickly if they are not backed up with commitments of money and manpower.

So Powell, at 60, has had to learn two other lessons. One is that not all promises are equal. Some are real;

Trust, that owns 27 office buildings. Each building has been linked up with a specific school. And in each building, Powell notes, "there are school supplies, computers, lawyers, accountants. It's got people who can go to that school and spend an hour or two with the kids. It's got places for kids to come and learn about the workplace. What most of these kids need more than anything else, to be absolutely blunt, is to see what the white world looks like."

This kind of talk has provoked criticism from some African Americans, who say the white world is using Powell to deflect attention from the real problems of discrimination and injustice. His voice vibrated with emotion when we asked about that.

"The white world is using me?" he responded. "I don't care if they're

network of family and friends that kept close tabs on each other's children. His sister Marilyn once told us that when Colin walked down the block, a pair of eyes followed him from behind every curtain; if he got in trouble, his mother knew about it

out of trouble. His wife, Alma, is deeply involved in preventing teenage pregnancy, and what makes the general most angry is the irresponsibility of some young black men. "You keep your hands off those girls," he preaches. "You stay in school and

**"The white world is using me?" he says in response to critics.
"I don't care. ... All I care about is the kids."**

before he got home.

"The communities were together. Families, parents were together," Powell remembers. "There was a church that was an important presence, or a synagogue. I sometimes compare it to a pinball machine: You had flippers which constantly kept the kid in place."

Reality started intruding only after he left the service in 1993 and traveled the country making speeches and promoting his autobiography. He went back to his old neighborhood to tape a TV special and was stunned by what he saw: no black men, and no whites except business owners and social workers who left at sundown.

At a Boys and Girls Club in Florida, he described what he had learned from his parents. But the lesson fell flat. Most of the kids didn't have parents at home. Finally, a youngster raised his hand and said, "But, general, if you don't have it like that, then how can you make it?"

Powell's mission is to answer that question, to weave a safety net for youngsters who have no watchful eyes behind a curtain, keeping them

you get your education, and that's where you demonstrate your prowess as a man — not by impregnating some 13-year-old."

Even if he doesn't often look across the Potomac, Washington comes to him. Friends regularly make the pilgrimage to Alexandria to seek his counsel, but he does not fit easily into either political party. He chose the Republicans because he favors their smaller-government, free-enterprise approach. But he has never shared the anti-government hostility of the GOP's more conservative wing, and he believes passionately in a program most Republicans disdain: affirmative action.

"For those who say preference systems are bad," he asserts, "I would love to take you through all the preference systems which are acceptable." Then he names a few: mortgage deductions, veterans benefits, colleges eagerly recruiting students who can throw a football or donate a gym. "So we're not against preferences,"

Continued on next page

A military man at heart, Powell has yet to adopt a politician's mind-set.

some are not. The second is that even real promises don't mean much if the volunteers and their resources are not directly connected to "places where children are located."

Accordingly, a new model is beginning to emerge. It's not enough for a corporation or a civic group to say, "I care. I want to help." More questions have to be asked. Where, and how, do you want to help? Who will show up? At which school? At what time?

A good example of this model, he says, is a Texas real estate company, the Crescent Real Estate Investment

using me. All I care about is the kids. And if, in the course of what we're doing, we start helping kids one at a time, and families one at a time, and communities one at a time, I don't really care what people write or say.

"It's there. So what? I'll use it. I can speak about these issues, and I can get the white world to listen."

Powell feels so passionately because this kid from the Bronx knows what the kids from the Burg are missing. His Jamaican immigrant parents both held blue-collar jobs in the Garment District, and they were part of a vast

A historic collecting opportunity authorized by

The Coca-Cola Company



Sculpture shown approximately actual size of 5" x 13.97" and in height.

An enchanting Limited Edition sculpture showcased within a crystal-clear dome.

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Continued from previous page he concludes with a tinge of bitterness. "We're just against any preference that is related to the color of a person's skin."

Powell separates himself from Republican orthodoxy on other issues as well, from abortion to gun control. "Obviously," he says with some understatement, "I am not a card-carrying member of the social conservative wing of the party."

Moderates like Powell are not popular in today's Republican Party, where religious conservatives have become a major force, and if he did seek the presidency he could face fierce opposition in his own party. Look what happened to former Massachusetts governor Bill Weld, who was blocked from becoming ambassador to Mexico by fellow Republicans — an incident Powell calls "unfortunate."

This raises the question: Does Colin Powell have a future in electoral politics? The polls say yes. His approval rating remains above 70 percent, and he has been described as "the most trusted living American."

But for now his wife says no. Alma Powell fears a political campaign would shatter the family's privacy, and she's probably right. The general, too, relishes the chance to play with his grandsons — 8-year-old Jeffrey and 3-year-old Brian — and he knows a campaign could turn them into strangers.

But even if his party, and his wife, welcomed a Powell candidacy, the general faces another obstacle: his own distaste for the messiness of politics. It's hard to imagine him doing what Bill Clinton does so often, and so well, on the recently released White House tapes: pleading for campaign cash, often from unsavory characters.

If Powell wants to be president, he will have to fight for the job and remember his military doctrine: Fight only when you have overwhelming strength and a sure victory.

So for now, the political world will have to wait. When he looks out his office window, Colin Powell turns toward the kids from the Burg, not the power brokers from the capital. But Washington is still there, over his shoulder and across the river. All he has to do is turn around. **□**

Cokie and Steve Roberts last wrote about the emotional highs and lows of their family's past year.

"A LONG WAY TO GO"

Excerpts from Powell's interview with USA WEEKEND Contributing Editors Cokie and Steve Roberts.

On race: "We've come a long way, and we've got a long way to go."

On corporate pledges: "We have tightened up to make sure they're real commitments and they're going to be followed through."

On his reaction to the Army sexual harassment scandals: "Devastating. Committing sexual harassment — what they did was a crime. And they ought to be punished."

On Army recruits today: "It takes a little more of a training investment ... than it did five or 10 years ago. They're not quite in the same physical condition. They need a little more structure and discipline before they are ready to be trained. It's still not as troublesome as it might have been 20 years ago, when we were getting youngsters who didn't have high school educations at all."

On e-mailing at-risk teens:

"Every year, about 15 minority kids, teenagers, will come out to the house and we'll just cook burgers and hang around. We'll play in the pool, and it's just amazing to watch them. I was teaching one kid how to swim, and the other was playing around in my office looking at pictures and what not ..."

"The one thing all of them gave me was an e-mail address. I gave a couple of them my e-mail address. I don't do this to just anybody. And one of the joys has been some nights I'll log on and suddenly [I'll get a message]: 'Hey, general.' It shows you these kids just need to see the other world. They need to be motivated." Powell makes a point of responding to the teens' e-mail.

On whether his wife is still adamant about his not running for president: "We have not discussed this for two years. That's absolutely the truth. There's no point in discussing it, because she has not changed her view."

Volunteer vows fall short

Some say it's too early to pass judgment, but seven months after a national summit on volunteerism there is little evidence of goals being met.

By Andrea Stone
USA TODAY

The Presidents' Summit for America's Future gave delegates in Philadelphia their instructions last April: Go home and mobilize millions of volunteers and dollars to improve the lives of poor youth.

But nearly seven months later, the main accomplishment of the high-profile gathering has been to produce more summits. Organizers offer anecdotes about new volunteer programs but no tally of results. Some initiatives heralded by corporations are repackaged extensions of old programs. And some companies are backing away from promises to give employees time off to do volunteer work.

Former general Colin Powell, who heads America's Promise — The Alliance for Youth, the non-profit group overseeing post-summit activities, will give a progress report Tuesday in Washington. He is expected to focus on corporate activities and local summits that came out of the Philadelphia meeting. But he says it's too early to judge whether the summit succeeded.

"The real answer is 10, 12 years from now when children have been protected" in after-school programs or received free health care, he says. "Will they go on a road to a better future? The answer is yes."

The summit's goal was clear. By 2000, give 2 million of the nation's 15 million needy young people resources to lead happy, healthy, productive lives.

The five resources: an ongoing relationship with a caring adult mentor, a safe place to go after school, adequate health care, a marketable job skill and an opportunity to learn the value of serving the community.

Before the bunting came off Independence Hall, the summit had secured 300 commitments from corporations and non-profit groups to help provide those resources.

But a national survey of states by USA TODAY reveals that perhaps the summit's greatest achievement, so far, was to spark more than 140 local and state mini-summits. Eight states and 52 cities have held them. All identified local needs and put together a plan of action. But beyond those strategy sessions, the summit appears largely a promise yet to be fulfilled:

► There is no report of how many children have free immunizations, after-school havens or tutors because of the summit.

"If you're looking for a measurable, definable report ... in a precise way, that's not yet available," says Bill Smullen of America's Promise. More than 100 commitments to help youth have been added to the 300 announced in April, but details have been made available on fewer than 25.

► The 40-person staff at the Alexandria, Va., headquarters of America's Promise has had three directors since April. Outsiders see serious organizational problems, but America's Promise says the leadership changes were typical shifts associated with any start-up operation.

► Some corporate commitments are extensions or repackaged versions of things already under way. For instance, Ronald McDonald House Charities has funded community programs related to the summit's goals since 1984. It has vowed to increase annual giving from \$12.5 million to \$20 million.

However, many other commitments represent substantially expanded efforts. VH-1, the cable TV music channel, expanded an existing \$1 million pilot project that provided cash and donations from musical instrument companies and the public to restore music programs in New York City public schools. It now plans to place \$100 million worth of instruments in schools in 50 cities by 2002.

Pillsbury Co. pledged \$1.75 million in grants to community programs that provide mentors to young people this year, up from \$400,000 in 1996.

"Would we have done something (without the summit)? Yes," says Pillsbury spokeswoman Becky Erdahl. "We would have had some pieces of it, but it would not be as big."

► Some companies that promised to give employees time off to volunteer are rethinking the pledge.

"They were too ambitious," says Smullen, who declined to name companies that have scaled back. "Some employees said, 'Gee, I'm already working 80 hours as it is. I really can't afford additional time, or when I do have time off I need to spend it with my own family.'"

► While some communities report a surge in volunteers, others see little new interest.

"It's hard to get enough mentors" for young people, says

Carolyn Kincaid of the United Way in Williamsburg, Va. "People are just not willing to make the commitment."

► President Clinton, who painted over graffiti along Philadelphia's Germantown Avenue, has moved on to other issues. He announced earlier this month plans to revive President Bush's daily Points of Light awards to recognize notable volunteer service, but Clinton now devotes his bully pulpit to other concerns, such as race.

Still, the summit inspired many. Some examples:

► Allstate Corp. pledged \$26 million worth of employee time to mentor and work with youth.

► Dentists in Texas' Rio Grande Valley had talked about offering free dental care for low-income children but "were struggling to get it started," says Maria Ferrier, a Texas state organizer. "The summit gave the impetus and visibility." Now, 75 volunteer dentists are treating the first of 30,000 needy children to be served by 2000.

Yet some in the non-profit world are impatient.

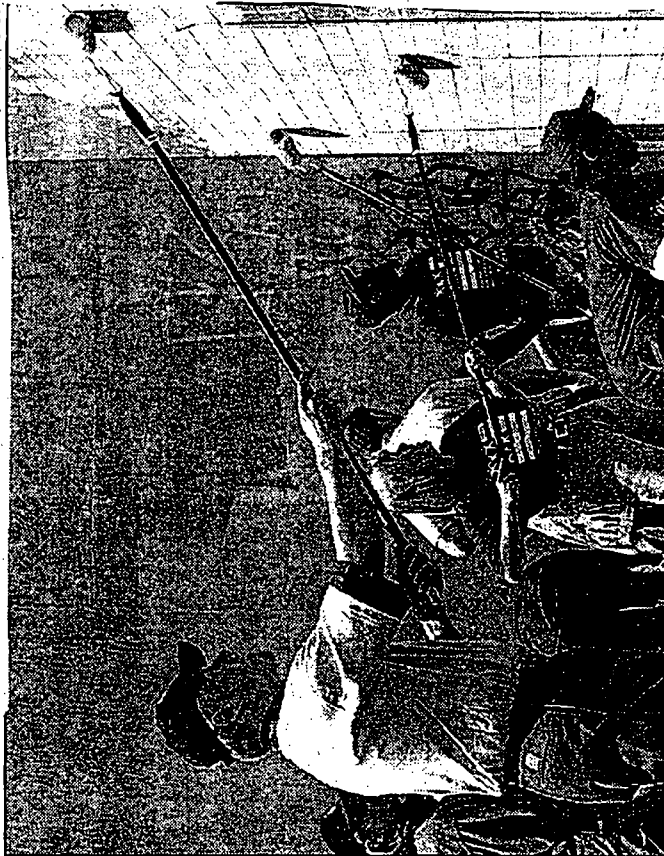
Bill Treanor of Youth Today, a newspaper published six times a year that covers youth-oriented non-profit groups, says, "There is no cogent plan."

"It would be like Eisenhower landing at Normandy and then not knowing whether to turn east toward Germany or west toward Spain."

But Powell, the former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, says he knows exactly where he's going.

"We have had some start-up challenges," he says. "I think we're over them now."

Contributing: Steve Holman



WASHINGTON

Clinton beseeches Bowles to stay on as chief of staff

President Clinton took his chief of staff, Erskine Bowles, out to the golf course Tuesday to try to persuade him to stay on the job. Officials say Bowles will stay at least through Clinton's State of the Union address in January. Bowles, a North Carolina businessman named to the position a year ago, said from the start that he intended to stay only about a year. Speculation that he would leave grew after Clinton and Congress struck a deal to balance the federal budget. Among possible replacements: Budget director Franklin Raines, national security advisor Samuel "Sandy" Berger, deputy chief of staff John Podesta, former trade representative Mickey Kantor and White House congressional liaison John Hilley.

— Mimi Hall

VOTER APATHY: Election experts, citing a healthy economy and surveys that show people generally say the country is on the right track, predict next year's midterm elections could see the lowest turnout since World War II. Republican pollster Frank Luntz predicts that in some precincts fewer than 20% of eligible voters will cast ballots, although local issues and ballot initiatives could boost turnout. Still, says Curtis Gans of the Committee for the Study of the American Electorate, as people continue to disconnect with politicians and withdraw from community involvement, voting could become the provenance of "the interested and the zealous." Recent turnouts: 38.8% in 1994; 36.5% in 1990 and 36.4% in 1986. The low was 35.9% in 1942.

CAMPAIGN FIRSTS: Republican Gov. Terry Branstad of Iowa and Democratic Gov. Jeanne Shaheen of New Hampshire might ask presidential candidates to sign pledges to preserve the two states' lead-off roles in the presidential campaign. Iowa holds the nation's first caucuses and New Hampshire the first primary, so candidates spend many days in each state. The two governors formed a bipartisan commission to strengthen their position against states that want to jump ahead.

ALSO ...

► **OOPS:** The National Republican Congressional Committee blames a computer snafu for sending a fund-raising letter that urged New Mexicans to defeat Rep. Bill Redmond because he's "one of the most stalwart Democrats in the House." Redmond is a Republican. His press secretary, Jennifer Bennett, said similar letters mistakenly targeted several other Republican House members. "It was funny but not necessarily that funny," said John Dendahl, state Republican chairman.

► **WELD JOB:** William Weld, who quit as Massachusetts governor to fight unsuccessfully to be ambassador to Mexico, has taken a job in international law with McDermott Will & Emery. Weld, 52, said he'll remain active in public issues and campaign for other moderate Republicans, but he doesn't plan on seeking public office.

► **FREEH TO RUSSIA:** FBI Director Louis Freeh is in Russia for talks on ways to combat organized crime and terrorism. Department of Justice officials at an FBI office at the U.S. Embassy in Moscow help train Russian law officers and assist in investigations.

► **FUEL CUT COSTS:** President Clinton's program to limit burning of fossil fuels, which some say contributes to global warming, would sharply increase home energy costs and cut income, an auto industry study says. It found that by 2030, Clinton's proposal would shave 2.7% from the gross domestic product and would drop average annual household income by \$4,250. The Energy Department says better technology and energy efficiency would absorb the costs.

► **TRADE TALKS:** Despite not winning "fast-track" trade authority, President Clinton will push a full agenda of trade measures at next week's meeting of Pacific Rim leaders. Trade Representative Charlene Barshefsky said the fast-track loss in the House is "short-term."

Written by Paul Leavitt with staff and wire reports

Congress has low legislative batting average

By Jim Abrams
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — If Congress played only by the numbers, it would indeed have been a dismal year.

House members introduced 3,036 bills in the congressional session that began in January and ended last week. So far, 59 of them, or slightly less than 2%, have become law.

The Senate didn't do any better, getting the president's signature for 19 of the 1,568 bills senators introduced during the year, a success rate of 1.2%.

To be fair, Congress did pass about 70 bills — two dozen on the last day alone — in the final days of the session. Assuming President Clinton signs most of those, the percentages will increase somewhat.

Of the bills that did survive the odyssey through committees, House and Senate votes, House-Senate conferences and the president, many were not exactly monumental. There were post office namings, medal awards, Western land exchanges and technical amendments to existing laws.

The Republican-led Congress this session was also again noteworthy for its enthusiasm for, and total lack of success in, amending the Constitution. There were 77 proposed amendments in the House and 17 in the Senate, many overlapping on such subjects as a balanced budget, term limits, school prayer and abortion.

Not one got the necessary two-thirds majority in both chambers. A proposed amendment on flag desecra-

tion did pass the House, but Senate supporters decided to wait until next year in hopes of picking up more votes.

Introducing bills that don't have a chance of ever becoming law is hardly new to Congress. "It goes on all the time, allowing people to take positions on a variety of issues," said professor Roger Davidson of the University of Maryland, an expert on Congress.

He added that it is "typical for the first session not to be terribly productive. You can expect more bills through the next time around," in the session beginning in January.

The White House said Tuesday that 35 bills are on the president's desk, awaiting his signature, and another three dozen or so have passed Congress but have yet to be delivered.

The president used his veto power to reject three complete measures this year — a disaster relief bill, a late-term abortion bill and an attempt by Congress to restore money for military building projects.

Most of these late-hour bills, approved with little or no debate and no roll call votes, were minor, of the nature of legislation to amend the Atlantic Striped Bass Conservation Act. But some will affect millions of Americans, including three fiscal 1998 spending bills, bills to overhaul the Food and Drug Administration and Amtrak, and a bill authorizing a new gold-colored \$1 coin and 50 newly designed quarters, one for each state.

Additionally, many of the bills that Congress never finished this year will eventually become law before the 105th Congress closes next fall prior to national elections.