

Some of the most talked about

ISSUES of the Volunteer Community

Volunteers and Strikes: Good Motives Should Not Be Exploited

By Peter Laarman

VOLUNTEERISM IS A GREAT AMERICAN TRADITION which needs to be reinforced rather than undermined. But the heritage of volunteer effort is undermined when well-motivated people are induced to perform roles which prolong or complicate a strike by paid staff. The

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desire to help is exploited by employers intent on "winning" the strike at all costs.

The use of volunteers to perform "struck" work simply is not a problem in most manufacturing and other private-sector employment. No one enters a steel mill or a coal mine to "help" maintain the nation's steel or coal production. People *do* cross picket lines in these situations, but their motive in doing so is money, not altruism. People who take the jobs of striking employees in these situations are known as scabs.

The sectors of the economy where volunteers are likely to appear and where their contributions may cause real problems include health care, education and other social services. In many instances, the institutions or agencies utilizing volunteer services will be *public* institutions, which by definition are not operating to make a profit. As a result of their nonprofit status, these institutions may give the impression that they are not really *employers* subject to labor-management problems. Yet the National Labor Relations Board and the Congress, recognizing the economic impact and scope of the health care industry, granted the employees of private nonprofit hospitals the rights and protections of the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA) in 1974. And a majority of states permit *public* employees in educational, health care and similar institutions to organize and bargain collectively. These states recognize that the employer-employee relationship in a public employment context does not differ significantly from such a relationship in private industry. So the legitimacy of strikes in the public

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sector, based on the realities of working for a living, should not be in question.

Unfortunately, the right to strike as an extension of the right to bargain is very much in question where public employees are concerned. Most public sector bargaining statutes are weak compared to the NLRA, and nearly all of them prohibit strikes. What this means in relation to volunteerism is that volunteers are likely to encounter a wave of suspicion and hostility when they "fill in" for public employees, since public employees generally take a huge risk when they decide to strike. Mass firings, heavy fines and even jailings are not unusual in public sector strikes, whereas such penalties are unknown when teamsters or machinists or carpenters walk out. Therefore, an individual considering a volunteer role during an actual or threatened public employee strike should be aware that the regular staff members are under extreme pressure, fighting for their rights as workers as well as for improved compensation and working conditions.

A more obvious consideration for volunteers in a strike situation, whether private or public sector, is that people strike for a reason. Employees are not militant by nature; they make the sacrifices involved in a strike because they feel they have no alternative. While it's in management's interest to represent a strike as unjustified and irresponsible, strikes as often as not are precipitated by management's own unreasonable posture. A school district facing budget problems, for example, can save money and balance its budget if it can provoke the teachers into a strike. While one's decision to volunteer cannot be guided exclusively by the question of "who's right," the employer's motives and culpability must be examined carefully. And the volunteer should also bear in mind that health care institutions and school systems traditionally pay their employees as little as possible. Unlike profit-making corporations, they cannot simply "pass through" their labor costs to the consumer.

Public relations constitutes a major factor in any labor dispute, and employers will go to great lengths to score public relations victories. A favorite tactic of hospitals in a strike situation is to accuse striking employees of callous disregard of human suffering or even of human life. What often is not disclosed is that the striking workers have *offered* to perform live-saving roles but have had their offer *refused* by managers determined to discredit the union. Similarly, school boards and administrators frequently will suggest to the media that senior students will be denied college admission on account of teacher strikes, even

though the union involved has attempted to establish tutorial programs to enable students to complete required coursework. And adding insult to injury, the same employer who accuses the employees of indifference to human needs and suppresses their offers of help will call upon volunteers.

As the many sets of guidelines developed by volunteer organizations make clear, the rules for volunteers are relatively simple: Never supplant the roles and functions of regular employees, never volunteer for a program or function which *should* call for paid staff, never accept a volunteer position which might subject you to liability lawsuits, and never volunteer in a context which would protract or exacerbate a strike.

The best service a would-be volunteer can render in a strike is to do whatever he or she can to *end the strike*. Not only does a strike settlement mean restoration of the best possible services for the consumer, but it also means that volunteers can return to their proper *adjunct* role in the institution.

Strike, Stress and Community Response

By Rochel U. Berman, M.S.W

THREE DAYS PRIOR TO THE JEWISH festival of Passover in 1977, 400 employees of The Hebrew Home for the Aged in Riverdale, New York, went on strike due to an impasse in labor-management negotiations. Although a strike plan carefully detailing the role of each department was prepared in advance, the reality and enormity of the responsibility of continuing to care for 700 aged people were overwhelming.

The crisis, which would be difficult to manage at any time

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During the strike the role and effectiveness of our existing volunteer corps varied.

of the year, was complicated further by the fact that it was Passover. The monumental task of koshering a kitchen that prepares food for more than 1,000 people (700 residents plus staff) was in process. This particular time of year carried with it still another negative component. The holiday also meant our existing volunteer corps and the primarily Jewish community in which the home is situated were busy with their own preparations for celebration and family gatherings.

"Love Thy Neighbor"

So, we turned to our Catholic neighbor, The College of Mount St. Vincent, which had helped us during another crisis—the New York transit strike of 1966. At that time, most of the home's essential staff could not get to work. Jacob Reingold, executive vice president of the home, called upon students of the college to assist the aged and infirm.

The common thread of humanity which had grown stronger and firmer in the intervening decade helped sustain us for the next few days. Both faculty and students came early in the morning, between classes, and in the evening to make beds, feed and assist in the care of our elderly population. This source of help was short-lived, however. A few days after the strike began, Easter vacation commenced and the girls headed home.

Mobilization of the Jewish Community

With the first 48 hours of the strike behind us and no settlement yet in sight, another attempt was made to reach the Jewish community. In order to highlight and underscore our need for help, we called each rabbi prior to the Sabbath at his home. We requested that announcements concerning emergency be made from the pulpit on the Sabbath.

These announcements were by far the most effective means of recruitment during our entire crisis period. They kindled a massive response. Starting with the first Sabbath of Passover until the end of the strike, we had a minimum of 30 volunteers a day. On some days as many as 70 people came to offer their help. The spirit of mercy and benevolence radiated and encompassed the Orthodox community in Riverdale. Dozens of Jews for whom the home was merely a beautiful edifice on the banks of the Hudson crossed our threshold for the first time. After their initial experience, they were drawn back almost magnetically.

The needs of the residents were great and were matched by expressions of enormous gratitude for the kindnesses shown them. On the Sabbath and on holidays during which riding is religiously prohibited, there were virtual "march-ins" from every corner of the community. In addition to providing essential care, e.g., feeding the blind and infirm, volunteers brought with them a festive spirit which permeated an otherwise quiet and sedate institution. We noted with pleasure that volunteering at the home had become a family affair. It spanned several generations. In one family, adult children and teenage grandchildren were joined by their grandfather in performing the age-old commandment of visiting the elderly and infirm.

In some congregations, the rabbi himself served to coordinate the volunteer effort, while in others a member of the sisterhood was appointed to the task. In all our recruitment notices we emphasized that volunteering was "not for women only." This helped expand the number of recruits to include several very enthusiastic and energetic males.

The contacts made through synagogues during Passover week led naturally to the further recruitment of volunteers through the three Hebrew day schools in Riverdale. Each school undertook the coverage of one meal a day. Groups of as many as 15 students came each weekday—before school to assist with breakfast, at lunchtime, or after school for the evening meal. The students alternated their service so that there was no significant disruption in curriculum for any individual student.

Here, too, the recruitment had an intergenerational component. The class mothers of one yeshiva instituted a telephone chain that reached all the parents of a school whose student body numbered over 300. Because of their deep commitment to Judaism, these parents were particularly sensitive to the religious needs of our residents. With a sense of dignity and piety they spread white tablecloths for the Sabbath and helped residents bathe and dress for the holy day.

How Volunteers Were Utilized

Volunteers were utilized primarily to assist with the care of skilled nursing facility residents. They worked under the direction of the nurses assigned to each unit. When volunteers arrived, they signed in at a centrally designated point. Meal passes redeemable in the staff dining room were distributed to volunteers who served a minimum of three hours. Volunteers were required to sign out when they left.

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Is it worth risking the destruction of programs and possibly losing those 25,000 hours of volunteer help?

After the first few days, when we had accustomed ourselves to the new system and routine, we identified the most appropriate tasks for volunteers as well as the most crucial times of day during which help was needed:

- 7:00 a.m.—11:00 a.m. Wake patients, assist with washing and dressing, distribute breakfast trays, clear tables, make beds (a formidable task, since each of eight units has about 50 beds!).
- 11:00 a.m.—1:30 p.m. Distribute lunch trays, assist with feeding, clear tables.
- 1:30 p.m.—4:00 p.m. Sort and distribute laundry, sort and distribute mail, escort patients out-of-doors, bring wheelchair patients to physical therapy for treatment.
- 4:30 p.m.—7:00 p.m. Distribute supper trays, assist with feeding, clear tables, assist in preparing for bedtime.

Problems and Reflections

When the possibility of a strike seemed imminent, all families of residents were notified by mail that their assistance might be necessary to continue vital resident services. Family response was minimal. When family members did come they usually tended only to the needs of their own relatives. In a few cases, they became adjunct staff on the unit and pitched in with patient care for the entire unit. For the most part, however, families continued to observe their usual visiting patterns.

The role and effectiveness of our existing volunteer corps varied. About half of the 20 volunteers increased the number of days and hours they gave to the home and performed all of the tasks described above. There were many, however, who chose not to cross the picket line. Some felt that they would be jeopardizing relationships with social workers and aides so that they could not provide quality service to residents following the strike. These volunteers chose instead to keep in touch with the residents by phone or postcard. From this point of view, it was less trying for people who had not previously volunteered to cross the picket line than it was for those with longstanding relationships. Even among the new recruits there was much sympathy for the cause of the staff on strike. Several young people requested to be assigned only to those patients most in need. Another group which experienced considerable conflict was our resident volunteers. Many of them pioneered better working conditions through activism in trade unions and identified with the staff on the picket line. As a sign of support, they felt they should curtail their usual volunteer activity for the

period of the strike. A very conscious effort was made to create an atmosphere in which opposing points of view could be aired, discussed and respected.

Perhaps among the many unusual developments during this crisis, the most positive and heartwarming to observe were the interpersonal contacts which emerged between teenage students and our aged population. Segregation of the aged in our society has left younger generations relatively unprepared to deal with old people or with their long-term future. Assisting during this emergency provided some insights into the aging process.

A "rap session" held with a group of students following the strike revealed that the youngsters were unusually sensitive and upset by any signs of infantilization of the aged or by any lack of credibility or dignity accorded to an old person. It would appear that their level of awareness of the problems of old age increased. It is our hope that with future contact and exposure will also come a greater level of understanding and acceptance.

The Role of Volunteers During a Teacher Strike

By Sue Szentlaszloi

The following article is reprinted with permission from the National School Volunteer Program's Information Bank.

OUR SCHOOL DISTRICT HAS NOT BEEN INVOLVED in a teacher strike, but during negotiations a few years ago, we were close enough that it became necessary to seriously consider the role of volunteers, and particularly our volunteer organization, in the event of a strike.

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Are we really serving our students and communities best in the long run . . .

This is the framework of reference from which we made our decision:

- The State of Pennsylvania enacted a Public Collective Bargaining Act in 1970 which includes teachers. Act 195 provides the conditions for establishing bargaining units, bargaining guidelines, and a schedule for the collective bargaining process in addition to conditions for unfair labor practices and remedies for resolving problems. The law specifies the point at which a strike may be called. Therefore, assuming parties have followed established procedures, teacher strikes are legal in Pennsylvania.

The bargaining unit is the West Chester Area Education Association, the local branch of the National Education Association (NEA). We have a small AFT (American Federation of Teachers) membership which is very vocal but has not yet become powerful enough to replace the Education Association.

- The West Chester Area School District is in Chester County, about 30 miles west of Philadelphia, with a student population of just under 12,000, a teaching staff of 650 in 11 elementary schools, three middle schools and two high schools. We are the largest in Chester County and have the largest Education Association, and therefore we are watched carefully by the surrounding districts. In a sense, we are likely to establish precedents or at least influence the direction that nearby districts take.

- We have in our district well organized volunteer programs supported by the district. In 1973, the board and new superintendent began establishing throughout the community and within the system the concept that the schools and community needed to find ways to develop a cooperative, collaborative relationship. One step taken that year to encourage the development and growth of that concept was the creation of the position of coordinator of volunteer programs and the commitment to develop volunteer programs in all the schools. Board policy specified that "the district shall maintain a vigorous program of school volunteer assistance." Guidelines indicated that school volunteers will work under the direction of a staff person to provide supplementary and supportive services to students and staff.

Our programs were organized to allow for maximum flexibility in each school. A parent volunteer of each school is recruited to serve as the chairperson for the school's program. They each receive about 16 hours of training for their jobs and are key people in the administration of the programs. Working with principals and staff, they are responsi-

ble for recruitment, scheduling, orientation and recognition of volunteers within the school.

During the first year we confronted all the usual fears and questions of staff members. Will volunteers be expected to replace paid aides? Will volunteers be used to avoid hiring additional teachers? What about liability? Will parents come in to snoop and interfere and try to tell us what to do? If anyone can "teach," who needs teachers? Are volunteers really dependable?

The key to minimizing negative attitudes was to assure all staff members that the decision to request volunteers was up to them. They, too, were in a sense volunteers. Care was taken not to pressure individual teachers to request volunteers. Within every school in the district there were teachers who wanted volunteer help. By the end of the first year, volunteer programs were established in every school.

By the end of the second year, an evaluation by principals indicated that they had begun to consider the volunteer program as a regular part of their educational program. By the third year, expansion and refinement of volunteer programs were being included in the management objectives of principals, and teachers declared they couldn't get along without their volunteers. Individual teachers and schools were beginning to find varieties of creative ways to utilize volunteers and were learning to be realistic about what volunteers were willing and able to do. By this time 550 to 600 parents, college students, high school students and senior citizens were contributing more than 25,000 hours a year. Programs were coordinated by 25 volunteer chairpeople. We had become a solid volunteer organization which had been accepted as a regular part of the school system.

It was out of this background, in the fourth year of our development of volunteer programs, that teacher negotiations became very tense. The possibility of a strike was very real during the first semester of that year. As tensions mounted, both administration and teachers developed detailed "strike game plans." The administration's game plan called for keeping schools open if there was a strike. At this point, we had to carefully consider the role of volunteers.

Because we had a corps of well-trained school chairpeople and more than 500 working and experienced volunteers, it would have been *logistically* possible to use the volunteer organization to help keep schools open during a strike. We could have hooked the volunteer organization into the communications network of the administrative game plan and recruited and deployed volunteers to those schools where they were needed almost on a daily basis. There was sup-

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port for this concept within the system and there would have been considerable community support for such action. Parents do *not* want schools closed! In this way, we could have effectively and efficiently used volunteers as strike breakers.

Thus, we could have solved a short-term problem, but what would the long-term results of such action be?

Teachers request volunteers on a voluntary basis. Good volunteer programs require a climate of acceptance, cooperation and collaboration on the part of volunteers and teachers. Even teachers who do not personally use volunteer help must accept the idea for the creation of a positive climate in a school.

Negotiations, by their very nature, set up an adversary relationship between teachers and the board. The reality of the negotiation process is that it is a political process revolving around the issues of money and power. Feelings run high and positions become polarized. By using volunteers to break strikes, we would be formally establishing the "side" of the adversary relationship that volunteers are on, and it isn't the teachers' side. We would be adding a third "power group," the community, to strengthen one side (the board) against the other (the teachers). It would undoubtedly have an effect.

But when the teachers return to work after a strike and are asked if they want their volunteers to return to work, what would you expect them to say? And what position would the Education Association adopt in relation to volunteers? Are we really serving our students and communities best in the long run by choosing to be actively involved in resolving a short-term conflict? Is it worth risking the destruction of the programs and relationships built up slowly over several years and possibly losing those 25,000 hours of volunteer help? What would be the attitude of the children of the volunteers toward their teachers when normal classes resume?

We considered all those questions and chose to keep the volunteer organization out of the line of fire if a strike was called. Letters were sent to all school volunteer chairpeople indicating that we would maintain a position of neutrality. We felt that this position would permit school volunteers to play an active role in the healing process when schools resumed normal activities and could in that way best serve the students and schools.

On Crossing the Rubicon A NOW Editorial

By the National Organization for Women

Change-directed volunteerism. *We have no quarrel with this kind of self-expression, which is the cornerstone of a democratic society. Without such volunteer effort, women could not liberate themselves.*

Service-oriented volunteerism. *This seeks to complement insufficiently funded social services with nonpaid labor in order to alleviate social ills. In addition, it blunts the pressure for a more equal distribution of the nation's wealth....—from "Volunteerism and the Status of Women," a position paper of the National Organization for Women.*

Ever since the National Organization for Women developed its position on volunteerism in the early '70s, the debate over woman's role as a volunteer never has abated. In 1974, for example, Association of Junior Leagues President Mary Poole responded, "It's not service volunteering that degrades women—it's the prevailing attitude toward women that is degrading service volunteering. It's impossible to reconcile exploitation of women with something they do voluntarily. If they are or feel exploited, all they need do is quit."

At its 1975 convention, the General Federation of Women's Clubs passed a resolution reaffirming its mission, "which is to work solely for the common good as it sees the need to be, for the well-being of the people and without remuneration."

In 1977, the National Council of Jewish Women made volunteerism its number one priority, forming national and local task forces. Esther Landa, NCJW president, declared

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this move was neither abdication of the responsibility of serving society, nor agreement that all work must be compensated to be judged worthwhile.

"Voluntarism is the smoothest stepping stone to paid employment a woman can find if that is what she is seeking," she wrote in the December 1977 issue of Council Woman. "Now volunteer service is also a proven means of gaining college or continuing education credit; and certainly, increasing skills will enable one to progress up the ladder of voluntarism, more and more able to take on greater responsibilities."

Despite such positions taken by other women's groups, NOW continues to advocate the kind of volunteering it deems most appropriate for women. The following editorial speaks out on behalf of volunteering for one of the most significant change-oriented activities of the century—the fight for passage of the Equal Rights Amendment. It is reprinted with permission from the March 1979 National NOW Times.

WITHIN THE LAST MONTH AND IN LESS THAN 24 hours, some 30 volunteers were recruited to work in NOW's National ERA Ratification campaign from Michigan, Pennsylvania, Alabama, Mississippi, West Virginia, Tennessee and Colorado.

For these 30 recruits it has meant leaving the accustomed comforts of their own homes, taking leaves of absence from jobs, arranging to have family responsibilities covered, forsaking familiar places and routines for the unfamiliar.

Why do they do it?

Every major city and numberless towns and villages across the country each has a small cadre of people who have rearranged their lives, abandoned successful careers, uncommitted old friends or unsympathetic long-time mates to run the chapters and state organizations, to work every available hour on one or another and usually all (at one time or another) of the feminist issues. Sometimes whole families are involved, juggling the routine with the uncommon.

Why do they do it?

Even leadership at NOW's national level, though presently salaried, involves not only uprooting from home and separation from family, but a crazy kind of commitment no other corporation in this country can command.

Why would anyone do it?

Even the victories, celebrated briefly, mean (as in the myth of Sisyphus) that the stone is at the foot of still another hill to be pushed yet again to the top. Fame, if there is any at all, is fleeting: 40 seconds on the evening news. And fortunes are not made from feminism: Most work for no compensation at all, and many, in fact, incur out-of-pocket expense that will never be reimbursed.

Are there any rewards? Is this all just selfless sacrifice in pursuit of perpetually elusive goals? A masochistic willingness to be unceasingly embattled?

Since 49 B.C. when Julius Caesar made the fateful decision to lead his army across a small river called the Rubicon in northern Italy (an act that precipitated a civil war though it led to his eventual conquest of the Roman Empire), "crossing the Rubicon" has meant—by dictionary definition—"to embark on an undertaking from which there is no turning back."

In a real sense, these feminists have also crossed a Rubicon: It was an act of conviction, heavily laced with unregenerate idealism and a sobering belt of cynicism. There is a passion for the impossible-made-possible by sheer grit and a wily inventiveness. But no one who has worked—as they have—open-eyed in the ERA ratification campaigns in the states retains any naive illusions about the democratic process, majority rule, or the triumph of either logic or justice. With the most prestigious and reliable of polls showing nearly 70 percent of the population of this country in support of the effort to strengthen and change women's status, they—democratic process, majority rule, logic, justice—are all subject to perversion by a determined, moneyed, and frenetic minority.

But those who have crossed the Rubicon still persist.

There is no way back, no bridge for retreat. And there are, we've concluded after searching analysis, some distinct rewards.

This side of the Rubicon there is, first of all, the opportunity for self-development and self-expression unparalleled in conventional employment, for learning and using skills that exceed the range of ordinary work and ordinary living.

This side of the Rubicon there is the opportunity for acquiring knowledge of the world and its institutions beyond the scope of routine existence.

This side of the Rubicon there is an awareness of being part of the exercise of power on a grander scale than is possible in any individual, traditional career.

This side of the Rubicon there is the uncommon chance

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for learning and using skills that exceed the range of ordinary work and ordinary living.

for living uncommon lives as opposed to those of "quiet desperation."

In sum, there is the opportunity to live extra ordinary lives with the sense of being exceptional people in exceptional circumstances in the vanguard of a great—and historically inevitable—advance of civilization.

For though they lose a thousand "battles," they cannot lose "the war." They are not the defenders of the status quo, the desperate mythologizers of the past seeking to enshrine it forevermore.

Who, after all, celebrates those who fought against education for women? Their right to own property and be guardians of their children? Their right to limit child-bearing? Their right to vote?

Those who have crossed the Rubicon accelerate the future. They know that victory—ultimately—must be theirs.
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A Call for National Service

By Donald J. Eberly

There is a growing interest in a national youth service for this country. A Gallup poll conducted earlier this year revealed a positive response (77 percent) by young people in the 18- to 24-year-old age group to a system of voluntary national service, which would offer them an op-

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portunity to serve in the military or do nonmilitary work for one year.

In February, Rep. Paul McCloskey, Jr. (R-Calif.) and 14 other representatives introduced a National Youth Service bill (HR 2206). The proposed legislation offers four options to all 18-year-olds, including military service, civilian service or a combination of the two. Then, on May 30, Rep. McCloskey announced he would introduce an amendment to the Defense Department Procurement bill (HR 4040), which would "pave the way [through a study] for a National Youth Service alternative instead of resumption of the straight draft."

May 30 also marked the convening of a two-day National Service Conference held in a suburb of Washington, D.C. The meeting was sponsored by the Committee for the Study of National Service, which recently completed a 20-month study of national service. The 250 conference participants agreed that national youth service is worthy of "a thorough national debate with strong participation by young people." While there was no consensus on what form national service should take, many individuals offered their own ideas and models.

One participant, Donald Eberly, has been an advocate of a national youth service for years. He presents here his personal views on national service, suggesting a model based on this country's past experience with the concept.

THE UNITED STATES NEEDS A FULL-SCALE PROGRAM of national service. The need can be found among its 2-1/2 million 16- to 24-year-olds, who are unemployed and looking for work. Many cannot get a job simply because they never have held a job. The government can break this cycle by becoming the employer of first resort, offering our young people a full year of work experience.

The need can be found in such areas as education, health, conservation and housing, where millions of young people can be engaged effectively to tackle related problems.

The need can be found by examining the bond of trust that exists between young people and their government in a healthy society. In the past 15 years, that bond has become seriously corroded. A properly conceived, well-run program of national service would help restore this bond.

Finally, the need can be found in the idealism of young people. Many believe or want to believe that what needs to be done, can be done. A system which denies millions of

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young people jobs of any kind, let alone jobs that young people believe would contribute to meeting society's needs, is a system that sends them an unmistakable message: "Forget about your hopes and ideals. They cannot be realized."

It is this last point that most sharply differentiates a jobs program from a service program. As material resources and opportunities for economic growth decline, as automation increasingly takes care of the production of goods, human needs and the way they are met will take on increasing importance. If the current generation of young people gains the experience of delivering such services, they will have the confidence and know-how to meet the needs of the future.

The Military Service Issue

For most of this decade, some 400,000 young men and women have enlisted each year in the all-volunteer military force. With the approaching decline of the youthful population, however, and with no expectation of a decline in our military establishment, continuation of the All-Volunteer Force in its present form seems unlikely. The government probably will be forced to choose between increasing the ante, thereby adding to inflation and inviting charges of a mercenary force, or cutting back severely on youth employment programs so as to increase the attractiveness of military service to more young people.

A third choice would be a return to the draft. If that happens, the national service alternative would describe the need for young people to serve in both civilian and military capacities, invite them to volunteer for a period of service before they are 25 years old, and restrict the draft to those who had not volunteered for any kind of national service. No one would be drafted except for military service.

Some national service advocates, notably Amitai Etzioni and Reverend Theodore Hesburgh, contend that a long-run program of voluntary national service would obviate the need for a draft, since it would generate a spirit of service among young people that would result in a sufficient number of volunteers for military service.

A National Service Proposal

Ideally, a program of national service should be derived from the mutual responsibility that should exist between a state and its young people. The state, out of concern for its

National service is not a new concept . . .

- William James laid the theoretical foundation for national service in 1906 in an essay entitled "The Moral Equivalent of War." If young men were conscripted to do much of the toughest nonmilitary work that had to be done, James argued, they would develop self-confidence and "would be better fathers and teachers of the following generation."

- The Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) and the National Youth Administration (NYA) were organized in the '30s as two of President Roosevelt's responses to the depression. More than 2-1/2 million young men enrolled in the CCC, which was perceived to be the most successful of Roosevelt's New Deal programs. Its purpose was two-fold: to transfer money to the poor (through allotments sent directly to the families of CCC enrollees) and to perform needed conservation work.

The NYA was larger than the CCC but received less acclaim. Also, the NYA was less distinctive in several respects. It enrolled 16- to 24-year-olds of both sexes and had programs for students and nonstudents. NYA participants worked in their home towns. Over the life of the NYA, from 1935 to 1943, there were 4.8 million participants, about equally divided between male and female.

- The GI bill is readily acknowledged as one of the best investments ever made by the U.S. government. By returning to the tax coffers several times as much money as the \$15 billion spent on education and training under the GI Bill from 1945-54, it was a sound economic investment. By producing what was generally conceded to be the best group of students ever found on American campuses, it was an investment in the quality of education. By greatly broadening the socio-economic profile of persons going on to higher education, the GI Bill was an investment in democracy.

Initially, there were predictions that the returning GIs would require a great deal of counseling and would not accept the authority of the educators. Instead, the GIs demonstrated the value of an experience-loaded interlude to formal education.

Also, the magnitude of response was vastly underestimated. Although experts predicted that less than one-tenth of the veterans would utilize the GI Bill, the total enrollment came to 7.8 million persons, or 50 percent of those eligible.

- The Peace Corps, created in 1961, disproved the predictions of those who called it a "kiddie corps" or compared it with the Children's Crusade of the Middle Ages. Where the assignments

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future, should encourage and enable all young people to contribute a period of service on the frontiers of human need. Young people, out of respect for their heritage, should feel a responsibility for a period of service on the frontiers of human need.

Based on past experience (see chronology), a national service program could be designed with the following characteristics:

- It would be open to *all* young people.
- It would require a transition period of about three years, allowing time for growth and experimentation.
- Participation would be arranged by a contract, voluntarily entered into by all parties.
- It would be based on the need for having services performed.
- Maximum local support for national service would be encouraged with underwriting guaranteed by the federal government.
- Service would be for no more than four years.

After Service

How will such a program provide for its enrollees after completion of service? First, national service should be a source of information about jobs and education. The program could provide a newsletter, job information sheets, opportunities for counseling and referrals to such institutions as the Employment Service and the Community Education-Work Councils proposed by Willard Wirtz.

Second, national service should certify the work performed by the participant. The certification should be descriptive, rather than judgmental, and should enable outgoing participants to get beyond the initial hurdle to jobs for which they are qualified.

Third, national service should offer participants an educational entitlement—a GI Bill for community service—along the lines of one proposed by Elliot Richardson and Frank Newman in 1972. At a time when the GI Bill for military service is changing its character, and financial support packages consisting of loans, grants and work-study programs are making opportunities for higher education almost universal, this is a complex issue. But if the nation wants to construct incentives for participation in national service, an associated educational entitlement is one of the most consistent ways to do it.

Fourth, the Women in Community Service and Joint Action in Community Service programs of the Job Corps

were manageable, as with teaching and agriculture, the work of the volunteers generally ranged from good to outstanding. Infrequently, where the assignments tended to be vague and the objectives unrealistic, the record was less satisfactory.

While in practice the Peace Corps did not quite live up to the hopes of its early advocates, it continues to stand as a small-scale model of a program where government expresses its trust in young people, where young people respond positively to this trust, where they do good work under difficult circumstances, and where they return with a quality of understanding and wisdom that could be achieved in no other way.

● **A presidential commission**, in 1966, examined national service and seemed to be on the verge of recommending it when White House officials told the commission there would be no money for such a program. Consequently, the commission simply recommended experimental programs to test the idea.

At that time, the national service issue was perceived narrowly, e.g., "Will a national service alternative make the draft more equitable?"

Nevertheless, the national service concept was examined more closely than it had been for many years. Apart from the draft issue, the following rationale emerged:

- There are vast needs for service in the U.S.
- Young people can meet many of these needs.
- Many young people want to meet these needs.
- In meeting these needs, young people may develop self-confidence and civic pride, gain work experience, explore career possibilities, engage in the world outside the classroom and away from TV, discover the rewards of serving others.
- Since the national interest is served by promoting the general welfare as well as fostering constructive growth opportunities for young citizens, the government should guarantee opportunities for all young people to contribute a year or two of service to their fellow man.

There were, of course, variations of this rationale. Some believed the case for national youth service was so strong it should be required of all young people. Some began the argument with the needs of young people for service experience. Either way, it was difficult to satisfy those persistent one-dimensional questioners, who asked, "What are you *really* trying to do, help kids grow up or serve the needs of the community?"

● **Service-learning**, the integration of a service experience with educational growth, has been evolving gradually for several decades. It is a special form of experiential learning, derived directly from the philosophies of William James and John Dewey.

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The need can be found in the idealism of our young people.

should be adapted for utilization by national service. These programs utilize volunteers to recruit enrollees for the Job Corps and to counsel and help place them in jobs when they graduate. It is a service that could provide special help for low-income young people without having a stigmatizing effect on the program.

A Five Percent Fund for Experimentation

If such a model youth service program were adopted today, it might prove too rigid to meet unforeseeable demands five or ten years from now. Needs might be anticipated better if sufficient experimental funds—perhaps five percent of the total budget—were allocated to the national service program. This money could be used to test new forms of youth service programs, such as ones similar to Canada's Katimavik or Israel's several modes of youth involvement. Certain cultural and public works projects also could be tested under the experimental program.

Evaluation

A close and continuing evaluation of national service is essential. Among the more obvious elements to be assessed are

- Participation rates by demographic sectors
- Value of service performed
- Impact on youth employment
- Impact on national service participants over time.

As the national service program continues, and teenagers view it as a live option for their post-high-school years, it will be of great interest to observe the choices they make. Will they continue to enter into marriage, employment and educational institutions at the current rate, or will there be marked shifts in the pattern?

Also, what will be the economic effects of national service? Will it prove the hypothesis that it is a counter-cyclical program? Will it produce substantial savings in welfare and unemployment expenditures? Will national service lead to greater productivity in such areas as health and education? Will it be possible to discern changes in the crime rate?

These questions can be debated endlessly, but can only be answered by operating national service for several years. To undertake such an initiative requires trust in young people and hope for the future. From what this observer has seen of young people, such an experience of trust will manifest itself in a better future.

Before the service-learning experience, a student is asked to consider its learning potential and to develop a set of possible learning outcomes. During the experience, the student maintains a daily log, records peak experiences, consults with faculty advisors, and attends occasional seminars. At the conclusion, the student submits to the teacher a portfolio of his/her learning experiences. The teacher assesses the learning acquired by the student and awards academic recognition as appropriate.

The 1969 Atlanta Service-Learning conference was a milestone in stimulating nationwide interest in service-learning. Participants in national service would be encouraged, but not required, to have service-learning contracts.

● **Program for Local Service (PLS)**, with only 1,200 participants over a two-year period, is the smallest government-sponsored youth service program in this review. It may yet prove to be the most significant. It was launched in 1973 as a test of the national youth service idea by two strong advocates, Joseph Blatchford, then head of ACTION, and Daniel J. Evans, then governor of Washington state.

The Program for Local Service was open to everyone aged 18 to 25 living in a specified area in and near Seattle. It offered full-time, one-year community service positions for a stipend equal to 90 percent of the minimum wage. There was no particular effort to sell PLS. It was simply presented as an opportunity to serve for a year.

A survey revealed that 20 percent of the eligible population was aware of the program. Ten percent submitted applications; one of four entered the program. The profile of PLS participants is essentially the same as the profile of applicants, thus indicating no discrimination in the placement process. It shows an above average proportion of women, minorities and persons from low-income families. Surprisingly, the education level of participants was higher than average. The most common denominator among participants was their employment status—70 percent were unemployed and looking for work.

Unlike most other programs in this review, PLS was not for a particular class of people, such as veterans, college students or the poor. It was open to everybody in the age range. Participants included mentally retarded persons, ex-convicts, a veteran classified as 100 percent disabled, and several persons with master's degrees.

The evaluation found the worth of service performed by the average participant to be \$7,000, almost double the unit cost to ACTION of funding the program. It also found the unemployment rate to have fallen from 70 percent at entry to 18 percent six months after completion of service.

—Don Eberly