

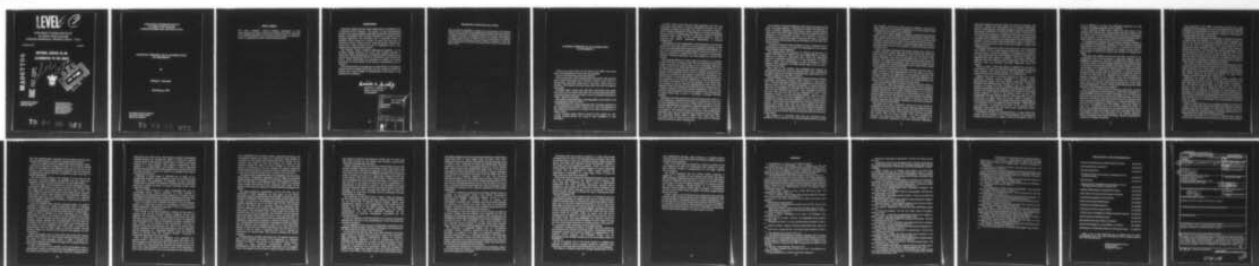
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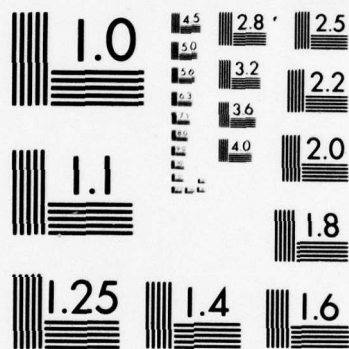
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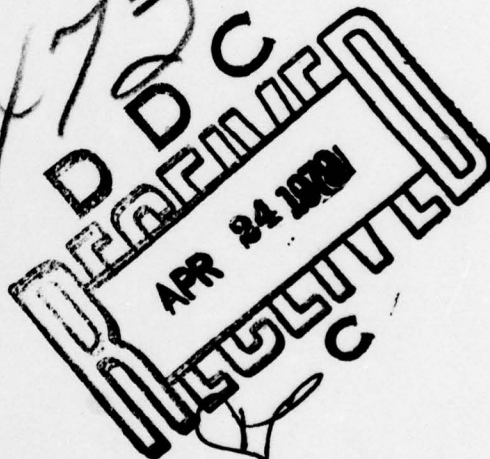
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## NATIONAL SERVICE AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO THE DRAFT

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**NATIONAL SERVICE AS AN ALTERNATIVE  
TO THE DRAFT**

**by**

**William V. Kennedy**

**20 February 1979**

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## FOREWORD


Numerous suggestions have been advanced for establishment of a national service program. The author of this memorandum proposes that such a program encompass social and environmental aspects, proceeding from the base provided by a common initial training experience. He concludes that a universal system of national service would be a means to cope with the costs of restoring a decent urban society, reducing present defense personnel costs, and restoring the sense of obligation that is fundamental to the democratic concepts.

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This memorandum was prepared as a contribution to the field of national security research and study. As such, it does not reflect the official view of the College, the Department of the Army, or the Department of Defense.

*DeWitt C. Smith, Jr.*

DeWITT C. SMITH, Jr.  
Major General, USA  
Commandant

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## **BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF THE AUTHOR**

**MR. WILLIAM V. KENNEDY** is a military writer who has been with the Strategic Studies Institute since 1967. He has published approximately 300 articles or chapters in books and periodicals. Mr. Kennedy served on active duty as an enlisted man in the Regular Army and as an intelligence officer in the Strategic Air Command. Currently he holds the rank of Colonel, Armor, US Army Reserve. Mr. Kennedy was graduated from Marquette University's College of Journalism in 1951. His areas of specialization are Northeast Asia, military press relations, and Guard and Reserve forces.



## **NATIONAL SERVICE AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO THE DRAFT**

Those of us who served on riot duty in the 1960's took away some vivid impressions of our inner city problems.

For me, the following remain the sharpest:

- Two young boys, neatly dressed and well spoken, who emerged when troops and police were firmly in control. They lived in a second-floor apartment along one of the most vicious streets in America. Their parents had kept them under their beds throughout the trouble.

- Teenage black youths who had been conscripted into gangs when they were not much older than the two boys described above, contacting military patrols at dusk to warn of burglaries planned by "their" gangs for the night.

- Housing so deplorable that it was impossible to stay indoors once the temperature went over 85°F.

- The statement by a police lieutenant that "normal conditions in this neighborhood are nearly a state of war. The troop deployment has reduced the incidence of trouble so far below normal that it is almost weird."

- Two Chicago police officers seated in their squad car, controlling nothing beyond the reach of their headlights or their flashlights.

In short, what I took away from that experience was, first, the impression that there is a direct relationship between the most immediate problem of the inner city—that of personal security—and the ready availability of large military or at least paramilitary forces. Second, it seemed apparent that the enormous rebuilding problems with which we are confronted—social as well as physical—will require something approaching a national mobilization.

Although in no way comparable to the dimensions of the human problems of the cities, there is an environmental cleaning up that needs to be done after three centuries of headlong development. So far, cost has precluded the rapid progress most of us wish to see. There is a need for a solution that does not imperil the legitimate interests of business and labor, but that enables us to get on with the job.

The national deficits of recent years are evidence of a collision between the costs of trying to cope with these domestic needs while trying to protect the United States in an increasingly dangerous world. A *New York Times* and CBS News poll published on June 28, 1978 showed a large national majority opposed to the country's present social programs and in favor of a drastic overhaul of the present tax structure on the model of California's Proposition 13. Plainly there is a fiscal and political crisis in the making that calls for a solution to our domestic problems at a level of expenditure well below the present cost of social programs. At the same time, the progress of current Defense appropriations bills shows that agitation within the academic and political activist community for a drastic reduction of national defense spending in favor of even greater social expenditures has not won support from Congress and a public which seem to want, if anything, a stronger national defense.

Although involving people more directly than money, there is a crisis emerging in national defense that is as serious in its own way as the burgeoning tax crisis in the civilian world. In short, it is now scarcely arguable that an emergency requiring expansion of the US Armed Forces will be likely to produce a crisis in personnel procurement. The National Guard and Reserve units traditionally depended upon for such expansion are themselves under strength. The Individual Ready Reserve (IRR) from which early reinforcements were to come for the Active Army *and* the National Guard and Reserve units is fading away.

In an article in *America Magazine* when the all-volunteer armed force was being debated, I expressed the belief that adoption of such a military manpower procurement system would produce early costs of some \$17 billion above those that could otherwise be expected in the personnel accounts.<sup>1</sup> It is scarcely a source of satisfaction to read that the cost for the first five years is estimated by the General Accounting Office at \$18 billion over the above the draft-era level.<sup>2</sup>

Coincident with all of these problems is one of national morale, in particular the decline or at least the submergence of the concept that privileges imply obligation.

The announcement on February 16, 1978 by the Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare that some \$400 million in student loans are in default is depressing news. When the widespread practice of declaring bankruptcy to avoid repayment of student loans is taken into consideration, as well as defaults in state-financed loan programs, the \$400 million figure may be only a fraction of the whole.

How many of the students who defaulted also enjoyed an educational deferment from the Vietnam draft? Are we educating at public expense a privileged intellectual class which feels free to thumb its nose at the rest of the country?

General William C. Westmoreland says that the nation's military manpower procurement policies made Vietnam a "poor man's war." The draft deferment policies, the expansion of conscientious objector status and the outright absconding to foreign countries that went on throughout the Vietnam War thrust into the enlisted ranks the men who did not know the "outs" available to them and the men who felt that they had an obligation to serve.<sup>3</sup> This situation is father to a most disturbing statistic, cited in a recent Association of the US Army publication, that "of 55 present members of Congress who were eligible to serve in Vietnam only 3 served."<sup>4</sup> Many more who escaped service in Vietnam and in earlier periods have found their way into policy-making and policy-influencing positions where their lack of first-hand knowledge of military life is a serious disability, and may, indeed, constitute a hazard to men and women who are serving now and who will serve in the future.<sup>5</sup>

The change to a volunteer force has not corrected these problems. On the contrary, it has institutionalized them by placing



the "burden" of service on those who are willing to serve and on those who find the economic attractions of service greater than anything they can hope for in civilian life.

Unless some major change in military personnel procurement policy occurs in the meantime, the high percentage of blacks<sup>6</sup> and other minorities drawn to the combat arms by the attractions of the volunteer system and the push of the civilian economy makes it virtually certain that the country's disadvantaged again will suffer a disproportionate share of the casualties, at least in the early months of a future war.

There is another potential time bomb ticking away within the present volunteer system. This derives from the fact that those who enlist incur not only the obligation to serve out the term of their active enlistment, but, also, an extended term of service in the Reserve. The early weeks of the Korean War showed that under the pressure of a military emergency, those who have already served will be recalled as trained replacements and reinforcements ahead of the millions who never have served.

World War II and Korea experience indicates that the risks of death, wounds or long imprisonment are very high in the early weeks of a major act of aggression. In all respects, therefore, the volunteer under the present system incurs risks and obligations far out of proportion to those faced by his or her contemporaries who choose to wait until a military draft can be got going.

The recall of World War II combat veterans in the early weeks of the Korean War, while nonveterans stayed safe at home, produced widespread resentment and a difficult public relations and domestic political problem for the Truman Administration. If, in a future conflict, high minority casualties are compounded by the recall of disadvantaged youths who already have served ahead of privileged groups who have not served—an explosive domestic social and political situation could emerge, analagous to that which produced the draft riots of the Civil War.

The idea that a more "universal" system of service should be established to assure equity and to reduce defense manpower costs is nothing new. In the past, these concepts were directed to meeting the external military threat. They waxed when the threat was great and waned when the threat receded. They were opposed by pacifists, but these have always been a small percentage of a notably nonpacific population. The most important opposition

came from educators and the clergy on a variety of grounds. The educators argued that interruption of the formal educational process could damage individual academic progress and perhaps discourage continuance of education after service. The history of the GI education programs, in particular that following World War II, refutes these arguments on all counts. Further, the educational treadmill from kindergarten through graduate school has begun to produce a reaction from students themselves, many of whom now seek an interval between high school and college or college and graduate school.<sup>7</sup>

The clergy opposed the idea of universal service on the grounds that military service would expose young men, not to mention young women, to corruptive influences. Considering the content of the mass media and the other influences rampant in almost any neighborhood, high school or college in the country today this objection has lost whatever merit it possessed. That fact alone, however, does not preclude continued opposition from this source.<sup>8</sup>

There is today a surprising degree of support for a return to conscription of some sort, and an increasing recognition that any such program must extend beyond the traditional concept of military service to include large sectors of civilian service.<sup>9</sup>

Gallup polls show a two-thirds majority in favor of a comprehensive national service program.<sup>10</sup> A national service demonstration project has been funded under the Young Employment and Demonstration Projects Act of 1977.<sup>11</sup> In all expressions of support for such a program, there is an implied or explicit warning against the inequities of the old military draft. The majority who supported the national service concept in the Gallup survey opposed a return to the military draft, as such. The *Philadelphia Evening Bulletin* believes "that any kind of a draft would have to apply across the board, without exception or favoritism or loopholes." The *Atlanta Constitution* warned against "the inequities of the old Selective Service System."<sup>12</sup> While having "no intention" of reinstating the draft "at the present time," President Carter said that any future draft would not provide deferments for college students.

Considering the drift of judicial decisions, it seems likely that women will be included in any future program of conscription, whether national service or simply a return to the military draft. If



so, it is difficult to see how the traditional exemption for such groups as theological students can be justified.

Court decisions handed down during the latter part of the Vietnam War indicate that conscientious objection is likely to be the easiest route of draft avoidance under any future US program of conscription. Current West German experience indicates this is likely to lead to a revision of the criteria for such exemption.<sup>13</sup>

A comprehensive national service program without loopholes or the traditional exemptions, adequate to meet military personnel requirements and providing the means to overcome our present urban and environmental problems at or below current costs, is easy enough to describe in concept but difficult to translate into action.

Who goes into military service and who goes to social or environmental tasks? Do all acquire a long-term military reserve obligation or only those "unlucky" enough to draw military service in the first place? Are there enough social and environmental tasks to absorb the interests and energies of the large numbers of youths not needed or not qualified for military service? Does everybody wear a uniform, or only those in the military, or will there be the standard service uniform for the military but a different uniform for the rest? Will there be a standard entry training program, or different programs for the military, social and environmental groups? If numbers of the conscripted youths are to work in the cities, what is to prevent them from becoming part of the drug, crime and degenerate "scene"? Where do all these people live while they are in the national service program?

Ten years ago, the Boy Scouts of America, along with a number of other organizations and institutions, underwent something of a moral collapse in the face of student uprisings, most of which were observed no closer than the living room television screen. The adult hierarchy that directs scouting, assorted university presidents and other supposed guides and counselors of youth anticipated a later and now much regretted recruiting slogan, "The Army Wants to Join You"—otherwise known as the blind leading the blind. In effect, they virtually abandoned the strictures and structures that in the past had at least discouraged scouts from urinating in their tents and college students from defecating in the washing machines, which, according to the student newspaper, became something of a problem at Fordham University.

The experience of the 1960's and beyond should tell us that organization and discipline are not to be despised, most especially in dealing with generations of American youth who have been led to believe that their wish is their parents', teachers', school board's and ultimately the nation's command.

Organization and discipline are dignified or debased by purpose. Assuming that the purposes of a national service program are worthy, we should have no embarrassment about using the most basic of all tools in establishing a sense of purpose and of the organization and discipline necessary to achieve those purposes, namely the uniform. I say *the* uniform, because anything less than the standard US service uniform will be ridiculed. The service uniform itself has been at one of the lowest points of esteem at any time in its history during the past decade—as judged by the tattered and soiled parts and pieces in evidence everywhere. That burden of shame is great enough without adding opera bouffe.

The decline of much of the Boy Scout movement during the past decade into chaos and disrepute stems from a fear on the part of its adult leadership that if they require the wearing of the uniform, and impose those essential elements of organization and discipline that enable people to live and work together to some worthy purpose, someone will call them "militarists."

Militarists are people who worship military methods and paraphernalia for their own sake. It is only common sense to do what Baden-Powell—the founder of the Boy Scout movement—did, use military methods when no others serve a worthwhile purpose quite so well. It should be obvious from the start, therefore, that if hundreds of thousands of young people are to participate in a national service program to some useful purpose, they must be organized into groups and trained to live together and work together in a way that will enable them to feel they benefited from the experience as individuals and accomplished something worth the doing.

There is a need, therefore, for a common program of entry-level ("basic") training that will include health and sanitation, physical conditioning, and the elements of community living. From that point the graduates should proceed to learning individual skills or to learning how to apply skills already acquired.

What this boils down to is a system of regional basic training centers that would equip entrants into the civilian as well as military



components of the national service program with a sense of identity, a comprehension of the intent of the program and the basic skills of living together. It is generally recognized that the Army-run Civilian Conservation Corps of the 1930's was the best of the New Deal programs. The Army is still the best-equipped Federal agency to administer the national service program. The Army field (fatigue) uniform is adaptable to civilian as well as military aspects of a national service program and it is relatively inexpensive.

Probably no more than a month would be required to accomplish the purposes of this introductory period. At that point, those who choose to complete their service in the armed forces and those who choose civilian service would go to separate training centers.

How do we decide who goes into the military and who goes into the civilian component of the program? Ideally, the entrant should decide that. Since direct military service will continue to be more onerous than service in the civilian sector, some major incentive must be offered.

If the national service program is to succeed in reestablishing a sense of obligation, the use of money as an incentive must be ended. Further, if the program is to accomplish its purposes at or below present costs, a significant savings in personnel costs must be realized.

Two years is considered here to be the minimum time required if there is to be a reasonable period of productive work to balance the administrative and training overhead. A pay scale considerably below the present military scale should be established for all participants in the national service program whether in military or civilian components. There should be opportunities for promotion and a commensurate pay increase, but still at a rate below the present military scale.

Virtually all surveys establish that education and vocational training are the principal drawing cards for attracting quality recruits to the military. It is also well established by now that at least the World War II "GI Bill of Rights" eventually returned far more to the public treasury in increased individual earning power and, hence, taxes than the program cost. The national service entrant who chooses military service should be assured of a fully financed four-year college program, or equivalent vocational

training, and a monthly living stipend in return: in essence, the World War II GI training program.

A residual reserve obligation should be required of all who complete the initial two years of national service. Here again there should be a substantial education benefits program to encourage active participation in National Guard and Reserve units rather than simply sitting out the six years largely as a name on a roster.

The military part of the national service program proposed here is relatively easy to envisage because the needs are clear-cut and the basic organizational structure long in place.

Structuring an effective civilian program will be more difficult. What are the needs?

The South Bronx section of New York City is often cited as a compendium of all urban ills. Even in New York, however, the South Bronx is not unique. Several neighborhoods in Manhattan and Brooklyn approach or match the South Bronx in desperation. The abandonment of large central-city tracts, including new public housing developments, in St. Louis and other cities attest the national scope of the problem. Because New York is the most "visible" of all our cities, however, the plight of the South Bronx and similar New York neighborhoods is the most extensively documented of any such areas and it is that documentation on which this discussion largely relies. The documentation supports the impression alluded to earlier that the most immediate need in the ravaged inner city areas is some means to secure the safety of persons and property. Routine civilian policing cannot cope with the problem.<sup>14</sup> A large force of supplemental police is required. National service police battalions could supply that need. First, however, there must be a body of laws and a prison system adequate to assure the permanent separation of the criminal element from those who wish to live a decent, productive life. In short, those teenagers who sought to break away from the gangs in the aftermath of the Chicago riot mentioned in the beginning of this article must be assured a safe haven and a chance thereafter to live free from fear of retribution. To accomplish this purpose, it is proposed that Federal districts with a special code of laws be created in those most intractable of slum areas, such as the South Bronx, where ordinary administration plainly has disintegrated.

A considerable expansion of the prison system will be required to maintain the permanent separation of repetitive offenders from



their old neighborhoods. National service could provide the low-cost personnel needed to operate an expanded prison system.

That is the negative side of a needed civic action program. Alone, it can be no more than a finger in the dike. If it is to have lasting value for the people of the afflicted areas and for the rest of the country it must be accompanied by programs that can overcome the degenerative apathy that now condemns so many Americans to welfare dependency.

The cash welfare system is not working. It is too easy for the bully-boy, the dope peddler, the gambler and just plain poor judgment to siphon off what little there is of the welfare check.

Some time ago, I heard a member of an Irish missionary society with almost 1,000 years of service to the poor to its credit say that one thing, above all, learned during all those years is that "the worst thing you can do to the poor is to give them money. You give them clothes, shelter, food, medical care and education. Money is something they earn for themselves." Adoption of a national service program would make it possible to convert from a cash to a service welfare program.

Given the Federal urban districts proposed earlier, it would be possible to employ an "urban conservation corps" of building inspectors, maintenance personnel, paramedics and teachers aides to create and maintain a livable environment and to train people—adults as well as children—to work themselves out of welfare dependency. In short, we would say to the resident of the urban district, "We will provide you with a decent place to live, food and clothing stamps, medical care and education. We will keep the criminals away from you and we will inspect your living quarters and those of your neighbors once each week to prevent the deterioration that has taken place in previous public housing projects. What you achieve in life beyond that depends on your own efforts."

What is envisaged, then, is a body of law that could take a clearly defined urban district out from normal political control—and off the backs of local taxpayers—place it under a Federal administrator and give that official the large body of people necessary for massive rehabilitation.

It will work only if the national service participants have a cohesiveness, a sense of purpose and an elan adequate to rise above the dismal environment in which they would be working and to

help others out of the morass. That requires a period of specialized training beyond the introductory phase in which the national service entrant would acquire a usable skill. It requires continuing training in a living situation that supports achievement. That equates to a quasi-military environment in which individual physical conditioning and the drill, appearance and achievement of the group become a source of pride to its members and respect from all who observe it.

Although it would require a different set of skills, an environmental national service program could be structured along similar lines. The availability of adequate, low-cost personnel would make it possible, for example, to greatly increase watershed protection, aiming eventually to protect principal streams along their entire length.

The net results would be to make manageable the now uncontrollable public welfare program, to make possible a progressive environmental protection program, to recreate a sense of obligation beyond self and to equip the population with the basic skills and structures of individual, group and national survival.

From the debates that attended reversion to an all-volunteer system, it is likely that a return to conscription in whatever form will be opposed as "involuntary servitude." If it is, is it necessarily undemocratic or "un-American"?

The concept of universal compulsory military service came to America with all the principal cultures—English, French and Spanish. The conditions of the Colonial period were such that universal service was simply a matter of life or death. So ingrained was the concept that it was not considered necessary to define the term "militia" in the writing of the Constitution. The term is defined in the State constitutions, but only in the sense of identifying exemptions from the universal military service obligation and in classifying the "Organized Militia" (now the National Guard) as distinct from the "Common Militia" consisting of almost all male citizens fit to bear arms.

How to make the universal obligation work equitably was another matter.<sup>15</sup> Historians now generally agree that about one-third opposed the Revolutionary War and the rest sat it out to see who would win. Even among the one-third who supported the war there was a wide divergence of burdens. Some were compelled to serve with local militia in short-term operations, some individuals



were compelled to serve under a shaky conscription program, but the greatest burden was borne by a relatively small number of volunteers in the militia and Continental forces. Except for the Loyalists who chose to leave the country, all citizens of the Colonies shared the fruits of victory whether or not they had chosen to participate in the war. Indeed, the greatest long-term beneficiaries may well have been those whose careful neutrality, or at least noncommitment, kept farms, fortunes, and sons intact.

The pattern thus established held true throughout the wars of the 19th century. Compulsory emergency service under the universal militia concept proved unwieldy, to say the least, during the War of 1812. By the time of the Mexican War, the burden of national service clearly had shifted to the volunteers who made up the regular services and the organized Volunteer Militia emerging in the States.

The large manpower requirements of the Civil War saw the enactment of draft legislation on both sides. In the North, exemption could be purchased directly for \$300, or indirectly by the hiring of a substitute. The payment of bounties further reduced the "threat" of service for the unwilling by attracting volunteers and thereby reducing the size of the draft calls. In fact, the principal effect of the draft was to stimulate voluntary enlistment and, thereby, collection of the country, State and Federal bounties that went with it. The immediate effect of this system was to place the burden of the war on two groups—the volunteers of all economic and social classes whose ideals led them to serve, and the poor for whom the various cash incentives were an irresistible attraction. As manpower requirements increased, it became necessary to tighten the "commutation and substitution" procedures so that the farmer and the laborer were eventually priced out of the substitution market. To the end, the wealthy were able to buy their way out of service if they so chose, a provision that was to become the cornerstone of several latter 19th century personal and family fortunes.

The high degree of public enthusiasm for the Spanish-American War and the gradual maturing of the Organized, or Volunteer Militia into what is now known as the National Guard made it possible to meet manpower requirements entirely from mobilization of State units and direct enlistment into the Regular forces. Once again, he who chose to remain at home could thrill to

the victories of Dewey and Sampson without loss of a day's pay and while moving into the spaces and economic opportunities vacated by the departing volunteers.

Public resentment over the economic discrimination of the 19th century wartime manpower procurement system, particularly that of the Civil War, had become apparent in the draft riots of the Civil War and in the often antimilitary attitudes of the American Labor movement as it grew to a major force during the latter part of the century. The result was a World War I military draft that was remarkably free from the defects of the past. To a large extent, this was due to the nature of total war and its requirement for commitment of all national resources. The privileged still could seek and obtain safe havens for their sons but the pressure of public attitudes, and the draft, required that these have at least the camouflage of some form of public service, preferably involving the wearing of a uniform.

The machinery of the World War I "draft," oiled and adjusted by the Army General Staff in the years between, became the basis for the World War II Selective Service System. Again, total requirements tended to force equalization of the burden and the hazards. The farmer or the skilled worker who was exempted continued to gain an economic advantage over his drafted contemporary, but this was balanced somewhat by the authorization of generous educational opportunities for the returning veteran.

It was the retention of the World War II era without substantial modification that led to the reestablishment of the old social and economic inequities.

In the language of the successive Presidential commissions that grappled with the problem, the heart of the matter was the question of "Who shall serve when not all shall serve?"

This derived from the fact that, from 1945 onwards, the United States found, for the first time in its history, that it must maintain a large peacetime military establishment subject to recurring, relatively limited expansion in time of international crisis or hostilities less than total war. In order to reduce the number of men who could be mobilized by the total-war draft machinery, large categories of deferment were authorized. While not unrelated to wealth and privilege, these tended to favor the intellectually gifted. In short, from 1945 on, the bright student who could afford college



and higher education and who married and fathered a child while in school had little to worry about from the draft. After 1951, additional insurance could be provided by joining National Guard or Reserve units. Although the latter step theoretically increased exposure to active service, the national decision to run the Vietnam War without large-scale mobilization made most of the Reserve component units into safe havens. As a result, it was not unusual to find National Guard and Reserve units in the late 1960's and 1970's manned by an amazing collection of men with advanced educational degrees. On the college and university campus itself, the concern expressed by faculty and student demonstrators for the poor was not accompanied by any rush to take the place of the poor who, as General Westmoreland observed, came increasingly to bear the burdens of combat service—often as substitutes for the campus population.

In 1970, a commission appointed by President Richard Nixon to consider an all-volunteer armed force (Gates Commission) formally acknowledged compulsory military service to be a discriminatory hidden tax-in-kind. From its studies, the commission concluded that "draftees and draft-induced enlistees are bearing a tax burden over three times that of comparable civilians," and that the disparity never would be made good even if veterans' benefits were to be taken into account.<sup>16</sup>

The decision to solve the inequities of the Vietnam era draft by creating a highly paid all-volunteer force disguised but did not eliminate the social and economic inequities. Not considered in the calculations of the Gates Commission was the more intangible cost of death or injury. Yet, potentially at least, the economics of the new volunteer system threaten to increase rather than decrease those costs for the most disadvantaged sectors of American society.

The chanting of emotional slogans such as "involuntary servitude" cannot, therefore, obscure the fact that "involuntary servitude" in support of at least one national program, i.e., national military policy, is a fundamental part of the American democratic tradition. Those who have benefited most from the decay or rejection of the universality of that tradition have been the intellectually and economically privileged. Those who have borne the costs and the hazards have been the poor.

Assuming the introduction of a national service program, what is to be done about the millions of people who have benefited from the draft exemptions of the past?

The easiest and most attractive solution is to offer those people the opportunity to serve in the national service program. Since they are by the nature of their past exemptions largely a highly educated group, their skills and experience would be especially valuable in the urban and environmental programs. Those two issues were *causes celebre* of the 1960's campus turmoil, so it seems reasonable to expect that the graduates of 1960's would welcome the opportunity to participate in a really major effort to rescue the cities, their poor and the environment.

Some there may be among the exempted population who would not wish to participate in a new national service program. The Swiss long ago recognized that there would be unavoidable exemptions from their supremely democratic national service program so they worked out a substitute: Citizens exempted from service for any reason must pay a tax of 2.4 percent on income earned between the ages of 20 and 32, and at successively lower rates until the age of 50.

If the youths who come of age in time to be included in the next conscription program, of whatever type, are not to feel themselves victims of grossly unfair circumstance it seems reasonable to expect that a tax on the Swiss model be collected for all the years since their elders who did not serve and do not elect to serve in the future came of conscription age. If an Equal Rights Amendment is added to the Constitution in the meantime, all the women who earn a cash income would be included, unless, of course, they had served voluntarily in the military or in some other form of service, such as the Peace Corps. The large additional, but relatively short-term increase this tax would provide in Federal revenues might well pay the cost of the initial investment in training camps, living quarters, etc., necessary to get a national service program going.

Assurance of adequate numbers of quality men and women for the armed services, at least in the lower ranks, would make possible substantial savings that could be applied to establishment of the national service program. The estimated 10-year cost for attempting to meet strength objectives in the Army Reserve alone is \$10 billion.<sup>17</sup>

By far the greater part of the funds needed to establish and maintain a national service program should be realizable from reduction of the waste and fraud associated with current programs.

The billions of dollars being lost through abandonment of new



and rehabilitated housing, under pressure of criminal activity, could be saved by the vastly improved policing available through a national service program.

Most of the large sums now spent for a variety of public service job programs are spent for employment and training of youth. Such activities would be incorporated into the larger national service program.

The fraud connected with the current welfare programs is staggering.<sup>18</sup> A sampling of such reports from almost any major daily newspaper indicates that most of this loss is in the attempt to alleviate or eliminate urban poverty. A source of recurrent trouble in all areas is the contract agency employed to run daycare centers, job training programs, nursing homes, etc. A comprehensive national service program would make it possible to standardize services in all of these areas, probably with better quality people and at lower cost.

In short, there is every indication that a national service program could be funded within the present level of public expenditures, and it might produce a substantial reduction of those expenditures. It is the one idea on the current horizon that addresses the full range of our domestic social problems with significant promise in the fiscal, military and spiritual areas as well. It is an idea fully in conformity with the democratic tradition. It is time to put it to work.

## ENDNOTES

1. "Who Shall Serve?," *America*, June 17, 1967, pp. 854-855.
2. *Recruiting for the All-Volunteer Force: A Summary of Costs and Achievements*. Washington, DC: US General Accounting Office, October 31, 1977.
3. The extent of the problem and its social connotations is documented by Lawrence M. Baskir and William A. Strauss in *Chance and Circumstance: The Draft, the War and the Vietnam Generation*, New York: Knopf, 1978.
4. "The Shrinking World: A Year-End Assessment," January 16, 1978, p 35.
5. The author has been present on two occasions when "bright young men," innocent of any understanding of the human impact, but occupying positions of influence within the government, proposed that the aircraft carriers of the US Sixth Fleet be deliberately sacrificed as pawns in a game of political "signals." Had they served on those carriers, or in any military unit, it is doubtful that they could have so blithely written off some 4,000 American lives—or the domestic political consequences of such an act.
6. George Wilson, "Blacks in Army Increase 50% Since Draft," *The Washington Post*, May 2, 1978, p. 16.
7. Gene T. Maeroff, "More College Seniors Found Putting Off Graduate Work," *The New York Times*, June 28, 1978, p. 1.
8. See letter to the editor of *America*, July 22, 1968, from the Rev. James Gilhooly.
9. The following are representative:
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10. *The Washington Post*, March 7, 1977, p. C7.
11. *The National Service Secretariat Newsletter*, Washington, DC, reported in April 1978 that the Youth Employment and Demonstration Projects Act of 1977 supplied funds for a demonstration national service project at Syracuse, NY, under the sponsorship of ACTION and the Department of Labor. In addition, it was reported, ACTION is requesting \$3,841,000 for national service research in fiscal year 1979.
12. Editorial, "Timely Warning," February 22, 1977.
13. "Germany re-examines objector draft-status rules," *The Baltimore Sun*, February 11, 1978, p.2.
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"Going Broke: Payroll Costs Overwhelm Cities," editorial, *The Harrisburg, Pa., Sunday Patriot-News*, August 24, 1975, discussing a starting salary in the San Francisco Police Department of \$18,816 and a total initial compensation "package" of \$29,540.

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