

JOB CORPS TO 1973

by

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DEDICATION

To the author's wife, _____, and parents,

_____ . This project would have been neither possible nor worthwhile without their love and support.

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CHAPTER 1

ANTECEDENTS TO JOB CORPS: BACKGROUND AND HISTORY OF THE CCC

A War Declared

The Capitol dome shone in the January night, its cupola especially illuminated by a bright light as is always the case when Congress meets into the evening. Early January, 1964, brought a deep chill to the capital city, but inside, members of Congress were preparing to welcome the President of the United States with a special warmth. Lyndon Johnson had held the office just over a month, and was now preparing to deliver his first State of the Union message.

Democrats in the Congress were especially interested to hear the new President outline his legislative proposals for the administration tragically cut short by the assassination of John Kennedy. Kennedy had had his problems with Congress, but Johnson was highly regarded for

his legislative acumen acquired both in the House and Senate dating back to the end of the New Deal. There were still a number of other New Dealers in Congress who would be sympathetic to the new President's programs. And, Johnson stood to profit from the national wave of sympathy engendered by the recent assassination and run for a full term as President in his own right. In this State of the Union message, Johnson could well outline his vision for America for the next four years as well.

Republicans were wary as the time approached for Johnson's address. Although they had effectively dealt with Johnson's more inexperienced predecessor, they had not seen Johnson actively lobby Congress for any Kennedy measure. What would the President offer, and how would they counter it?

Soon Johnson's vision for a Great Society became clear. In ringing tones, he offered a message of hope. But, said the President,

unfortunately many Americans live on the outskirts of hope -- some because of their poverty and some because of their color, and all too many because of both.

Our task is to help replace that despair with opportunity.

And this Administration today here and now declares unconditional war on poverty in America.¹

To achieve his vision, Johnson proposed the resurrection of programs Franklin Roosevelt, a Democratic predecessor,

had instituted during the Great Depression. But unlike Roosevelt, Johnson saw poverty as a problem that had emerged only recently. He, and much of the country with him, were surprised at the extent of poverty in the Land of Plenty. The hidden nature of poverty would make it difficult to fight. Roosevelt, on the other hand, faced economic problems that had existed for years and pervaded virtually every level of the society.

The Great Depression

Much has been written of Inauguration Day, 1933. In many ways, the bleakness of Franklin D. Roosevelt's inaugural reflected the mood of a nation mired in a Great Depression. Just as a cold rain blew through Washington streets and chilled the attendees, the effects of the stock market crash had rippled throughout the United States since October, 1929, affecting virtually everyone's life.

The stock market crash ended years of wild speculation. People who were left with any money began to refuse to spend it, and a chain reaction began: manufacturers, faced with a shrinking market, laid off workers. Laid-off workers, in turn, had to economize what little money they had, thus shrinking the market further and forcing more businesses to close.²

The magnitude of the Depression, and the speed with

which it spread, was alarming. Between the end of October, 1929, and the middle of the next month, financial losses of the New York stock market were over \$30 billion, twice the size of the national debt.³

Millions worked only part time or not at all. By the next year, 4,500,000 Americans were unemployed. Those persons still working in manufacturing averaged \$25 a week in pay. Symbolizing the plight of others, 80 breadlines served 85,000 free meals a day in New York City alone. And those figures were only a beginning. In 1931, more than 5 million were unemployed, a total which jumped to more than 12 million in 1932, or 20% of the American workforce. Meanwhile, the average weekly pay in manufacturing had dropped to \$16, and the average family income was \$1600 per year.⁴

By Inaugural Day, 1933, the Depression had run its course for three years, and the unemployment figure had risen to 13,689,000. Social costs began to be noted -- one source estimates that 2,000,000 displaced workers were drifting around the country.⁵ Unemployment of this magnitude had dropped the Gross National Product (GNP) from \$104 billion in 1929 to under \$59 billion in 1933.⁶

Preparing to assume the Presidency, Roosevelt was especially aware of the impact the Depression had had on the nation. In some cities, unemployment had reached

80%. In others, "several thousand cases of 'death by malnutrition' were reported . . . despite the fact that milk was selling for ten cents a quart, bread for seven cents a loaf, . . . and hamburger for fifteen cents a pound."⁷ In the nation's farms, prices had fallen so low that farmers raised and marketed their crops at a financial loss: wheat and corn, for example, sold for less than 40 cents a bushel, and cotton six cents a pound.⁸

Roosevelt, as a strongly conservation-minded man, was also aware of other conditions contributing to the pervasive hard times. As Holland and Hill state it, by 1933, the United States was

no longer the rich preserve it had been when white men first found it. . . . For generations of exuberant exploitation Americans had cut, burned, wasted, and exhausted their land. Forests had once covered 800,000,000 acres (in the continental United States); in 1933 but 100,000,000 acres of virgin timber were still left.⁹

Denuding the land had exposed the soil to winds and occasional flooding and had led to Dust Bowl conditions throughout the Midwest. American farmers had not learned protective measures and "as a result, an estimated three billion tons of earth were yearly being washed from the cultivated areas of the nation."¹⁰

In the early 1930's, however, these economic and

physical conditions stood in sharp contrast to the "Roaring Twenties," when "anyone could see that this country had discovered the magical formula for perpetual prosperity."¹¹ In the 1930's, people with vivid memories of the previous decade found themselves fighting a war of sorts with an enemy that completely surrounded them. The Great Depression brought with it an unprecedented despair. As Boardman writes, "In (a) war, for many, the body died suddenly; in the Depression, for many, the spirit died slowly."¹²

Thoughts similar to these were very likely in the minds of those in the inaugural crowd as Roosevelt took the podium. There was no question in Roosevelt's mind that the nation was in an emergency. For one thing, people needed to get to work, both to regain some economic well-being and to throw off a defeated spirit. Another large concern was with conservation. Some watching and listening on that bleak March day knew that, since the 1932 election, Roosevelt had refused to cooperate with President Hoover with any of Hoover's plans for recovery. Hoover, a great believer in private charity, did not believe in direct Federal aid to the unemployed. He regarded the "dole" as weakening individuals' "independence" and "self-reliance," and Federal aid as "socialistic."¹³ Others may have known that Roosevelt

felt he did not possess the authority to act until inaugurated as President. Only a handful could have known of Roosevelt's unspoken plans to implement a program addressing unemployment, conservation, and spiritual values.

As Roosevelt began to speak, the warmth in his voice assured those listening that a "New Deal" was coming soon. The speed with which it was to come would have shocked even the most dispirited.

Forerunners of the CCC

Roosevelt's plan to address the problems of the Great Depression became apparent in the first "Hundred Days" of the new Administration, when the legislative package defining the New Deal was outlined.

The second major law of the Hundred Days ". . . accomplished something of great personal interest to Roosevelt."¹⁴ In a message to Congress shortly after the inauguration, Roosevelt asked for the power to create a Civilian Conservation Corps. Its purpose, said Roosevelt, was temporary employment for a quarter million young men

to be used in simple work, not interfering with normal employment, and confining itself to forestry, the prevention of soil erosion, flood control, and similar projects.

The proposed Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), further, was to be ". . . carried on by existing machinery of the Departments of Labor, Agriculture, War, and Interior."¹⁵ The need was pressing -- Roosevelt wanted to act within two weeks.

With his plan for a CCC, the new President recognized that economic concerns had reached critical proportions, and unlike the Hoover administration, Roosevelt announced his intentions to act on them. Roosevelt also proposed a CCC to meet human needs as well. In the same message to Congress, the President said that

more important . . . than material gains will be the moral and spiritual value of such work. . . . We can take a vast army of the unemployed out into healthful surroundings. We can eliminate to some extent at least the threat that enforced idleness brings to spiritual and moral stability.¹⁶

The idea for a CCC did not originate with the Roosevelt presidency as has often been suggested. Instead, Roosevelt was more of a catalyst for an idea that had existed before, both in the United States and Europe. In accepting the Democratic nomination the previous July, Roosevelt had suggested a CCC as part of a campaign against unemployment.¹⁷ There is evidence that, before the 1932 election, Roosevelt was aware of European and other American programs like the CCC he was proposing.¹⁸ Those programs had stressed an involvement

with nature, and it was on grounds of conservation that support for a nationwide American corps was sought and ultimately justified.

Roosevelt had spoken in terms of conservation when he declared that every European nation had a definite land policy. The United States, having none, ". . . face(d) a future of soil erosion and timber famine."¹⁹ Many European land policies included a corps of civilian men, created by government, to work in nature. Such a concept existed in men's minds, if not in fact, nearly a century before Roosevelt assumed the United States Presidency.

European Youth Camps

A first reference to the concept of a civilian corps formed by government to engage nature is attributed to the Englishman Thomas Carlyle. In 1850, Carlyle proposed that idle men be organized into ". . . industrial regiments -- regiments not to fight the French or others, who are peaceable enough toward us, but to fight the bogs and wildernesses at home and abroad."²⁰ Some twenty years later, John Ruskin reinforced Carlyle's concept by suggesting that the British Army, when not at war, should labor along with civilians in peacetime work.²¹

The idea of civilian work corps gained scattered support in Europe. Holland, reporting on his research in the area, writes that in 1912, Josef Popper-Lynkeus, an

Austrian engineer,

strongly urged his state to introduce a compulsory labor service in order to insure a minimum sustenance for all its people. (Also that year), a group of professors at Heidelberg University, Germany, prepared and sent a memorandum to the German Minister of War proposing a voluntary youth corps.²²

Still, no work corps was established in Europe before 1920.²³ Impetus for such a corps came from World War I.

The devastation brought by that war to the countryside and to European's lives was unprecedented in modern times. At the 1920 Congress of International Fellowship of Reconciliation, the German delegate proposed a novel program as a partial solution: "Let us form an international group of volunteers," he said, "who will offer their services free for the task of reconstruction"²⁴ The International Voluntary Service, housed in camps and performing reconstruction work in Northern France, was a direct outgrowth of the 1920 conference. Holland notes that Americans were among the first camp members.²⁵

Bulgaria had even considered work camps before the International Voluntary Service was established. Faced with ". . . disrupted transportation, a food shortage, and youth clamoring for jobs . . ." following the war, a youth labor corps was proposed as an alternative, and began to operate in 1921.²⁶

For the first third of the twentieth century, at least, a crisis atmosphere spurred the development of youth work camps as much as any event. Once established, other crises maintained and expanded them. Holland writes that one Swiss camp of fifteen students in 1925 gradually expanded until subsidized nationally eight years later. The German Free Corps grew from one camp to thirty in 1931.²⁷ One reason for their growth was the general world depression. As the German economy began to fall in 1931, the government actively promoted a "voluntary labor service." By the next year, over a quarter million young men and women worked in these camps for ". . . bread, lodging, work clothes, and a small payment" ²⁸

Although youth camps spread rapidly in Europe in the early 1930's, only fragmentary information about them reached the United States.²⁹ President Roosevelt had been to Europe both as a student and as Assistant Secretary of the Navy, and certainly had an opportunity to become familiar with youth work camps. Holland, however, indicates that Roosevelt never referred to European work camps in any public statement or document.³⁰

American Youth Camps

The first reference to an American youth labor corps came in 1912, the same year Popper-Lynkeus and the Heidelberg professors promoted the same in Europe.

William James, a Harvard professor of philosophy, took a position different from the other two progenitors:

There is nothing to make one indignant in the mere fact that life is hard, that men should toil and suffer pain. . . . It may end by seeming shameful to all of us that some of us have nothing but campaigning, and others nothing but unmanly ease. If now . . . there were, instead of military conscription, a conscription of the whole youthful population to form for a certain number of years a part of the army enlisted against Nature, the injustice would tend to be evened out, and numerous other goods to the commonwealth would follow. The military ideals of hardihood and discipline would be wrought into the growing fibre of the people; no one would remain blind as the luxurious classes now are blind, to the permanently sour and hard functions of his higher life.

To coal and iron mines, . . . to road-building and tunnel-making, . . . would our gilded youth be drafted off, according to their choice, to get the childishness knocked out of them, and to come back into society with healthier sympathies and soberer ideas.³¹

James could not have known how prophetic his words would be. The Great Depression tended to equalize classes in America, and a youth corps was an almost natural response.

Lacy indicates that Roosevelt later acknowledged a familiarity with James's ideas, but denied being influenced by them.³² To the public eye, at least, Roosevelt's background readily lent itself to the nascence of a Civilian Conservation Corps.

That background was one which embodied long-standing Democratic ideals. According to Lacy, Roosevelt loved the land and adhered to the strict Jeffersonian belief that an

existence lived close to Nature was the highest life plane. Moreover, Roosevelt wanted a number of city dwellers to move to the countryside.³³ In his early public life, the young Chairman of the New York Fish and Game Committee fought for reforestation measures. Conservation was an issue in Roosevelt's bid for the Vice-Presidency in 1920.³⁴

Later, as Governor of New York, Roosevelt found his sentiments reflected by Henry Morgenthau, Jr., an old friend and editor of the journal American Agriculturist. Biographer Blum described Morgenthau's credo:

The source of the good life was the land. The purpose of the good life was helping those who needed help. The land and the people were the important things, the things the young man cared about.³⁵

Morgenthau once conducted an experiment which served as a precursor to the CCC. "Using unemployed men to thin out 100 acres as a wood lot, . . . (Morgenthau) calculated how many could be employed on each 100 acres to be reforested, and he accumulated data on how their work assignments could be organized."³⁶ That experience especially caught Roosevelt's attention, and after his reelection as Governor in 1930, appointed Morgenthau Conservation Commissioner, ". . . the office he most desired."³⁷

The Roosevelt/Morgenthau collaboration was to be a

telling one for the eventual development of a CCC. Under Morgenthau's direction, New York employed 10,000 men on reforestation projects. Blum called this development the "genesis of the New Deal's CCC", a fact later publicly verified by Morgenthau.³⁸

By 1931, under Roosevelt's administration as Governor and Morgenthau's direction, New York was conducting a forestry operation larger than any state had previously attempted,³⁹ a fact which had to have been a source of pleasure for Roosevelt. In a prelude to the 1932 Presidential election, Roosevelt sent his Conservation Commissioner to the Western states both to test the political waters and assess the damage wrought by the Depression and Dust Bowl. Morgenthau saw that the situation was worse than he had imagined and he became convinced that a new administration could utilize new initiatives to correct it.⁴⁰ In a letter to Roosevelt, Morgenthau wrote that "our New York story on agriculture has reached (the Western farmers) and they all admit New York has done more for the farmer than any other state."⁴¹ Before the election, Roosevelt was also aware of California and Washington state efforts to organize unemployed men into conservation work teams,⁴² and his beliefs in a government committed boldly to a broad, proven social program deepened.

With those thoughts in mind, Roosevelt publicly proposed a Civilian Conservation Corps to meet the national emergency of the Depression the night he accepted the Democratic nomination for President. In 1942, the Library of Congress was to report, with great accuracy, that ". . . the Civilian Conservation Corps was not an idea that was new, untried, or uncharted. The program was launched after careful consideration of everything concerned, including not only agencies involved but areas affected."⁴³

The Civilian Conservation Corps

Building on the notion that European nations had a land policy while America had none, Roosevelt asked Congress for a Civilian Conservation Corps on March 21, 1933. In so asking, Roosevelt placed emphasis on conservation as a means of welfare. Only one restriction was placed on the men who would perform the conservation tasks outlined in his message -- that they be unemployed.⁴⁴ Taking its cue from the President, Congress acted with great speed and passed authorizing legislation ten days later. Five days later, on April 5, 1933, Roosevelt established the CCC with Executive Order No. 6101.⁴⁵ The Executive Order itself reflected the crisis atmosphere of the day: in its concern with

immediate employment and emergency conservation work, Roosevelt's Executive Order ". . . mentioned neither education nor training as a function of the new agency."⁴⁶ Instead, attention was focused on administrative matters: a Director of Emergency Work was appointed, \$10 million was transferred for his use, and an advisory council from the Labor, War, Agriculture, and Interior Departments was set up.⁴⁷

Roosevelt had meant business when he promised a "New Deal." If Congress had acted with startling speed to pass the CCC legislation, the pace with which the actual camps was set up was blinding. Even before Executive Order 6101 was signed, Roosevelt had ordered on April 3 that men should be enrolled by April 6.⁴⁸ After one month, more than 50,000 men were enrolled, 1,000 camps had been selected, and 52 were already in operation. The next month, 330 camps were operating and over a quarter million men had been mobilized. By the end of one year, 1,520 camps were fully operational.⁴⁹

As the CCC expanded, its role expanded as well. Records do not indicate when or where educational programs began, but individual camps, each with unique characteristics, appointed educational advisors to conduct training programs along the lines of the "spiritual and moral stability" Roosevelt had promised.

As these activities became more formalized, education in the Civilian Conservation Corps (took) the form of organized classes and activities of both an academic and vocational nature. Illiterate boys have been taught to read and write. The types of training have included academic, vocational, avocational, administration, job training on the job and training related to leisure time instruction.⁵⁰

Such instruction was usually held four or five days a week for two or three hours an evening after work.⁵¹ Because the CCC was mobilizing men on a grand scale, the impact of its related training was bound to have a significant impact nationwide. Roosevelt encouraged such, insisting that the CCC have an "educational and rehabilitation program."⁵² The result of such a program was reported by the Library of Congress in a widely-shared view: "The environment of the enrollee during his stay in the Civilian Conservation Corps camp is an influence which is singular enough to merit consideration as a formative factor in his life."⁵³

During its operation, the CCC -- and its educational program -- was widely judged to be successful. By mid-1941, nearly 1,400,000 corpsmembers had participated in on-the-job training.⁵⁴ The CCC was clearly developing from an emergency agency toward a permanent one, promoting, as Roosevelt stated, the welfare and extending the educational opportunities for youth.⁵⁵ It is over this point, its educational offerings, that the

first serious criticism was leveled at the CCC, with state and local agencies seeking to transfer to themselves the CCC's educational function.⁵⁶

The vocational education function of the CCC vis-a-vis that of the public schools was particularly controversial. The Christian Century, in favor of the public education programs, argued for a return to the status quo before the CCC: the CCC was offering training that ran counter to that called for by the Smith-Hughes and George-Deen Acts. Local control, to the Christian Century, was eminently preferable to ". . . projects carried out under direct federal supervision on the basis of direct government appropriations." This new arrangement was an "entering wedge (and) freedom from federal influence has been a cardinal principle of our school system from earliest days."⁵⁷

An earlier voice had questioned the CCC's "duplication of existing educational facilities." A subcommittee on vocational training of the National Committee of Education and Defense said that although the ". . . federal government is and must be concerned with education . . . (its) participation (must be limited to) a nationwide program operated through the public schools."⁵⁸

This same argument, apparently against channeling federal dollars away from public schools, was also

enunciated by the Educational Policies Commission of the NEA and the American Association of School Administrators. Saying flatly that the CCC should be discontinued as a separate youth agency, "its functions as agencies of vocational training, general education, and guidance should be continued but transferred to state-and-local education agencies."⁵⁹

Other criticisms of the CCC revolved around the increased military nature of its training, in view of the war threat. Charges that the CCC was no longer a relief agency, but a training ground for the military and defense industries gained support in late 1941.⁶⁰

Meanwhile, the conservation lobby offered counterarguments. The CCC had been generated too quickly in 1933 for the lobby to have been an effective advocate for its establishment. But by 1940, conservationists had uniformly come to view the CCC as a favorite project, and they gave it their wholehearted support. The crux of their argument, expressed in the pro-conservation Nature Magazine, was thus:

Educators, by and large, choose to remain consistently blind to the fundamental importance of conservation. . . . We do not believe the educators are correct in classing the CCC as purely educational (and) assuming that the kind of conservation work done by the CCC should be continued, we do not believe that the public school systems today, or five years from today, could handle it.⁶¹

These first criticisms of the CCC, however, were rendered academic by a crisis of a different sort, war in both Europe and the Pacific. In a letter made public, Roosevelt lost no time in justifying continuing the CCC because of its place "in the all-out war effort. . . . The employment of (CCC) youth in some cases releases soldiers for active duty and in others involves tasks which would require the employment of adult citizens."⁶² Roosevelt was joined in his support by various war and industrial manufacturers and industrial union councils, who were finding favor with former CCC enrollees,⁶³ just as the critics had charged.

The critics had also pointed out how the CCC was becoming a permanent agency and less an emergency one. Citing recently lowered age limits, increased federal appropriations, and a large buildup of capital on the one hand,⁶⁴ and reduced unemployment, booming war production, and need for military personnel on the other, the critics succeeded in portraying the CCC as an anachronism. Lacy writes that the CCC's identification with welfare and relief ". . . was too complete to permit a change,"⁶⁵ and thus could not be identified with the national issue receiving more support, the war effort.

Powerful voices soon began to argue for the CCC's demise. Senator Harry Byrd said,

Our government must be stripped of needless bureaus and unnecessary activities.

I have stated that \$2,000,000,000 each year can be saved in nondefense spending and here given a detailed schedule.

Here it is:

Abolish the Civilian Conservation Corps.⁶⁶

The Joint Committee of Reduction of Nonessential Federal Expenditures echoed Byrd's sentiments.⁶⁷ A Washington Post front page editorial claimed, "The CCC today is without function. There is not a boy on its rolls who can't get a job."⁶⁸ The strongest blow to Roosevelt's program came from Secretary of the Treasury Henry Morgenthau, Jr. Of the CCC, he said

. . . its primary function is the vocational training of youth, with present emphasis on employment in defense occupations. It would seem that the regular activities of the Civilian Conservation Corps . . . must conflict with the more important defense program and should be eliminated or drastically reduced.⁶⁹

Following Morgenthau's claim, it was clear that the CCC would not survive the war. Congress agreed with the critics, and the CCC was voted out of existence in the middle of 1942.

Praise for the CCC came from many quarters after its operations were shut down. Boardman reflected a popular view that the CCC was one of the New Deal's most popular measures.⁷⁰ Lawson echoed that sentiment by saying that former corpsmembers and the nation were improved by its efforts, and "poor, underprivileged young men (had been

reached) as nothing else in their lives had been able to do up to that time."⁷¹

Influential voices also remembered the CCC. Hubert Humphrey said

I will never be able to forget (the Depression). I know that out of those days, experiences came . . . that helped shape legislation later on. The Job Corps -- I was its original author in the Congress of the United States -- (came about) because I remembered the young men (who) walked the railroad tracks in the days of the Depression.⁷²

In shaping legislation for the future, Humphrey and others were about to draw sides and reopen a debate that would recall the CCC. The beginnings of a new program lay therein.

FOOTNOTES

¹The Washington Post, 9 January 1964.

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⁶Fon W. Boardman, Jr., The Thirties: America and the Great Depression (New York: Henry Z. Walck, Inc., 1967), p. 46.

⁷Lawson, pp. 20-21.

⁸Ibid., p. 14.

⁹Holland and Hill, pp. 10-12.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 12.

¹¹Boardman, p. 11.

¹²Ibid., p. 12.

¹³Lawson, p. 17.

¹⁴Boardman, p. 66

¹⁵Leslie Alexander Lacy, The Soil Soldiers: The CCC in the Great Depression (Radnor, Pa.: Chilton, 1976), p. 12.

¹⁶Holland and Hill, pp. 12-13.

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¹⁸Lacy, pp. 17-18.

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- ²⁰Thomas Carlyle, Latter-Day Pamphlets (New York: Harper, 1850), pp. 42-43.
- ²¹Ruskin, 1872, p. 142.
- ²²Popper-Lynheus, 1912, p. 16.
- ²³Holland and Hill, p. 17.
- ²⁴Holland and Hill, p. 17.
- ²⁵Ibid., p. 18.
- ²⁶Ibid., p. 19.
- ²⁷Ibid.
- ²⁸Ibid., pp. 19-20.
- ²⁹Ibid., p. 21.
- ³⁰Ibid., pp. 1-50.
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- ³²Lacy, p. 32.
- ³³Ibid., p. 18.
- ³⁴Ibid., p. 19.
- ³⁵John Morton Blum, Roosevelt and Morgenthau: A Revision and Condensation of From the Morgenthau Diaries (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin Co., 1970), p. 35.
- ³⁶Ibid., p. 19.
- ³⁷Blum, p. 18.
- ³⁸Ibid., p. 19.
- ³⁹Lacy, p. 19.
- ⁴⁰Blum, pp. 18-19.

⁴¹Ibid., p. 21.

⁴²Ibid., p. 22.

⁴³Lacy, pp. 17-18.

⁴⁴U.S. Library of Congress, Legislative Referral Service, Civilian Conservation Corps, 77th Cong., 2nd Sess., 1942, Document No. 216, p. 23. (Hereafter referred to as Library of Congress.)

⁴⁵Holland and Hill, p. 13.

⁴⁶Ibid., p. 1

⁴⁷Library of Congress, pp. 124-25

⁴⁸Lacy, p. 16.

⁴⁹Library of Congress, p. 19.

⁵⁰Ibid., p. 20.

⁵¹Ibid., p. 4.

⁵²Ibid., p. 52.

⁵³Lawson, p. 63.

⁵⁴Library of Congress, p. 53.

⁵⁵Ibid., p. 70.

⁵⁶Ibid., p. 123.

⁵⁷M. Frakes, "The Federal Camel in the School Tent," Christian Century, 12 November 1941, pp. 1405-1407. (Hereafter referred to as Christian Century.)

⁵⁸Ibid., p. 1406.

⁵⁹"The Future of the CCC," Nature Magazine 35 (January 1942): 33-34. (Hereafter referred to as Nature Magazine.)

⁶⁰Christian Century, p. 1405.

⁶¹Nature Magazine, pp. 33-34.

⁶²U.S. Congress, Senate, Labor and Public Welfare Committee. Hearings Regarding the Civilian Conservation Corps and National Youth Administration, 77th Cong., 2nd sess., 1942, pp. 72-73. (Hereafter referred to as Senate 1942.)

⁶³Senate 1942.

⁶⁴Library of Congress, p. 127.

⁶⁵Lacy, pp. 206-07.

⁶⁶"CCC Faces Attack in Congress," Congressional Digest 21 (June 1942): 163-92.

⁶⁷Ibid., pp. 169-70.

⁶⁸The Washington Post, 12 February 1942

⁶⁹Senate 1942, p. 58.

⁷⁰Boardman, p. 6.

⁷¹Lawson, p. 50-64.

⁷²Sheldon D. Engelmayer and Robert J. Wagman, Hubert Humphrey: The Man and His Dream (New York: Methuen, 1978), p. 72.

CHAPTER 2

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY OF YOUTH

CORPS BILLS: 1942 - 1964

Postwar America

A number of years after the end of the second World War, Margaret Mead distinguished the postwar America from the prewar as "men who became builders of cities from Stone Age men."¹ In 1957, US News & World Report said the past ". . . ten years have been a time of change and accomplishment unmatched in the history of America, or of any other nation. In one brief, ten-year period, America's face was remade" -- by superhighways, supermarkets, \$300 billion each for defense and production, jet travel, space travel, and "families acquired a degree of security never known before."² Despite the best efforts of the New Deal, it was World War II and related developments that provided the catalyst for a boom economy.

Following the war, the American economy expanded

almost immediately in nearly every sector. The Southern and Western regions experienced a rapid industrial growth, workers moved internally on a massive scale, labor unions gained in size and power, and agricultural productivity grew despite a declining farm population. As new business ventures were mounted, Americans began to believe in ". . . marvelous possibilities in the future . . . in a society that seemed open and promising."³ But in a revisionist view of this new society, Zinn says that the second World War, following on the heels of the New Deal, meant that Roosevelt's innovative legislative program ". . . made no changes in the economic structure of the United States or in the distribution of national wealth, changes necessary to achieve real equality and democracy."⁴

In view of these thoughts regarding a new prosperity, the role of the New Deal, by then only in the recent past, was the subject of considerable debate. Of its multiple "alphabet soup" agencies, however, one program was nearly universally recognized as an unqualified success -- the CCC.⁵

If the CCC was so successful, why was it not reinstated after the war to continue its conservation work? A number of forces blocked a reinstatement of the CCC. For one thing, the CCC was originally emergency legislation -- and by the late 1940's and early 1950's,

the emergency had vanished. As Grantham indicates, the new boom times had blinded most Americans to the existence of poverty and the people whose needs the CCC was intended to serve.⁶ A massive reindustrialization, moreover, and the mobilization of an industrial labor force fostered a disinterested attitude toward conservation by most Americans.

Other inhibiting factors gradually presented themselves. Postwar America brought hard times to the educational system: wartime neglect, shifting of teachers into better-paying jobs, and crowded schools from an expanding population meant that if any emphasis was to be placed on education, it would not be placed with a program such as the CCC.⁷

Youth had also changed. Instead of the highly-visible unemployed youth of the Great Depression, youth in the early 1950's was quiescent:

Youth today is waiting for the hand of fate to fall on its shoulders, meanwhile working fairly hard and saying almost nothing. The most startling fact about the younger generation is its silence. With some rare exceptions, youth is nowhere near the rostrum. By comparison with the Flaming Youth of their fathers and mothers, today's generation is a still, small flame.⁸

Poverty, when it was recognized, was regarded as characteristic of minorities in scattered pockets and slums.⁹ Throughout the Eisenhower Administration, no

major initiative to meet poverty on those grounds was undertaken. As O'Neill writes, "Eisenhower was not sympathetic to the civil rights movement. . . . He had no feel for the poor. The President was not a daring or innovative politician and never pretended to be."¹⁰ Minorities -- and their problems -- were generally invisible.¹¹

Through these circumstances, Zinn describes the twenty-five years after the war as "overwhelming and confident. Where Truman spoke of a 'Fair Deal,' Kennedy described a 'New Frontier,' and Johnson bragged of a 'Great Society,'"¹² only belatedly did this spirit of confidence turn toward a long-standing poverty problem. In the last of these Administration programs, the CCC concept gained enough support to be re-enacted in the form of Job Corps.

There is no question that the Job Corps, created in 1964 as part of a "War on Poverty," is based on the CCCs of the New Deal. That concept was kept alive in two ways.

First, a number of youth conservation camps had existed in various states in the twenty years since the end of the war, although with a low profile. A 1959 study illustrated their extent and purposes. A total of 73 delinquent forestry camps were established in 14 states with more than 1500 enrollees. Youth work programs,

similar to the CCCs, operated in seven camps in five states with over 1000 enrollees.¹³

Second, for two decades after the war, the CCC still had ardent supporters, especially in Congress. Political debates and lack of consensus over its role in a postwar world prevented the CCC concept from being revitalized until a new purpose could be found. In the case of Job Corps, that purpose was found in an anti-poverty effort. The support gradually mustered by the CCC proponents in a struggle to reestablish a conservation program, however, ultimately contributed to the enactment of Job Corps.

Legislative History

An indication of the popularity of the CCC, and attempts to revive it, can be gathered from an editorial in the March 30, 1959, Salt Lake Tribune: "Bills have been in Congress almost every session since the end of World War II providing for a youth corps modeled somewhat after the old Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) of the Depression."¹⁴ The statement is incorrect, however -- only in the late 1950's did a youth corps bill begin to take final shape.

Legislation pertaining to the CCC had earlier been introduced in Congress. The only bills dealing with the original CCC after its closing were ones providing for

disability payments or retirement benefits for enrollees or camp Reserve officers -- and that was in 1947.

81st Congress

A first attempt to reestablish the CCC was made in the Second Session of the 81st Congress in 1950. Identical bills were introduced in both houses

To reestablish a Civilian Conservation Corps; to provide for the conservation of natural resources and the development of human resources through the employment of youthful citizens in the performance of useful work, including job training and instruction in good work habits, and for other purposes.¹⁵

The 1950 effort was a coordinated attempt to address conservation in much the same manner suggested by the 1942 Library of Congress report: "There is anticipated a definite need for the Corps after the war, to provide a means for carrying on regular peacetime conservation of our natural resources and to readjust soldiers and perhaps younger men to normal peacetime conditions."¹⁶ Among the eight Senate co-sponsors was Hubert Humphrey. A house bill was introduced by Rep. John A. Blatnik, himself a former CCC member.

Rationale for the 1950 bills came first from a conservation standpoint. Rep. Reva Beck Bosone called attention to a spreading blister rust, neglected mountain roads, and the need for fire lookout towers.¹⁷ Rep. Helen Gahagan Douglas referred to the necessity of

conserving ". . . our natural resources which were of necessity so badly neglected during the war"18 The proposed program was designed entirely for conservation purposes.¹⁹

Secondly, supporters of the revised CCC pointed to its potential in human development. The bills were designed to provide work training for part of the "one million boys between the ages of 16 and 24 who were looking for work" in January, 1950.²⁰ Reminiscent of Roosevelt's emphasis on spiritual and moral value of performing healthful work outdoors, Bosone anticipated that the new CCC would have the same benefits as the old.²¹

Remarkably, hearings on the proposed CCC legislation were held before a "Special Subcommittee on Civilian Conservation Corps Legislation" by the House Public Lands Committee for five days in mid-May and late June, 1950. However, the hearings were usually characterized by debate over the accountability of the New Deal's CCC and the present need for conservation work.²² It was apparent that with the new industrial production of the late 1940's and early 1950's, conservation was low on Congress' list of priorities. Lyle F. Watts, Chief of the U.S. Forest Service, recounted how his attempts to get a similar program before the House Appropriations Committee in the late 1940's had gotten nowhere.²³

One result of the House Subcommittee hearings was that the potentially positive effects for youth was repeatedly discussed.²⁴

No Congressional action was ever taken on the proposed 1950 legislation. The Senate bill died in the Labor and Public Welfare Committee; the House bill was never voted on. Yet, indications were that the concept of a youth corps was still alive in legislators' minds.

85th Congress

Except for 1955, when Congressman Blatnik of Minnesota spoke warmly of his experiences in the CCC on the House floor, no mention of a youth corps was made again until 1957. In that year, Hubert Humphrey began a campaign in favor of such a program.

Early in the First Session of the 85th Congress, Humphrey introduced two bills to establish a pilot Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) to meet the needs of delinquent boys. In explaining the program's title, Humphrey also alluded to the conservation interests whose support was vital:

The name of the corps is derived from two sources -- the old Civilian Conservation Corps of the thirties and the splendid Youth Conservation Commission of the state of Minnesota, which has had such notable success in the rehabilitation of delinquent boys in its forest camp programs in recent years.²⁵

One bill, S. 871, was to establish a pilot YCC. A second, S. 872, was an omnibus measure including a pilot YCC with measures to finance school construction, scholarship programs, and state programs for juvenile delinquency. Humphrey referred to the omnibus bill as the Youth Opportunities Program, and attempting to bolster Democratic support, recalled a campaign statement by Adlai Stevenson in this regard to expand the role of vocational education.²⁶

Humphrey probably remembered the 1940's controversy over the CCC's educational program and sought to shift attention away from it. By recalling how the CCC had transformed the lives of its corpsmembers, Humphrey ambitiously suggested that the same approach could reduce the anxieties just beginning to be expressed by the Lost Generation. Doing so, however, diluted the conservation focus Humphrey so eagerly sought.

In 1957, Humphrey's advocacy was moot. Sputnik had been launched and with mounting pressures to resolve the missile gap and the education gap, Congress turned its attention to the National Defense Education Act (NDEA).

The next year, however, Humphrey began to emerge as champion of a Youth Conservation Corps devoted to the cause of conservation. On March 31, 1958, Humphrey introduced a new measure

to authorize the establishment of a Youth Conservation Corps to provide healthful outdoor training and employment for young men and to advance the conservation, development, and management of national resources of timber, soil, and range.²⁷

In support of his measure, Humphrey said, "It is time now that we take a new look at America's conservation effort,"²⁸ and largely avoided further reference to juvenile delinquency.

With S. 3582, Humphrey sharpened the focus of his initiative and began to line up conservation interests in favor of a YCC. His first legislative move was to arrange four co-sponsors. He also announced that the measure had the support of the American Forestry Association, American Planning and Civic Association, Citizens Committee on Natural Resources, Izaak Walton League, National Parks Association, National Wildlife Federation, Sport Fishing Institute, Wilderness Society, and the Wildlife Management Institute.²⁹ Then, introducing his bill, Humphrey outlined the approach he would continue to enunciate. The YCC should be closely tied in with the Federal conservation agencies which would utilize "existing, adjacent educational institutions"³⁰

Humphrey also saw that the same measure was introduced in the House the same day. His colleague from Minnesota, John Blatnik, did the honors.

Again, with the emphasis on an NDEA measure, and decreased interest for conservation in general, Humphrey's proposals died in committee. Humphrey probably knew the chances of passage in the second session were slim, but his advocacy at this point was the beginning of an increasingly strong effort to pass a YCC bill.

Two tangential bills were also introduced in 1958. One, by Rep. Victor Anfuso, was to establish a junior corps of cadets in each of the military branches to combat juvenile delinquency.³¹ Another, by Senator Estes Kefauver, sought to address the delinquency issue by making Federal forests available for states to participate in a Youth Rehabilitation and Conservation Committee.³² Neither measure had the kind of groundwork or support of the Humphrey bill, created negligible interest, and this type of proposal would not be introduced again.

86th Congress

1959. Just hours after the gavel fell to open the new Congress on January 7, 1959, Rep. James Roosevelt of California introduced a bill "to study the use of conservation programs to provide healthful outdoor training for young men and to establish a pilot Youth Conservation Corps."³³ It was clear that much would be heard about a YCC in the 86th Congress.

Humphrey had been working to make sure of that. His

efforts in 1959 were to be a mature political attempt. Yet, in his effort to broaden support for a YCC, the attempt was considerably flawed.

The political lessons Humphrey had learned from his previous efforts became apparent when, just before the opening of the 86th Congress, Humphrey published an article in the January, 1959, Harper's. The article, "A Plan to Save Trees, Land, and Boys," served to make the American public aware of his proposal to create a YCC. Humphrey began by extolling the CCC and its benefits to enrollees:

The boys put on solid weight. They grew taller. Many had their teeth attended to for the first time. They developed manual skills they had never suspected and later got specialized vocational training -- truck-driving, machine maintenance, building-trades skills. Eventually, training became as important as the actual pick-and-shovel work of conservation.³⁴

The war, however, had drained off the CCC's manpower and its conservation work halted. Now, after 17 years, Humphrey said, conservation projects had not been resumed, and without them, the United States faced shortages of timber and productive land.³⁵ After outlining the proposed structure of the YCC, Humphrey assured potential enrollees that they could take pride in having performed a valuable service.

Soon after the article appeared, Humphrey introduced

S. 817 with 17 cosponsors. The bill contained virtually the same language of his S. 3582 of the previous year,³⁶ and it called for an interagency effort involving the Departments of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW), Agriculture, and Interior.

By 1959, Humphrey was standing on even firmer ground with the conservation lobby. He knew of the National Parks Association's position that "youth conservation camps are the only practical common sense solution to the need for manpower programs"³⁷ The statement of A.W. Gruber, Deputy Chief of the U.S. Forest Service, that "There is even more natural resource work to do today than there was when the CCC program came into being in 1933,"³⁸ must have been especially heartwarming. Humphrey even publicly acknowledged his contact with and the support of the conservation lobby on at least two occasions.³⁹ Praise was also extended to his fellow Minnesotan, John Blatnik, at every opportunity.⁴⁰ Some of the conservationists' support translated into organized labor support as well.⁴¹

Hearings were held on S. 812 by the Senate Committee on Labor and Public Welfare. Holding the hearings forced the Federal Departments Humphrey had named in his bill to examine the YCC issue publicly for the first time. As the hearings got underway, shortcomings in the draft

legislation quickly came to light.

Humphrey had promoted the YCC as a conservation measure. Yet, early in the hearings, Humphrey said that the mission of the YCC was primarily educational, and that was why he had proposed the YCC fall under the purview of HEW.⁴² By proposing departmental involvement, Humphrey quickly ran up against opponents who advanced the party line. Arthur S. Flemming, Secretary of HEW, advised against a YCC.⁴³ Elmer F. Bennett, then Acting Secretary of the Interior, also advised against a YCC, calling it ". . . neither necessary nor advisable."⁴⁴

Particularly embarrassing was Secretary of Agriculture E.T. Benson's denouncement of Humphrey's YCC. In his measure, Humphrey had called for a representative to the Youth Conservation Commission from the Forest Service to be appointed by the Secretary of the Interior. As Benson quickly pointed out, the Forest Service lay within the Agriculture Department.⁴⁵ Humphrey's oversight won no supporters in the Eisenhower Administration.

During the Senate hearings, a number of references was made to the CCC as the seed idea for the YCC. With them came renewed debate on the educational purposes of both the CCC and YCC which were not clearly resolved that year. There was little question that the YCC educational program, whatever its ultimate appearance, would include a

vocational education component,⁴⁶ but questions remained as to who should conduct the training and when in the workday it should be done.⁴⁷ A compromise was struck, and the committee voted to make the educational program optional for all but the illiterate.⁴⁸ About that time, Humphrey referred to the YCC not as a program of education, as before, but as a program of welfare,⁴⁹ and sometimes gave the impression of vacillating on the YCC's purpose.

The Committee on Labor and Public Welfare reported S. 812 favorably on July 14, 1959.⁵⁰ Through suggestion and compromise, the committee amended S. 812 to include these features which would shape the future debate over youth corps: the Labor Department, instead of Agriculture, Interior, or HEW, would be given responsibility for administering the YCC. In addition, a target first-year figure of 50,000 corpsmembers was sought, pre-enrollee costs of \$2500 per year were established, and an age limit of 16 was set to permit school dropouts to join. The YCC's main purpose of conservation was verified as well.⁵¹

Floor debate was intense, again along party lines. Influential Republican Senators, including Dirksen, Case, Javits, and Goldwater, following a tacit Eisenhower lead, expressed uncertainty whether YCC camps would be

segregated. Despite lingering questions, S. 812 passed the Senate 47-45.⁵² But the bill's passage was due to the strength of the conservation coalition Humphrey was engineering instead of careful planning.

1960. Senate passage of the YCC bill the first time it was offered and the related action in the House during the Second Session of the 86th Congress is evidence of the political leadership Humphrey was bringing the measure. By the end of the session, however, Humphrey's optimism for a YCC had been tempered.

Humphrey's biggest problem lay with the House, where 14 bills regarding the startup of the YCC had been pigeonholed by the Education and Labor Committee. Eight more YCC bills were introduced early in the House's Second Session. In 1960, following the lead of the 81st Congress, the Education and Labor Committee sponsored a Subcommittee on Special Education which heard only two days of testimony.⁵³ Again, no measure was brought before the House for a vote.

Congressmen had other matters on their minds that election year, as they stepped up their campaigning for what they expected to be a close Presidential race in November. The second session ended fairly early, on September 1, 1960, and little time was left to consider a measure which both parties were content to drop for the

time being.

Humphrey, however, managed to pick up a small victory. As a minor part of the 1960 Democratic platform, a plank was inserted ". . . recommend(ing) establishment of a Youth Conservation Corps, to give the underprivileged young people a rewarding experience in a healthful environment."⁵⁴

87th Congress

1961. Ten days after the 87th Congress opened its First Session, Humphrey set out to hold his fellow Democrats to the 1960 plank by introducing, along with 22 cosponsors, S. 404, a bill "to authorize the establishment of a Youth Conservation Corps to provide healthful outdoor training and employment for young men and to advance the conservation, development, and management of national resources of timber, soil, and range, and of recreational areas."⁵⁵ Although the incoming President Kennedy had seldom referred to a YCC in his campaign, Humphrey was quick to pay political homage to the President-elect "for his leadership . . . (and) in keeping the commitment to the people of the United States he has made"⁵⁶

After the House's inaction in 1960, Humphrey had reason to be more optimistic in 1961 about his YCC's chances. After all, a Democrat was coming to the White House after eight years. The new President, youthful and

full of "vigor," seemed to hold the promise of changes to be made.

Of his 1961 bill, Humphrey described it as a "refinement" of S. 812 which he had previously introduced.⁵⁷ By refinement, Humphrey actually meant he was reintroducing the same bill which had been amended in committee in the 86th Congress.⁵⁸ Thus, the YCC was still to be regarded as a function of the Department of Labor, and as a result of the election, Humphrey easily had the concurrence of the Secretary of Labor, Arthur Goldberg.⁵⁹ Also, in reintroducing the earlier bill, Humphrey sought a YCC which would enroll 150,000 men by its third year of operation with a budget of \$400 million.⁶⁰

Humphrey clearly wanted to make a name for himself in conservation. But his wishes were again thwarted later that spring when the Kennedy administration asked the Senator to introduce the Administration's bill for, among other things, a YCC. Kennedy recognized Humphrey's efforts on behalf of conservation, and he sought Humphrey out as a determined floor manager. But Humphrey chafed at having his focus on conservation blurred by anyone. He dutifully introduced the bill, but without enthusiasm -- he didn't order the customary reprinting of the measure in the Congressional Record with his introductory

remarks.⁶¹ In line with Kennedy's muted support for a YCC in the campaign, the Administration bill, S. 2036, had proposed a three-part "Youth Opportunities Act." In addition to on-the-job training and public service employment programs, a pilot YCC was included.⁶² The bill was to cost less than \$300 million over a three-year period, and would have enrolled only 6,000 corpsmembers.⁶³ Secretary of Agriculture Freeman, Attorney General Robert Kennedy, and Senator Clark all later testified that the Administration had proposed a pilot YCC because it was ". . . trying to balance the budget."⁶⁴

Nevertheless, the Administration's action had the effect of galvanizing broad support for the YCC. Like their predecessors, Freeman and Secretary of Interior Udall argued along party lines, this time in favor of a YCC. Although neither Department was mentioned in Title I or II of the Administration's bill, passage was advocated on conservation grounds.⁶⁵ HEW also advocated passage of S. 2036, as did the Bureau of the Budget, in view of Kennedy's cost-cutting efforts.⁶⁶

Aside from the Kennedy Administration's interest in saving dollars, two lines of support for a YCC began to be enunciated before any hearings were held. Officially, interest in a national conservation program had been

expressed by the President, Cabinet-level Departments, and by the Senate. YCC advocates also talked of youth unemployment and others related it to juvenile delinquency. Prokop writes that these advocates never addressed nationwide unemployment, only ". . . poverty (in) pockets scattered throughout America."⁶⁷ Although poverty was a tangential concern, it was not held up in support of the YCC to the extent of either conservation or youth unemployment, issues which Humphrey had advocated.

Action of the Senate Committee on Labor and Public Welfare demonstrated the effectiveness of Humphrey's political know-how. The Committee, sympathetic to Humphrey's campaign, issued Senate Report 976, combining S. 404 and S. 2036 into one bill. The amended bill still referred to S. 404, but was named "The Youth Employment Opportunities Act." Its Title I dealt with a YCC. One compromise made by the committee between the Administration's and Humphrey's measures was that initial YCC enrollment was dropped from 50,000 to 30,000. However, a five-year, instead of a three-year program was called for, during which Humphrey's figure of 150,000 men would be enrolled. The result would be smaller YCC camps at any one time, but an overall operation requiring \$1.7 billion.⁶⁸

Action in the House was to lead to different results,

however. Over 20 YCC measures were introduced in 1961, yet only the Administration bill, introduced by Rep. Carl Perkins as H.R. 7536, received hearings before the General Subcommittee on Labor of the House Committee on Education and Labor. Perkins, chairing the subcommittee, was a supporter of the YCC and had earlier introduced a measure providing for it. Subcommittee action revised the age of potential enrollees from between 16 and 22 to between 17 and 21, and, like the CCC, suggested a base monthly salary and a six-month enrollment period, limited to four enrollments. The committee also changed Kennedy's request for a pilot enrollment of 6,000 corpsmembers to 12,000 and reported it to the full committee, which in turn reported the measure out as H.R. 8354.⁶⁹

Debate in Congress over a YCC gave the measure greater visibility. With it came increased criticism. The Wall Street Journal, for example, ran an editorial which accused the Senate Labor and Public Welfare Committee of voting to report S. 404 favorably ". . . in three minutes . . . without debate . . . before the Republican minority appeared."⁷⁰ Senator Pell maintained that the cost of sending a youth to a YCC camp was ". . . more than tuition at any Ivy League College, plus board and lodging."⁷¹

The YCC concept was criticized in view of other events. Rep. Chamberlain decried the House Education and

Labor Committee for passing a leaf-raking bill, especially after the President had called for belt-tightening in view of the Berlin crisis.⁷² Enough support existed for the YCC on the floor to refer the House bill to the Rules Committee by the end of the First Session.

Despite Congressional wranglings, public support for a YCC was growing. A Gallup poll of August 8, 1961, showed that 80% of the American population was in favor of the "CCC-type YCC program."⁷³

1962. As the Second Session of the 87th Congress opened, two versions of a Youth Conservation Corps bill lay within the respective chambers. The Senate had placed S. 404 on its calendar, but was deferring action until the House Rules Committee reported the bill out.

Meanwhile, Kennedy had recognized the popular support that had been developing for the YCC, and indicated his Administration would push for its enactment. In his State of the Union message of January 11, 1962, Kennedy revealed that the Youth Employment Act was second on his list of legislative priorities. The Economic Report that Kennedy sent to Congress on January 20 more strongly recommended passage of the youth act and the establishment of the YCC. Kennedy hit the same theme again on March 1 in a special conservation message sent to Congress.⁷⁴ Less than a week later, Kennedy anticipated in a press

conference that the youth measure would be enacted by that Easter.⁷⁵

By then, Carl Perkins was eager for the House to act on the youth bill. In a move designed to bring the bill to the floor and circumvent the Rules Committee, Perkins introduced H.R. 10682, to establish a YCC and to authorize local pilot service employment programs.⁷⁶ Perkins was pressing for adoption of the YCC and public service employment programs because they were two of the three components of Kennedy's original proposal to provide help for out-of-school youth. The third component, on-the-job training, had become part of the Manpower Development and Training Act.⁷⁷ Perkins' new measure was reported favorably by the Education and Labor Committee, but no floor action was taken.

The Rules Committee, meanwhile, sat on H.R. 8354. Their refusal to report the bill elicited a critical editorial from The Washington Post:

It is a pity that the bill to create a Youth Conservation Corps, warmly supported by President Kennedy, has been mired in that legislative quicksand, the House Rules Committee. The measure was approved in the Committee on Education and Labor. It has considerable backing among Congressmen, Republicans as well as Democrats.⁷⁸

Support for the proposal continued to grow. Senator Moss extended an offer to compromise the Senate and House

versions of the bill if only the Rules Committee would report it.⁷⁹ Humphrey, meanwhile, continued to receive support from the AFL-CIO and National Convention of Juvenile Judges.⁸⁰

It soon became apparent that, even with Kennedy support, the Youth Employment Opportunities Act would not be reported out of committee during the 87th Congress. A frustrated Humphrey, in a speech on the Senate floor, announced that he, at least, was not defeated:

I have been preaching the need for a Youth Conservation Corps since 1959, for almost four years. I intend to keep right on preaching

I believe in this legislation. I intend to fight for this legislation. . . .

Beginning the second week of January 1963, this preacher climbs back into the pulpit.⁸¹

88th Congress

1963. And climb back into the pulpit Humphrey did in the second week of January, 1963. Continuing almost at the point where he had left off, Humphrey announced on January 14 that ". . . at the end of the last session, I pledged that the fight to pass the Youth Employment Act would be renewed when the opening gavel fell on the 88th Congress. The gavel has now fallen and the fight is now on."⁸² In so doing, Humphrey introduced S. 1, identical to S. 404, this time with 33 cosponsors.⁸³ Hearings on the renewed bill were scheduled almost immediately. Humphrey had continued to do his political homework.

S. 1 sailed a remarkably smooth course through the Labor and Public Welfare Committee. In all, 61 witnesses were heard; only one -- the National Association of Manufacturers -- opposed passage.⁸⁴ Kennedy again gave the bill his blessings, and, in a February 14 message to Congress, said that "putting young men to work in our forests and recreational areas . . ." would address high dropout rates in addition to health problems and poverty problems.⁸⁵ Despite this and a few other references to poverty, conservation remained the focus of S. 1. To make sure the conservation message was not lost, the Labor and Public Welfare Committee amended the bill's title to read "Youth Conservation Corps Act" instead of "Youth Employment Act."⁸⁶

With strong political and Presidential support behind the bill, Senate debate was bound to be sharper than in 1959, when party line support had been different. Debate in the First Session of the 88th Congress both further clarified the purposes of a youth corps and was a harbinger of criticism to come.

The time that S. 404 had lain in the House Rules Committee the previous Congress gave Humphrey additional time to counter opposition to the bill. Humphrey had continued to mobilize support for the YCC under the banner of conservation. Yet, he still emphasized the educational

role of the corps and suggested supplementing corpsmembers' experiences on the job with academic and vocational training to be offered through the established school system.⁸⁷ Senator Clark acknowledged that a prime benefit of the YCC would be vocational and technical education, apparently provided through the public schools.⁸⁸ Each Senator remembered the controversy over the CCC's educational role and thus sought to avoid the same in the YCC.

The YCC's critics also had gained additional time to muster their forces in opposition. Senator Goldwater, for example, had jumped on a UPI story and used it to call attention to the type of youth the YCC intended to enroll:

Michael Ford, 16, who last month testified before a House subcommittee on the . . . Youth Conservation Corps, was arrested Thursday on burglary charges.⁸⁹

Senator Prouty again raised the issue of the per-enrollee costs and compared them to tuition at Ivy League schools, and Proxmire succeeded in passing a Senate amendment cutting first-year costs from \$120 million to \$100 million.⁹⁰ Goldwater sought to bring the Defense Department into operation of the corps, but Defense, in a different stance from the New Deal, now wanted no part in a civilian youth program.⁹¹ Through these attempts, opposing Senators probably recognized the support that

Humphrey had generated and the inevitability of the bill's passage. Their opposition had never been more subdued.

S. 1 passed the Senate remarkably quickly, and with a larger margin than before, 50 to 34, with 16 Senators not voting.⁹² In a favorable report that summer, the New York Times recalled

. . . the least controversial experiment of the New Deal -- the Civilian Conservation Corps of the nineteen-thirties. It was a smashing success. So much so, in fact, that President Kennedy plans a modern-day version of the old C.C.C. -- the Y.C.C. for Youth Conservation Corps -- designed to provide employment for young men by putting them to work saving the nation's resources. The Senate has passed the bill and it is now in the House.⁹³

But the YCC bill was again in trouble in the House. Carl Perkins had again introduced a YCC measure with Administration support and the Labor and Education Committee had again reported it. Despite new support from the American Vocational Association, National Education Association, and American Personnel and Guidance Association, and the fact that 88 related House bills had been introduced, the measure was again referred to the House Rules Committee where it had died in 1962.⁹⁴

Background to the Economic Opportunity Act

By the fall of 1963, the YCC bill again seemed to be doomed. Kennedy still had not been able to get the bill reported out of the Rules Committee. Humphrey's campaign

had generated widespread public support, but not yet enough. In view of this repeated stalemate, perhaps a new approach would have to be found for the bill to pass. An extraordinary turn of events that fall suddenly brought about a new initiative. Within a year, Congress would pass a bill which included a Job Corps with an emphasis different from what Humphrey had been advocating.

Other sources describe the passage of the Economic Opportunity Act.⁹⁵ An irony in the creation of Job Corps is that its authorizing legislation dealt almost exclusively with poverty. In the debate over the YCC, poverty was only one of a number of issues with which the program would deal. The War on Poverty legislation, however, emphasized the provision of job training to attack poverty. Conservation would be served by only some of this training.

Another irony in the creation of Job Corps was that Kennedy had given his blessing to the development of a large-scale poverty program just before his assassination.⁹⁶ Walter Heller, Chairman of the Council of Economic Advisors, recalled telling Lyndon Johnson

We did not formulate a program until after the assassination. It was in process at that time, and I discussed it with President Kennedy on November 19, 1963. As I had told you on November 23, Kennedy had said to go ahead with our work on a program, but gave no guidance as to the specific contents. That was to come later.⁹⁷

The day after the assassination, Johnson told Heller, enthusiastically, to go full speed ahead with the "attack on poverty."⁹⁸

Gelfand describes the puzzlement of some observers as Kennedy scouted and Johnson implemented an antipoverty program: "since at least the New Deal, strong pressure groups had set the country's political agenda; the federal government had been a reactive agent rather than an independent force."⁹⁹ However, an election year was coming up, and important issues had to be found. Kennedy had acted cautiously in much of his first term, feeling he lacked a clear popular mandate. He, then Johnson, recognized the payoff in a program with appeal to a wide spectrum of American society. Moreover, Johnson, as a master politician,¹⁰⁰ was determined not to be a reactionary President. He knew, from his experience on Capitol Hill in both the House and Senate, how various lobbies influenced legislation and the fewer he had to deal with, the better. Playing down the conservation interests in the War on Poverty legislation was an easy decision.

In a message to Congress in March, 1964, Johnson recommended the creation of a Job Corps. Outlining his plan, Johnson said

A new national Job Corps will build toward an

enlistment of 100,000 young men. They will be drawn from those whose background, health, and education make them least fit for useful work.

Those who volunteer will enter more than 100 camps and centers around the country.

Half of these young men will work, in the first year, on special conservation projects to give them education, useful work experience, and to enrich the natural resources of the country.

Half of these young men will receive, in the first year, a blend of training, basic education, and work experience in job-training centers.

These are not simply camps for the underprivileged. They are new educational institutions, comparable in innovation to the land-grant colleges.¹⁰¹

Stung, Humphrey ". . . personally protested to the President over the theft of his YCC (dream) by (the) poverty program."¹⁰² Yet, there was little question that Johnson was going to get what he wanted. For a program as far-reaching as the War on Poverty, President Johnson was sure to employ a version of the "Treatment." The "Johnson Treatment," as described by Evans and Novak,

could last ten minutes or four hours. It came, enveloping its target, at the LBJ Ranch swimming pool, in one of LBJ's offices, in the Senate cloakroom, on the floor of the Senate itself Its tone could be supplication, accusation, cajolery, exuberance, scorn, tears, complaint, the hint of threat. It was all of these together. It ran the gamut of human emotions. Its velocity was breathtaking and it was all in one direction. Interjections from the target were rare. Johnson anticipated them before they could be spoken. He moved in close, his face a scant millimeter from his target, his eyes widening and narrowing, his eyebrows rising and falling. From his pockets poured clippings, memos, statistics. Mimicry, humor, and the genius of analogy made The Treatment an almost hypnotic experience and rendered the target stunned and helpless.¹⁰³

Ben Ramsey, former Lieutenant Governor of Texas, once explained why he agreed with Johnson on an issue: "Lyndon got me by the lapels, and put his face on top of mine and he talked and he talked and he talked. I figured it was either getting drowned or joining."¹⁰⁴ In the election year, there were many joiners. Johnson's antipoverty program passed through Congress much as FDR's New Deal measures had done some thirty years before.¹⁰⁵

Johnson, having done nothing to advance Kennedy's legislative program,¹⁰⁶ was credited with the success of the War on Poverty bill. As ". . . a textbook example of the President as chief legislator,"¹⁰⁷ Humphrey's efforts for a youth corps were quickly forgotten.

FOOTNOTES

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⁴Howard Zinn, Postwar America: 1945-1971 (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1973), p. 89.

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⁸"The Younger Generation," TIME, 5 November 1951, p. 44.

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¹⁰William L. O'Neill, Coming Apart: An Informal History of America in the 1960's (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1971), p. 7.

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¹³Senate Record, 86th Cong., 1st sess., 1959, 105, pt. 1: 1389-1391.

¹⁴Salt Lake Tribune, 30 March 1959.

¹⁵Senate Record, 81st Cong., 2nd sess., 1950, 96, pt. 1: 694.

- ¹⁶Library of Congress, p. 109.
- ¹⁷House Record, 81st Cong., 2nd sess., 1950, 96, pt. 2, 2497.
- ¹⁸Ibid., p. A1501
- ¹⁹Ibid., p. 2497.
- ²⁰Ibid.
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- ²²U.S. Congress, House, Special Subcommittee on CCC Legislation of the Committee on Public Lands. Reestablishment of the Civilian Conservation Corps, 81st Cong., 2nd sess., 1950, p. 55. (Hereafter referred to as House 1950.)
- ²³Ibid., p. 50.
- ²⁴House 1950, p. 43; Senate Record, pp. 4521--22.
- ²⁵National Child Labor Committee, The American Child XLI, 1959, p. 21.
- ²⁶Senate Record, 85th Cong., 2nd sess., 1958, 104, pt. 1: 801.
- ²⁷Ibid., p. 801.
- ²⁸Ibid., pt. 4, p. 5776.
- ²⁹Ibid., p. 5777.
- ³⁰Ibid., p. 5781.
- ³¹House Record, 85th Cong., 2nd sess., 1958, 104, pt. 5: 6934-35.
- ³²Senate Record, 85th Cong., 2nd sess., 1958, 104, pt. 6: 7386.
- ³³House Record, 86th Cong., 1st sess., 1959, pt. 1: 37.

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³⁹Hubert Humphrey, War on Poverty (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964), p. 21-22 (Hereafter referred to as Humphrey War.); Senate Record, p. 1384.

⁴⁰Humphrey Plan, p. 54; Senate Record, p. 1386.

⁴¹Senate Record, p. 12283.

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⁴⁴Ibid., p. 5.

⁴⁵Ibid., p. 4.

⁴⁶Ibid., pp. 2 & 41; Humphrey War, p. 21.

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⁵⁰Senate Record, 86th Cong., 1st sess., 1959, 105, pt. 10: pp. 13290 & 13343.

⁵¹Senate 536.

⁵²Senate Record, pt. 12, pp. 15792-93.

⁵³Senate Record, 86th Cong., 2nd sess., 1960, 106, pt. 1: p. 8646.

⁵⁴U.S. Congress. Senate. Subcommittee on Employment and Manpower of the Committee on Labor and Public Welfare. Youth Employment Act Youth Conservation Corps, 87th Cong., 1st sess., 1961, p. 29. (Hereafter referred to as Senate 1961.)

⁵⁵Senate Record, p. 1006.

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⁵⁷Senate 1961, p. 27.

⁵⁸Ibid., p. 37; Senate Record, 87th Cong., 1st sess., 1969, 107, pt. 1, pp. 674; pt. 12, p. 15640;

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⁶⁰James Prokop, "Do We Need Another CCC?" American Forests, July 1962, pp. 20-23.

⁶¹Senate Record, pt. 7, pp. 9701-04.

⁶²Ibid., p. 9703.

⁶³Prokop, p. 22.

⁶⁴Ibid., p. 48; Senate 1961, p. 111.

⁶⁵Senate 1961.

⁶⁶Ibid., pp. 10-14.

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⁷⁰Senate Record, pp. 15067-68.

⁷¹Senate 976, p. 63.

⁷²Senate Record, pt. 11, p. 14330.

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⁷⁵John F. Kennedy, Kennedy and the Press: The News Conferences, ed. H.W. Chase and A.H. Lerman (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1965), p. 398.

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⁷⁸Senate Record, pt. 12, p. 15797.

⁷⁹*Ibid.*, pt. 6, p. 8344.

⁸⁰*Ibid.*, pt. 7, pp. 9526-28; pt. 11, p. 14717.

⁸¹*Ibid.*, pt. 16, p. 22089.

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⁸³*Ibid.*, pt. 5, p. 6019.

⁸⁴*Ibid.*

⁸⁵*Ibid.*, pt. 2, pp. 2235-2239.

⁸⁶*Ibid.*, pt. 5, p. 6007.

⁸⁷*Ibid.*, p. 5665.

⁸⁸*Ibid.*, pp. 6021-22.

⁸⁹*Ibid.*, p. 6268.

⁹⁰*Ibid.*, pp. 6263, 6028-30.

⁹¹*Ibid.*, p. 6014.

⁹²*Ibid.*, p. 6337.

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⁹⁴Senate Record, pp. 5475-77; "Youth Corps Bill Gets Fresh Start," Business Week, 30 March 1963, pp. 79-80.

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¹⁰⁰Shriver Interview.

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¹⁰⁴Robert A. Divine, "The Johnson Literature," in Divine, p. 13.

¹⁰⁵Gelfand, p. 132.

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CHAPTER 3

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE JOB CORPS PROGRAM

Lyndon Johnson's greatest achievement in the War on Poverty was getting Congress to pass a comprehensive antipoverty bill. What Johnson had accomplished with the Economic Opportunity Act was astonishing. In well under a year, the master political craftsman had seized an issue, galvanized public awareness, and set imaginations aflame while mobilizing resources in an all-out, domestic war -- on poverty. Johnson was fortunate to have inherited from Kennedy the elements of a poverty program that could be mobilized quickly¹. The ultimate successes and failures of the War on Poverty can be directly attributed to the manner and speed with which these elements coalesced. One of the War on Poverty's most visible and most expensive programs, the Job Corps, is no exception.

The Emergence of the Poverty Issue

Kennedy's "New Frontier" had begun to address various problems experienced by the disadvantaged. A number of measures had either been proposed or enacted to deal with ". . . slum housing, juvenile delinquency, unemployment, dependency, and illiteracy" ² The Kennedy administration had recognized that unemployment could be reduced by programs of retraining, and the resulting Manpower Development and Training Act (MDTA), written and passed with "rare bipartisan harmony," attempted to do just that. In less than a year, however, MDTA's ". . . warmest supporters were acknowledging that the act was failing in one of its major purposes: it was not reaching the long-term, chronic unemployed." ³

By the Kennedy administration's third year, some insiders had the nagging feeling that the New Frontier was becoming just a collection of ". . . old frontiers already crossed (that) would not, singly or collectively, change the grey face of the other America." ⁴ Moreover, with the approach of an election year, it was critical that a liberal program of some substance be created to realize the potential of the young administration.

How poverty came to be the basis of such a program is a reflection of both the lessons learned and the intellect

of those in the Kennedy White House. At no time during the Kennedy years was there public demand for action against poverty, neither was there a disadvantaged lobby.⁵ Yet, some writers had begun to address the issue and described either economic inequities or outright, debilitating poverty. Michael Harrington's The Other America, John Kenneth Galbraith's The Affluent Society, and other analyses by Leon Keyserling and Robert Lampmann clarified and summarized long-standing economic concerns into one word -- poverty. Around that word, discussions began to grow.

In January, 1963, Walter Heller of the Council of Economic Advisors read in the New York Herald-Tribune that the Republicans were planning an anti-poverty program. With Kennedy's approval, the Council began mapping the Administration's response.⁶ Kennedy himself had become familiar with the increasing recognition of a poverty problem: Heller said that Kennedy had asked for both Harrington's book and Keyserling's study, and Special Assistant Ted Sorensen brought a New Yorker review of current treatments of the topic to Kennedy's attention.⁷ Kennedy's sister, Eunice Shriver, continually lobbied for a domestic "Peace Corps" operation.⁸ Arthur Schlesinger noted that Kennedy's reading impelled him to favor a poverty program that would

pull together many smaller programs.⁹ Kennedy directed both Heller and Sorensen to begin a coordinated effort to attack poverty in his 1964 legislative package. On November 19, 1963, Kennedy asked Heller to prepare some antipoverty measures in a few weeks -- Kennedy would review them after the Thanksgiving holidays and a trip to Dallas.¹⁰

On November 23, 1963, Walter Heller met Lyndon Johnson on Johnson's first full day as President and introduced the idea of a poverty program. Immediately, Johnson's response was, "That's my kind of program (and) I want to move full speed ahead." Further, the new Chief Executive went on to say he intended to make poverty the cornerstone of his administration.¹¹

Johnson recognized the situation he faced. With the election less than a year away, he had to move quickly to establish his leadership and, after a measure of obscurity as Vice President, reassert his liberal credentials.¹² By endorsing a broad-based attack on poverty, Johnson could also shore up the black vote.¹³

The new President wasted no time carrying a poverty program forward. Even before Kennedy's funeral, ". . . interagency meetings were held on the subject of poverty programs." Shortly afterwards, a Council of Economic Advisors report called for the "federally-led effort" to

combat poverty which Kennedy had sought. Johnson approved it without hesitating.¹⁴

While Johnson carved the Kennedy plans into the cornerstone of his own domestic policy, it became apparent that a war on poverty would be expensive. Johnson thus shifted the responsibility for its design from the Council of Economic Advisors to the Bureau of the Budget. The Bureau developed a measured, orderly "community action" approach: community action agencies and development corporations would first assess local needs, and then engage in careful planning and evaluation in a few localities before unleashing a heavy investment of federal funds. After initial development, federal funding would be used to plan and coordinate the range of programs indicated by the pilot projects. This approach won wide endorsement.¹⁵ But there were two significant dissenters to this approach: the Labor Department and Johnson himself. Labor Secretary Willard Wirtz flatly did not want to leave the design of an antipoverty program to the Executive Branch, and he called on the War on Poverty planners to emphasize employment programs instead. To Johnson, Wirtz's demurrer was an effort to win more appropriations by expanding Labor Department programs, and the President would have none of that. Merely feeding the bureaucracy and allowing federal dollars to trickle down

to a wild profusion of programs would create an administrative nightmare. Johnson had been in state politics long enough to realize the turf issues such a plan would engender, and he was not about to have his domestic policy compromised that way if he could help it. Moreover, what the Bureau of the Budget had proposed would take too long to produce visible results, and as a confirmed New Dealer, Johnson wanted visible results quickly. "The alternative of an independent agency headed by a director reporting to the President gained support."¹⁶

Johnson was about to make a decision on which his domestic policy, and, what he hoped, public perception of him, would hinge. Although he had felt himself to be an outsider to the courts of "Camelot," Johnson had nevertheless seen the effect of the Kennedy polish and style. With the right leadership, a new agency to combat poverty could accomplish two things: not only could a poverty agency get results quickly with few turf problems, but an element of the New Frontier could be used to add to the legitimacy of the Great Society.

Johnson had the perfect candidate in mind. On Saturday, February 1, the President called Peace Corps Director Sargent Shriver to follow up on a meeting they had had earlier in the week, and drafted Shriver to head

the War on Poverty. Despite Shriver's remonstrances, the President unleashed the "Johnson Treatment" and closed with, "This is your President speaking, and I want you to do it."¹⁷ And at a noon press conference, he announced Shriver's appointment as Johnson's ". . . personal Chief of Staff in the War Against Poverty."¹⁸

Sargent Shriver as Poverty Planner

If Johnson wanted quick results from a program that would capture the public imagination, he could not have chosen a more appropriate man than Shriver to be its director. The President hoped Shriver would bring to the position both the leadership qualities by which the Peace Corps had been a popular success and his ties to the New Frontier. Shriver's charisma and effectiveness were matched only by his capacity for long, hard hours of work and his expectations of the same from others. An associate once said, "Shriver drives himself and his staff relentlessly. When someone suggested an early-morning meeting 'about ten' he shook his head. 'By ten o'clock the day is half over'"¹⁹ But ". . . as an administrator Shriver (had) many admirers. He is never stubborn or proud; it is easy for subordinates to argue with him. He shows a delightful irreverence about Approved Practice."²⁰ And, like Johnson, Shriver was known to deal effectively with Congress. In Shriver's

view, that ability, coupled with Johnson's need to get the War on Poverty legislation passed quickly, caused Johnson to name him poverty chief.²¹

Thereafter, Johnson put absolute confidence in his new Chief of Staff. Shriver reflected that same confidence, while admiring Johnson's continuing interest in the War on Poverty. As Director of the new program, Shriver never felt he was left "high and dry" because he had the support of the President. "Johnson gave as much attention to the War on Poverty as any President could give."²²

But it was Shriver's decisive leadership style that meant the poverty warship would be hammered together and sent into action under a full head of steam. Johnson's wishes for quick action were Shriver's burning desire. Mothballed were the Budget Bureau's community action and development corporation ideas. The Bureau of the Budget never forgave Johnson or Shriver for their rejecting its version of a War on Poverty.

Plans for the War on Poverty

As expected, Shriver wasted no time planning an attack on poverty. Immediately after Johnson announced Shriver's appointment as Special Assistant to the President,²³ Shriver arranged a briefing to bring himself up to date on the problem and to outline a legislative attack on poverty. At his suburban Maryland home Sunday evening,

February 2, Shriver met with the men who would be responsible for putting together a legislative proposal and taking it to Congress: Kermit Gordon, Director of the Bureau of the Budget; Walter Heller, Chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers; and Adam Yarmolinsky, one of Robert McNamara's "whiz kids" at the Pentagon and a trusted Shriver confidant.²⁴ At that first planning meeting, Shriver revealed that he and the President were of the same mind when it came to fighting poverty. He declared that Gordon and Heller's community action approach to fighting poverty would "never fly," and that it was incapable of producing visible results quickly enough to satisfy Congress. As inheritor of \$500 million President Kennedy had set aside to address poverty issues,²⁵ Shriver knew he could not spend that amount "intelligently" on community action programs. After some quick figuring, he estimated that such programs could account for no more than \$200 million. With the \$300 million he had left, Shriver thought he ". . . should consult with other people to get ideas what to do beyond community action."²⁶ In Yarmolinsky's account, that small group was going to find "the pieces that would make up a more comprehensive program."²⁷

The search for the pieces began at an all-day planning conference two days later. In the bright February

sunshine, over 20 presidential advisors, departmental representatives, outside experts, and long-time Shriver friends arrived at the Peace Corps building and gathered around a table in the government-green conference room to brainstorm the direction the War on Poverty should take.²⁸ It was difficult to know where to begin. The body of current research on poverty was exceedingly small, wrote one conferee, so they "started almost from scratch."²⁹ But, riding on Johnson's expectations and the press response to the President's recent all-out declaration, most of the people attending the planning conference agreed that a one-idea, one title bill would be a letdown. If Johnson wanted a comprehensive poverty program, then it was up to this body of planners to create a wide-ranging bill with a number of approaches. Shriver clearly encouraged the Budget Bureau to unearth all the proposals it had earlier debated for the planners to review.³⁰

For his part, Shriver took the "War" analogy literally. "Poverty (was) much, much too complicated to be soluble by one method or prescription. One approach was idealistic (because) no one person or group has the answer to anything as complicated as poverty." Instead, Shriver wanted to attack and get a breakthrough on whichever "front" he could. Then it was a matter of

sending the "dollars and reinforcements" to the "general" who had hammered through the "enemy line."³¹

From that initial all-day session, a three-point attack emerged. Two points were to give the poverty program some ideological direction. The planning conference had debated the nature of poverty as it was understood at the time: the alienation of the poor and the hidden character and generational aspects of poverty and its impact on minorities.³² The concept of individual economic independence would be emphasized, and the theory that poverty was cyclical was endorsed. In practical terms, however, the focus of the War on Poverty was to be on youth.³³ Before the day was over, a task force to draft the antipoverty legislation had been formed and given a mandate to act quickly. As the conferees left, the members of the task force were certain of one thing: that they should

set about to look for one program that could express the central idea of preparing poor people to do the kind of work for which society would pay them a decent wage. They found it, or thought they found it, in the idea that was to become the Job Corps -- offering school dropouts a chance to live, learn, and work in a completely new environment in which they would be prepared for a productive role in society.³⁴

Philosophical Basis for a War on Poverty Youth Program

As the sixteen members of the task force began to

breathe life into an antipoverty legislation package, they were faced with the choice of either providing new employment opportunities or improving people's abilities -- a choice of "preparing people for jobs or jobs for people," as one member put it.³⁵ The preparing-people-for-jobs approach seemed to be the less difficult alternative, and in pursuing it, the task force, like the President himself, found themselves the beneficiaries of ideas and proposals that had already been laid out.

Official interest had already been expressed in residential vocational training centers, a component of the 1963 Vocational Education Act, but the funding had never been approved to make them operational.³⁶ Hubert Humphrey had also generated considerable support for the Youth Conservation Corps. Humphrey's efforts had resulted in plans for the shelved YCC which were quickly resurrected. One of the reasons the War on Poverty planners were able to decide on incorporating a youth corps into the poverty legislation as quickly as they did was that its educational program had already been developed. Under the Kennedy Administration, when it looked as if Humphrey's YCC program might pass Congress, the Labor Department had assigned two staffers, John Cheston and Pat Healy, to plan an educational component

for the youth centers. Cheston and Healy had called in Lew Eigen, an Associate Professor of Educational Technology at Temple University, to help formulate a new, national residential program of education for disadvantaged youth.

While Congress had debated the YCC, the three educational planners turned over and over again some basic, but essential questions about education in American society. They knew that, in order to be successful, one needed some desirable trait or characteristic, be it good looks, a good education, or good skills. The YCC had sought to deal with disadvantaged youth who had nothing -- they couldn't read, they had a poor appearance, their logical thinking was weak, and they had no skills. Very basic to Cheston, Healy, and Eigen's thinking was that it was necessary to spend some money to bring a disadvantaged youth to a certain plateau to give him some of the things he lacked, and then let other elements of society take over. If a program could help a youth enlist in the Army, for example, it was successful.

The planners soon focused on making youth more employable, and their thoughts revolved around four points:

1. In some cases, to give a youth a greater chance of success, it was necessary to teach nothing, just "clean the kid up." The planners were aware that some

disadvantaged youth, though capable and willing to work, had problems with their physical appearance. For example, the planners knew of instances when a youth who had never seen a dentist found that no one wanted to hire him because his teeth were in very bad shape. Once the problem was corrected, the barrier to employment was removed. In instances where all that some youth needed to find a job was having new clothes or getting help with physical hygiene, the chances were that these youth who wanted to work could successfully get through a job interview.

2. Some youth don't know how to act in a business setting. In many cases, youth had never been exposed to people who were not members of the immediate family, and were not aware of norms of behavior. In other cases, some youth might not realize the importance of invoices and would discard them. For people disadvantaged in this manner, all that was needed was affective training to develop awareness of acceptable behavior and understanding of a business environment.

3. Lack of basic education skills was a severe barrier to success. Many youth weren't able to work because they couldn't read or write. Thus handicapped, it was impossible, for example, to read a work order or keep track of the hours they worked. There was thus a pressing

need for remedial education.

4. Lack of vocational skills was another significant barrier. Without a marketable skill, many young people were doomed to unemployment.³⁷

Humphrey had proposed a YCC which, like the CCC, would provide services in a residential setting. To Eigen, Cheston, and Healy, the residential setting lent itself readily to dealing with any of these four deficiencies in any combination.

Although these ideas never resulted in a program named Youth Conservation Corps, they were picked up again the first day the War on Poverty task force met. Because the philosophical bases behind this kind of employability training for the disadvantaged had already been dealt with, the War on Poverty planners had this much to go on. With the idea of individual barriers to jobs in hand, the biggest decision the poverty planners made was to individualize instruction instead of holding fixed classes or terms. Along with the concept of individualization, the planners decided to focus on micro-level problems throughout the poverty program rather than the macro-concerns. Had the emphasis been on macro problems, the War on Poverty would have endorsed job creation, tax rebates, and similar strategies. But a poverty youth corps was to deal with individuals, and if it could deal

with enough individuals, it would be a success.

Planning a Job Corps

The War on Poverty planners thus set out to make youth more employable. The language they agreed to use in the legislation -- "to assist young persons . . . to become more responsible, employable, and productive citizens" -- was designed to avoid focusing entirely on vocational education. Where vocational education had, to the planners, traditionally focused on industrial needs, the youth component would keep its focus on individual needs. Still, they regarded the vocational component as the most critical in terms of the program's objective.³⁸

The poverty planners' enthusiasm for a youth program grew quickly. But what would it be called? In late February, a number of names were being suggested for the residential training program -- the American Youth Corps, the National Youth Corps, Opportunities for Young Americans, the National Training Corps. At one staff meeting, Shriver reviewed the list of names and said, "Nuts. Let's just call it the Job Corps. That's what these kids are really interested in -- a job." Despite staff objections to a lackluster name, Shriver prevailed.³⁹ The Job Corps it would be.⁴⁰

The Job Corps planners adhered to the four points that had been developed during the YCC debate and began to

build a program around them. The task force, operating under a \$30,000 budget from the President's contingency fund,⁴¹ began to look for ways to utilize the residential training center concept to fight poverty.

The de facto chairman of the poverty task force, Adam Yarmolinsky, had served as Special Assistant to Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara.⁴² From his Pentagon experience, Yarmolinsky was aware of a number of unused military bases throughout the country that could be quickly converted into residential vocational training sites. A think paper was circulated within the task force which suggested the Army handle the logistics of housing, food, and clothing, the Defense Department act as a coordinating body, and that a civilian agency be utilized to direct the educational-vocational aspect of the program.⁴³ The plan made sense: the success of the CCC was due in large part to the Army in the 1930's.⁴⁴

But in the 1960's, a plan to involve the military in a youth training corps brought the poverty planners into conflict with a number of other interests in Washington. The Labor Department, which still laid claim to the Youth Conservation Corps plan then under consideration, badly wanted a share of Job Corps, and reacted against having a residential youth program lifted from its jurisdiction.⁴⁵ Also, one Defense Department staff

member realized the task force's original plan ". . . would scare the hell out of a substantial number of liberals" who did not want to see Washington drafting school dropouts into a militaristic society.⁴⁶ The plan was also attacked by the conservation interests which had long backed Humphrey's YCC proposals. Although Shriver innately distrusted the conservation lobby and the bureaucracy which might operate such centers,⁴⁷ he knew better than to cross Senator Humphrey, whose star seemed to be rising with the advent of the Johnson administration.

The members of the poverty task force were all quick studies. At once recognizing the opposition to an active Defense Department role, they agreed to play down the military's role in the youth training camps. Still, to get Job Corps started up quickly, they retained the military bases as youth center sites.

By eliminating active military involvement with the residential youth program, the way was open for the poverty planners to incorporate Cheston, Healy, and Eigen's four points for the YCC into a program with a decidedly civilian orientation. Still in February, the task force began to write legislation that took the YCC plans into account. Studying the four points, the planners saw that they lent themselves to two types of centers: small rural centers, and large urban centers.

The small rural centers were envisioned with a capacity of from 100 to 200 corpsmembers, and the large centers would have a capacity of 2000 to 3000 corpsmembers. The prevailing thought was that if providing a marketable skill was most important for a certain youth, then the vocational training called for could most satisfactorily be handled in the larger centers near cities, where both supplies and jobs were located. If a particular youth needed to develop remedial skills or affective skills for the workplace, the planners thought those skills could be better taught in the smaller centers. If a youth needed the full complement of skills he could "graduate" from the small centers into the large urban centers, which some saw as the "high school" of the new program.⁴⁸ The "cosmetic" factor, or "cleaning the kid up," could be handled at either type of center.

Of course, building a network of residential schools in a short time was going to be expensive. The planners deliberately recommended the two types of centers on grounds of cost-effectiveness. Vocational courses would be offered in the large centers, because the costs involved in capital purchases of machinery and equipment could be spread out among a larger corpsman population. As to what vocational courses should be offered, the planners again focused on the micro-level rather than

examining labor market demands. Only "basic" skills, for which demand was expected to remain steady, were endorsed: cooking, welding, carpentry, etc. Because the task force had access to Office of Education funds which allowed contractors to set up new programs, the draft legislation proposed that private contractors -- corporations and universities -- operate the urban centers.⁴⁹

The smaller centers, on the other hand, would obviously have a higher per-capita cost: there were simply going to be fewer corpsmembers in the smaller centers. The youth corps planners agreed with the earlier YCC proposal that the small centers be located on Federal lands, controlled by the Department of Interior and the Department of Agriculture's Forest Service. The planners realized that locating youth camps on Forest Service or Interior lands made it inevitable that corpsmen there would have to perform some conservation work, as was done in the CCC. Such an arrangement was ideal -- conservation interests would be happy and basic vocational education and affective training could be provided through small conservation projects.⁵⁰ Although the conservation aspect was included in plans for the youth corps program, Shriver made it clear to the task force that "any conservation work accomplished in the process was simply

an incidental benefit -- a by-product subsidiary of the main task (of training youth)."⁵¹ Shriver also made up his mind that the conservation lobbies would not be called upon to testify when the poverty bill came before Congress.⁵²

Recruitment

The poverty planners also considered the question of recruiting for the proposed Job Corps. Lyndon Johnson was known to want visible results in his War on Poverty quickly, but with the Army no longer seen as an acceptable vehicle for handling large-scale intake, other federal agencies were considered. The Department of Labor's United States Employment Service (USES) received the greatest attention as a recruiting agency, but to make sure the hoped-for massive response could be handled adequately, the task force proposed that the new poverty agency -- which was being called the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) -- charter other agencies to both compete with USES and encourage state employment agencies to seek out disadvantaged young men.⁵³

By March, 1964, the poverty legislation was almost complete, and enthusiasm was high among the task force members. In mid-March, a tentative plan entitled "Job Corps" had been drafted by one component of the task force. The plan provided both a philosophy of and a

justification for Job Corps: it called for young men to be removed from their native environments where "the spark of motivation" had so long been "stifled," and placed in Job Corps camps for a two-year period. Enrollees would be paid a living allowance of between \$30 and \$50 a month, and a separation payment of \$50 for each month successfully completed. If the corpsman so desired, half his separation allowance could be set aside for his dependent family and be matched by the proposed OEO. Originally, the Job Corps was planned to accommodate 100,000 corpsmen, 40,000 by the following June.⁵⁴ A sketchy vocational element was defined:

vocational training programs will . . . take into account employment opportunities in the various occupations. This aspect of the program will first introduce enrollees to various families of occupations which constitute realistic vocational goals. The development of basic skills in a particular occupational area will follow, designed to qualify trainees to meet entry or apprentice level requirements in that occupation. Emphasis will be placed upon on-the-job-training and learning by doing.⁵⁵

The first Job Corps planners also had idealistic expectations: Job Corps staff had to be imbued with an esprit de corps similar to Peace Corps, and a student:instructor ratio of 25:1 should be maintained.⁵⁶ Though the legislation was somewhat vague and despite the fact that it had been written in only three weeks, it was becoming clear that the Job Corps would

become the cornerstone of the poverty program, and an expensive one at that: the poverty planners would ask \$190 million be budgeted for it.⁵⁷

In packaging Job Corps along with other poverty programs, the original \$500 million envisioned in the Kennedy administration for fighting poverty was almost doubled -- the new poverty bill would seek \$962.5 million for its programs. Shriver also pressed hard on the issue of power. One provision in the poverty bill virtually guaranteed interagency cooperation with OEO by requiring federal agencies which were engaged in administering similar programs to ". . . cooperate with the (OEO) Director in carrying out his duties and responsibilities under this Act" ⁵⁸

Thus, by mid-March, 1964, the War on Poverty bill was sent to Congress. Members of the task force could pride themselves on their accomplishment:

The Shriver style of work (had) encouraged sessions which typically ran into the late evening hours. The remarkable fact is that in about six weeks the task force, aided by a group of legal draftsmen from various executive departments headed by Assistant Attorney-General Norbert Schlei were able to put together a bill which was ready to go to the Hill. Ordinarily a routine updating of an established department's legislation might be expected to take six months in the drafting.⁵⁹

Johnson shared the task force's enthusiasm for the War on Poverty bill, submitted as the proposed Economic

Opportunity Act. Of the Job Corps, he said, "These are not simply camps for the underprivileged. They are new educational institutions comparable in innovation to the land grant colleges."⁶⁰

On March 17, 1964, Shriver appeared before the House Committee on Education and Labor to begin testimony for H.R. 10440. And while Congress debated the bill over the next five months, the task force stayed at work making the proposals in the poverty bill concrete. H.R. 10440 was indeed notable for the speed and acumen with which it had been drafted. But Republican detractors in Congress criticized the bill for being vague and ambiguous and they acted just as speedily to attack it.⁶¹

Shriver recognized that many of the War on Poverty's battles would be politically motivated. He agreed that the language of the bill "was somewhat vague," but he insisted that the language was designed to give the poverty program greater flexibility. That flexibility was necessary because the poverty planners still did not know precisely how to combat poverty, and they wanted to be able to address problems as they arose. Shriver regarded the early Republican criticism as premature and ill-founded because it "started before we began anything."⁶²

Criticisms of the War on Poverty

Another indication that the War on Poverty would be a political issue came at one point while the task force was drafting the poverty legislation. Michael Harrington, the author of The Other America, addressed Shriver. What Shriver had to remember, he said, was that "the money figures that are being talked about are utterly unrealistic in view of the goals authorized. . . . One billion wouldn't cover any one point in the programs President Kennedy originated."⁶³ Shriver reportedly responded, "Well, I don't know about you, but this my first opportunity at spending a billion dollars and I'm excited by the prospect." This early exchange, while the poverty bill was still being assembled, is characteristic of most of the planning by which the War on Poverty and Job Corps was formulated. Once Johnson had seized poverty as a national issue, poverty was no longer the province of early writers like Harrington who had long studied the problem. Instead, the rush to ignite a national program meant that the poverty bill drafters chose to provide a political solution to the poverty problem. By March, 1964, poverty in America and its response was left in the hands of political men and political organizations.

Almost immediately after the War on Poverty bill was presented to Congress, some legislators expressed their

concern that Job Corps would act as a magnet to draw young people out of school who might otherwise continue.⁶⁴ Shriver himself knew that Job Corps posed a threat to public education and he acted quickly to choose a head planner for Job Corps whose ties to public education were unimpeachable. On March 25, he named Dr. Vernon R. Alden, President of Ohio University, to direct the Job Corps planning effort.⁶⁵ Shriver's instincts with Alden were correct -- the attack he thought might come from educational interests never came.

From Legislative Plans to Program Plans

From the outset, Alden regarded Job Corps as a promising educational experiment on a grand scale, which described the way he sought to translate the Job Corps legislation into action. He especially took an academic approach to the problem of establishing centers. Alden felt that universities, more than corporations, should contract with the proposed OEO to operate Job Corps Centers -- they already had adequate experience in running experimental programs.⁶⁶ Through his contacts with other administrators, Alden set up four "volunteer task forces" at Rutgers, Columbia, George Peabody Teachers' College, and Ohio University to develop working plans for the youth program.⁶⁷ The proposals generated by Alden's first efforts were far-ranging, but they quickly

illustrated serious shortcomings in Alden's approach. For example, the College of Education Planning Committee from Alden's own institution outlined administrative details, staff organization, basic education, teacher education, and guidance and counseling for the new centers but failed to mention vocational education.⁶⁸ Another early proposal suggested social studies, English and "social interaction," but with little emphasis on "vocational training."⁶⁹ Shriver recalled, with some disgust, "I couldn't get anything out of the schools of education."⁷⁰

Although Alden was fully aware of the need to quickly establish a national program with highly visible results, he plunged into seeking results before he understood the problem as the task force saw it. Clearly, Alden had failed to emphasize the role of vocational education in the new Job Corps centers.

Nevertheless, Alden's presence in the early Job Corps planning process assured that universities would be a factor in the operation of Job Corps centers. Yet, the pressure from the private sector to become involved was greater. On March 31, John Rubel, Vice President of Litton Industries and a member of the poverty task force, sent a memo to Shriver and Alden proposing that ". . . many key functions . . . be done under contract to private concerns." From his familiarity with computer systems in

instructional settings, Rubel advocated a new concept: Job Corps should take what he called the "systems approach." In Rubel's view, Job Corps was

a complex transforming machine with many internal parts. . . . The input -- the raw material -- that is fed into this machine is people. The output is people. It is the function of this machine to transform these people. It is the task of those responsible for administering the Job Corps to properly control the input to the machine, its internal functioning, and its output.

"Nothing," said Rubel,

could be worse than to approach its separate parts on an ad hoc basis. The systems approach must be taken, no matter what it is called, to secure the desired end result. And I believe it is well within the capabilities of the industrial sector (with its expertise in defense and space programs) to provide it.⁷¹

Shriver immediately liked Rubel's pragmatic approach,⁷² and from early April, the private sector's role in the development of a Job Corps program became clearer.

Alden himself had recognized the importance of business in operating Job Corps centers, but he seemed unable to assimilate business into his grand educational experiment. After reviewing Rubel's memo, Alden spent at least a week arranging a meeting with businessmen in which the program would be explained and proposals solicited. On April 15, representatives of 18 companies -- some old friends of Alden's -- met in the conference room of the old Court of Claims building in Washington to hear Shriver

and Alden bid for their support. Despite polite interest, none of these businesses eventually contracted to operate a Job Corps center.

Alden's good intentions were never translated into effective planning for the Job Corps. He had never left his university post and in attempting to divide his time between his university and his Job Corps planning duties, Alden could only spend one day a week in Washington.⁷³ He acknowledged that the effort had him "spinning like a top."⁷⁴ Without daily direction, planning for Job Corps became spotty. While Alden became less prominent in the planning efforts, one of his allies moved into the planning vacuum. In April, Francis Keppel, U.S. Commissioner of Education, had attended a few meetings of the planning task force and was captivated by the idea of a Job Corps. He especially wanted a sound vocational program in the Job Corps centers, and by lending some Office of Education funds, arranging weekly meetings, and designating members of his staff to assist in planning Job Corps educational programs, gave the planning effort new direction by early summer.⁷⁵ Shriver had already seen the need for an expanded planning effort and Alden was soon phased out.⁷⁶

Renewed Job Corps Planning

The men who made up the "new" Job Corps planning group

in July were considered a new breed of educator. After taking part in a few early interagency planning sessions, Keppel designated Wade Robinson to represent the U.S. Office of Education (USOE). A consultant to USOE from his post at Harvard, Robinson had been a school dropout as a youth, and he had an understanding what a program to serve dropouts should look like. Robinson decided to make the educational program functional first. He quickly brought in the experts in reading, math, programmed learning, and vocational education he needed to launch the Job Corps educational program: Lewis Eigen, who had written the YCC plans, was recruited from his post at Temple, along with Pat Healy, who was serving as Special Assistant to Secretary of Labor Willard Wirtz. Harvard's Douglas Porter and Michigan State's David Gottlieb, who had worked in programmed instruction and adolescence respectively, were brought in, as was Jerome Kaplan (elementary math curricula); and a graduate student from Alden's Ohio University, John Hodges, who became the Job Corps vocational education specialist.⁷⁷

The Job Corps planners who met in the summer of 1964 inherited a host of problems. Shriver had been pushing to open the first Job Corps centers in September or October, and with only three months to go, no decisions had been made concerning center construction, administration, and

enrollee recruitment, and the educational program content was still not final.⁷⁸ Alden had managed to generate a list of proposed conservation centers from the Departments of Agriculture and Interior, but the projected construction costs were four times higher than the budgeted amount.⁷⁹ Moreover, some potential contractors had expressed only a "skeptical interest" in operating Job Corps camps, and despite Rubel's efforts, no contractors had become actively involved. The universities Alden had contacted were saying they needed six months for thorough planning before they could prepare their proposals, which would mean camp operations would begin three months later than Shriver wanted.⁸⁰

Immediately, the educational planners faced a puzzling question: how far-ranging should their own efforts be? As university men, they recognized that universities had little experience dealing with large numbers of disadvantaged youth or in preparing people for sub-professional jobs. Furthermore, the delays that the universities were experiencing in preparing proposals, though understandable, were intolerable. Private industry, on the other hand, had vast material and managerial resources and experiences in training. But could the private sector be allowed to capitalize on the War on Poverty?

The answer came from an unexpected source, the private sector itself. That July, the Federal Electric Corporation expected to have its contracts with the Defense Department scaled back. Federal Electric had experience in staffing and administering large-scale projects for the government, and in the interest of diversifying its programs, saw Job Corps as an ideal project. After an expression of the corporation's interest, Robinson sent Lewis Eigen to Federal Electric's New Jersey headquarters to explore contract possibilities. A week and a half later, Federal Electric submitted a list of 115 assumptions and questions which covered nearly every phase of operating a Job Corps center.⁸¹ This endeavor had Shriver's blessings: if the Job Corpsmembers were going to be trained in a capitalistic society, there was no reason the holders of Job Corps contracts could not profit from their efforts.⁸²

Federal Electric's document impressed the planning team, which considered it a significant contribution.⁸³ Thus, in very short order after being convened by Robinson, they had before them a practical list of suggestions and concerns from a private contractor's point of view. By August, the planners had developed a set of working procedures for contracting with business and industry to operate urban Job Corps camps. The Job Corps

planners were happy to let private contractors develop their own educational programs for use in the urban centers. Robinson's group then concentrated on developing the educational component of the rural conservation camps.⁸⁴

After Federal Electric's detailed list of questions clarified the planners' thoughts about the nascent Job Corps contracting process, a number of companies -- including Science Research Associates and Litton -- submitted proposals.⁸⁵ Very quickly, the planning group gained experience in reviewing proposals from the private sector, and chances for the success of the urban centers were improved.

Robinson's planning team was not able to deal effectively with other pressing concerns, however. By summer, the issue of how recruiting and screening for the Job Corps would be handled was still unsettled. The United States Employment Service (USES) had seemed a logical choice for the task, but Shriver was cool to the idea. For one thing, he felt the USES couldn't reach far enough into the nation's poverty pockets to tap the youth most needing Job Corps. He had already had success with local agencies directed from Washington in recruiting for the Peace Corps, and similar OEO instrumentalities, he felt, could be more effective than USES. But Shriver's

thoughts brought a swift response from the Bureau of the Budget, whose community-action approach in the War on Poverty had been rejected by Shriver. The Bureau strongly opposed a duplication of recruiting efforts and forced a compromise: the Job Corps planners could determine eligibility criteria, but only with the Labor Department's advice. The USES, already established for such a purpose, would handle recruitment and screening.⁸⁶ By August, when the poverty bill was heading for a vote in Congress, Shriver and some planners still thought the arrangement would handle intake too slowly. How the process could be speeded up was a decision which would have to be made after passage.

Women's Job Corps Centers

Still completely unresolved was an issue which Congress had handed the planning task force back in the spring. Although Job Corps was originally presented to Congress as a program for boys, the iron-willed "gentlelady from Oregon," Rep. Edith Green, publicly demanded of Shriver why girls weren't to be included as well. Her persistence on the point won Shriver's begrudging commitment to include girls. Shriver dutifully followed Rep. Green's recommendation and appointed Dr. Jeanne C. Noble of New York University to develop plans for women's Job Corps centers.⁸⁷ But Shriver had

directed Noble to work only part-time on her plans, and thus her effectiveness was limited. Noble held a planning conference in late July to seek support, but managed to muster interest only from local school boards and YWCAs, neither of which were "ideally suitable" to operate such a program.⁸⁸ Throughout the summer, Noble was excluded from the planning activities of Robinson's task force, and by the time the War on Poverty bill, including provisions for a womens' Job Corps was heading for passage, little firm planning for womens' centers had taken place and Jeanne Noble was becoming frustrated.

That there would be a War on Poverty and an agency to direct the conflict was established when Congress passed the Economic Opportunity Act on August 20, 1964. The planners who had drafted the legislation and the group that had hammered together the elements of the Job Corps program could take considerable pride that their bill passed Congress with its language and requested budget amounts essentially intact. But there was little time for wild celebration. Shriver and his task force originally wanted 40,000 Job Corps enrollees by June of 1965, but the bill's relatively late passage meant the best camp construction weather had been lost. Final negotiations with contractors could not begin until the bill had been passed, and the task force's rejection of the Army's

involvement in a mass mobilization and logistical coordination effort all made the original enrollment goal all the more unrealistic.

And even though the poverty bill had passed, Congress still hadn't appropriated the expenditure of the first dime for the poverty program. The House Appropriations Committee took some note of the impending late start of the poverty planning by declaring, ". . . it is obvious that when this program was planned it was expected that it would be implemented much earlier than is now going to be the fact," and cut Shriver's request for \$974.5 million to \$750 million.⁸⁹

The Senate Appropriations Committee recommended a somewhat higher amount, \$861.5 million, and after action by a House-Senate conference committee, agreed on a figure of \$800 million. A bill containing this amount quickly passed the Congress on October 3 and was signed by President Johnson on October 7, 1964.⁹⁰ The next day, the new Office of Economic Opportunity officially began fighting the war on poverty.

FOOTNOTES

¹Shriver Interview.

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³Ibid., pp. 16-18.

⁴Ibid., p. 8.

⁵Ibid., p. 7; Gelfand, p. 128.

⁶Sundquist, p. 20.

⁷Ibid., p. 7; U.S. Office of Economic Opportunity. History of OEO During the Johnson Administration. Washington, DC, 1969, pp. 9-10. (Hereafter referred to as OEO.)

⁸Martin, Ralph G. A Hero for Our Time, 1983, p. 237

⁹Schlesinger, Arthur, A Thousand Days, 1965. Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, p. 1009.

¹⁰Sundquist, p. 20.

¹¹OEO, pp. 13-14; Sundquist, p. 21.

¹²Gelfand, p. 128.

¹³Cloward and Piven, 1966, pp. 14-17.

¹⁴OEO, p. 14.

¹⁵Gelfand, p. 130; Sundquist, p. 22.

¹⁶Sundquist, pp. 24-25; Gelfand, pp. 130-131; Evans and Novak, 1966, p. 430.

¹⁷Shriver Interview.

¹⁸OEO, p. 17.

¹⁹William F. Haddad, "Mr. Shriver and the Savage Politics of Poverty," Harper's, December 1965, pp. 43-50.

²⁰Anthony Lewis, "Shriver Moves into the Front Rank," New York Times Magazine, 15 March 1964, p. 50.

²¹Shriver Interview.

²²Ibid.

²³Yarmolinsky, "The Beginnings of OEO," in Sundquist, p. 34.

²⁴OEO, p. 18; Sundquist, p. 25; Yarmolinsky, p. 34.

²⁵Shriver Interview.

²⁶Ibid.

²⁷Yarmolinsky, pp. 34-36.

²⁸Sundquist, pp. 25, 142; OEO, pp. 18-19; Yarmolinsky, p. 37.

²⁹Yarmolinsky, p. 37.

³⁰Sundquist, pp. 25-26.

³¹Shriver Interview.

³²Yarmolinsky, p. 37-38.

³³OEO, p. 19; "Poverty, USA," Newsweek, 17 February 1964, p. 36.

³⁴Yarmolinsky, p. 39.

³⁵Ibid.

³⁶OEO, p. 243.

³⁷Interview with Lewis Eigen, University Research Corporation, Chevy Chase, Maryland, 23 May 1984. (Hereafter referred to as Eigen Interview.)

³⁸Ibid.

- ³⁹OEO, p. 245.
- ⁴⁰Shriver Interview.
- ⁴¹Yarmolinsky, p. 42.
- ⁴²Weeks, 1966, p. 134.
- ⁴³Yarmolinsky, p. 43; Christopher Jencks, "Johnson vs Poverty," New Republic, 28 March 1964, pp. 29-33.
- ⁴⁴Charles William Johnson, "The Civilian Conservation Corps: The Role of the Army" (Doctoral dissertation, University of Michigan, 1968.)
- ⁴⁵OEO, p. 245; Jencks, p. 16, Yarmolinsky, p. 43.
- ⁴⁶OEO, p. 245.
- ⁴⁷OEO, p. 243.
- ⁴⁸Interview with David Gottlieb, University of Houston, Washington, DC, 10 May 1984. (Hereafter referred to as Gottlieb Interview.); Eigen Interview.
- ⁴⁹OEO, p. 250; Sundquist, p. 26.
- ⁵⁰Yarmolinsky, p. 43; Eigen Interview.
- ⁵¹OEO, p. 243; Jencks, p. 16.
- ⁵²OEO, pp. 243-250.
- ⁵³Yarmolinsky, p. 44.
- ⁵⁴OEO, pp. 251-52.
- ⁵⁵U.S. Office of Economic Opportunity. (Hereafter referred to as US OEO.). Draft plan, "Job Corps," (no date), p. 8, Box 781, Records of the Office of Economic Opportunity, National Archives (Hereafter referred to as NA OEO.)
- ⁵⁶Ibid., pp. 6-19
- ⁵⁷Yarmolinsky, p. 50.
- ⁵⁸Yarmolinsky, pp. 40-47; Sundquist, p. 27; Gelfand, p. 132.

⁵⁹John C. Donovan, The Politics of Poverty (Indianapolis: Pegasus, 1972), p. 32.

⁶⁰Lyndon B. Johnson, House of Representatives, 88th Congress, 2nd Session, 3/16/64, p. 3.

⁶¹Gelfand, p. 132; Sundquist, p. 27.

⁶²Shriver Interview.

⁶³"Poverty U.S.A.," Newsweek, 17 February 1964, p. 36.

⁶⁴Yarmolinsky, p. 44.

⁶⁵OEO, p. 247; New York Times, 26 March 1964.

⁶⁶"Urban School Rescue Plan Called Priority Mission of Job Corps," New York Times, 3 May 1964, sec. IV, p. 9; OEO, p. 248.

⁶⁷Ibid.; Felix C. Robb, April 13, 1964, to Vernon Alden, Box 793, NA OEO.

⁶⁸US OEO, "Preliminary Working Papers for Job Corps Proposal," no date, Box 781, NA OEO.

⁶⁹Dr. Eric F. Goldman, no date, to Vernon Alden, Box 792, NA OEO.

⁷⁰Shriver Interview.

⁷¹John Rubel, March 31, 1964, to Sargent Shriver and Vernon Alden, Box 772, NA OEO.

⁷²OEO, pp. 248-49.

⁷³Weeks, pp. 103-109.

⁷⁴Vernon Alden, May 22, 1964, to Melvene Hardee, Box 792, NA OEO.

⁷⁵Weeks, pp. 143-146; unsigned, July 20, 1964, to Francis Keppel, Box 779, NA OEO.

⁷⁶OEO, p. 249.

⁷⁷Gottlieb Interview; Eigen Interview.

⁷⁸Weeks, pp. 105-109.

79OEO, p. 246.

80Ibid.

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82Shriver Interview.

83Interview with Dr. Otis A. Singletary, President, University of Kentucky, Washington, DC, 4 May 1984. (Hereafter referred to as Singletary Interview.)

84William P. Kelly, August 7, 1964, to Internal Distribution, Box 792, NA OEO.

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CHAPTER 4

JOB CORPS OF THE OFFICE OF ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY, 1964 - 1969

Launching the Program

Until Congress passed an appropriations bill for the War on Poverty, there was nothing the Job Corps staffers could do officially. The time between passage of the Economic Opportunity Act and passage of its appropriation bill was spent developing working procedures for OEO and its Job Corps component. Anticipating the go-ahead from Congress, Shriver had already decided on a director for Job Corps: Dr. Otis A. Singletary, Chancellor of the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

The only thing clear to Singletary when his appointment became official on October 10¹ was that he had a bare office, a phone, legislation authorizing over \$100 million -- and he was asked to put a program

together.² The Job Corps he would direct consisted of plans for three types of residential centers: men's urban centers, men's rural centers, and women's urban centers. The urban centers for men would operate under contract with universities, corporations, and other public and private agencies who could demonstrate their capability to operate large residential training centers. These centers were designed to accommodate 1000-2000 enrollees who entered Job Corps with the highest reading and arithmetic abilities. Vocational training would be given in office and data processing machine operations; shipping and accounting trades; hospital orderly; waiter, cook, and counter worker; small appliance and automotive repair; and machine tool operations. The rural centers were designed to be small, receiving 100-200 enrollees, and be located on Federal lands. The Job Corps Civilian Conservation Centers, as they were called, were to be administered from Washington by OEO through the Departments of Agriculture and Interior. The conservation center enrollees were to receive training in basic conservation, carpentry, masonry, cooking, and typing. Women's Job Corps centers were designed to be operated under contract as were the men's urban centers, but would be smaller: about 250 women enrollees would receive vocational education in the areas of clerical occupations, retail trades, food

preparation, health services, cosmetology, and "other areas where there are job opportunities for women." The Job Corps women's centers were also to offer basic education and training in ". . . the development of values, attitudes, and skills that will contribute to stable family relationships."³

Otherwise, Singletary knew Job Corps faced a serious problem right away. A week after the Economic Opportunity Act was passed, the President, eager to fire the first shot in the War on Poverty, had announced at a press conference the locations of the first 22 Job Corps centers.⁴ He wanted Job Corps centers in operation by January, 1965. Johnson apparently tried to take advantage of a compromise written into the Act which allowed state governors to veto any Job Corps center proposed for their respective states within 30 days after federal notification. If a veto was not forthcoming in those 30 days, the centers would be established as planned.⁵ Johnson's plan backfired: he made his announcement, incredibly, without consulting with any of the affected governors beforehand or with OEO.

Reaction from the states was swift and angry. Immediately, Albertis S. Harrison of Virginia loudly and vehemently decried one of the first Job Corps conservation camps proposed.⁶ The resulting negative publicity

immediately put the Job Corps program on the defensive. Senator Wayne Morse suggested OEO was guilty of "serious bungling" when it failed to use his office to release announcements concerning a Job Corps center in Oregon.⁷

Governors' responses to the President's surprise announcement forced Shriver to assume the role of a public relations director: while Singletary acclimated himself to the Director's responsibilities, Shriver spent a great deal of his time consulting with other governors about plans for Job Corps centers. For his part, Shriver did much to overcome the adverse reaction to Johnson's announcement. By November, Shriver announced the start of the first Job Corps projects: he had obtained from 14 state governors their waiver of the 30-day veto provision, and 32 Job Corps conservation camps were approved.⁸

Still, Shriver's efforts produced mixed results. The Governor of Washington wrote Singletary that

many members of the Washington State Economic Opportunity Task Force . . . have expressed reservations on the chances for success of the camp at White Swan due to the great controversy which divided the adjacent communities. Premature announcements, lack of initial federal-state coordination, and rumors of political intrigue have combined to make prospects for this camp questionable.⁹

In another case, plans to establish one Job Corps center were of questionable legality: a Job Corps camp near Fort Simcoe was projected to conduct all its activities on the

Yakima Indian Reservation, and the tribe retained a lawyer to ". . . bring injunction to restrain the establishment. . . " of the camp.¹⁰ Shriver, still scrambling to sell Job Corps to the states, decided to concentrate his efforts in localities only where it was welcome.¹¹ By January, 1965, he received the approval from governors from two more states to establish a number of camps.¹² Shriver's work to gain approval from Governors had another cost: his lobbying delayed agreement on an established procedure for OEO to establish contact with state officials until December, 1964,¹³ thus delaying the opening of a number of centers.

Johnson's premature announcement had illustrated a nearly total lack of coordination between the White House and OEO. And within OEO, a lack of coordination in the planning effort quickly became apparent. Most of the Job Corps planning effort had focused on how Job Corps centers should be operated, and almost none on how they should be opened. The failure of the Job Corps planners to effectively deal with camp openings, moreover, raised a few eyebrows in Congress. Hubert Humphrey wrote Shriver that he had received a "blistering letter" from Gaylord Nelson stating that California had agreed to 17 sites while the Governors of Minnesota, Michigan and Wisconsin had agreed to a total of 10 sites among them. Nelson had

said that there was no poverty in California, but with "lots of public land," California "gets the lion's share of the Youth Camps." Humphrey asked Shriver to contact Nelson at once because "he and about ten other Senators are raising hell and complaining bitterly. The President has asked me to be his eyes and ears up in the Senate, and what I have been hearing these past couple of days is not very pleasant."¹⁴

Singletary as Job Corps Director

While Shriver was devoting most of his attention to public relations problems with state governors and Congress, Singletary and his staff confronted other immediate concerns.

From very early in the program's operation, it was clear to the Job Corps staff that the choice of Singletary to direct Job Corps could not have been a wiser or more prudent one. Ever since the task force had first met, planning and implementing Job Corps had been carried out in a chaotic, hard-charging atmosphere. A collection of energetic, bright minds had developed a residential educational program without experience from which to draw. Precedents were often set by the staffer with the loudest voice or by the first person to get to the copy machine. Much still remained to be done to actually operate the program, and given this collection of

individuals and a short time frame, the lack of a set procedure was, in one staffer's opinion, "a good way to get Job Corps off the ground."¹⁵

Conceptualizing and planning Job Corps was one matter. Considerably more difficult was making it happen. It was in that area that Singletary was important.¹⁶ He realized that when he came into the program, the substantive decisions had already been made. Singletary also recognized the value of good people, and he depended on them. According to characterizations given by senior Job Corps staff, Singletary provided direction and brought a clearer sense of administration to Job Corps, and he left the details of program operation to his subordinates. Doing so allowed Singletary to act as spokesman and defender for the program, while using his considerable charm -- and toughness -- to give the program needed credibility with state governors and a close tie with the White House. Just as important, Singletary was not afraid to give Shriver his honest opinions, a trait Shriver respected.¹⁷

When Singletary assumed his duties, he recognized that the most pressing needs were for program development -- center staffs had to be recruited, they had to be prepared to do something with arriving corpsmen, and decisions had to be made about contracting to operate

urban centers. These matters were considered top-ranking policy decisions that were far more important than determining and following an organizational structure.¹⁸ Even though Singletary was given a free hand in determining an administrative structure, the President was still insisting on January opening dates, and Singletary had no choice but to allow the Job Corps staff to continue to work long hours under high pressure to establish, in effect, a brand-new school system.¹⁹ The staff's attempts at implementing a program with few precedents often led to unexpected problems.

Organizational Issues

The lack of a clearly-defined organization in Job Corps became a nagging problem. When the Job Corps staff realized in November that camp openings would have to be delayed because of a lack of both acceptable contracts for urban centers and an organized intake process, the original enrollment goal of 40,000 enrollees by June 1965 was cut by almost one-half. Moreover, contracts for other services were being let almost as an afterthought. One Job Corps contract, for engineering support in camp construction, sought a firm "willing to deal with and furnish services for an accelerated crash program with extremely short deadlines."²⁰ Any delays were likely to become embarrassing to the Administration, and the Bureau

of the Budget, reviewing a "highly fragmented proposal" for Job Corps organization, quickly requested changes.²¹ Singletary agreed, and in early 1965, a new administrative arrangement with more clearly defined duties and responsibilities was established.

Negotiations with Contractors

Congress had given Job Corps a mandate to become functional quickly, but when the bill was passed, negotiations with contractors were at a standstill. By the time funds for the Act were appropriated in October, only four inquiries were serious enough to merit consideration, and only one had been received from industry. Federal Electric, following up on its list of suggestions, had submitted an "impressive" proposal to operate a camp in New Brunswick, New Jersey. A proposal from Ohio University to operate a camp near Cleveland, Ohio, and proposals from the states of Texas and Indiana to operate one center each "warranted optimism," but the Job Corps could do nothing about them at the time. Johnson was eager to avoid the impression that he was influencing the outcome of the Presidential election, and asked Shriver to postpone opening any centers until afterwards.²² But by mid-November, after the Johnson landslide, Philco and Sperry Rand submitted detailed proposals, and by the following spring, contract

applications among large corporations nearly doubled.²³ Still, it would be some time before urban men's centers would open. OEO refused to go sole source on urban center contracts, and the resulting competitive bidding required that detailed contract specifications be prepared.²⁴ That effort took months, delaying the opening of the urban centers until well into 1965.

Womens' Centers

The problem of the women's centers also faced Singletary and his staff. Interest in the women's centers was flagging, both within Job Corps and from potential contractors. Jeanne Noble had been heading the planning effort for a women's Job Corps component on a part-time basis, and a set of guidelines for women's centers contractors had been prepared by October. In the guidelines, Noble suggested using cost-reimbursement contracts, a method which Singletary's staff had been reluctant to utilize with men's centers.²⁵ The rest of the Job Corps staff met to consider Noble's plans a week later, and the delay in considering women's centers was, to Jeanne Noble, the final straw in a series of delays and brushoffs. She quickly left Job Corps, and in a letter fired off to Singletary, said, "You must admit at this point, Dr. Singletary, that there are fewer persons working actively to advance the program of the girls, than

there are working to advance programs for boys."²⁶

After Noble's departure, one component of the Job Corps staff quickly arranged a meeting with potential contractors. During the meeting, held on December 3, it became clear that the Job Corps staff had failed to address a women's Job Corps adequately: the National Office staff had left it up to contractors to identify job opportunities for women. They had also suggested that contractors utilize the "cluster concept" of occupational training, in which "clusters composed of related skills, occupational orientation, and opportunities should be presented as a single sequential unit."²⁷ Some contractors were confused, and others were reluctant to sponsor women's centers because the costs of submitting a proposal for a 200-woman center were as great as those of the larger men's urban centers, and the profits would be considerably less.

Inter-agency Relations

The Job Corps staff was more successful in the area of inter-agency relations. Under terms of the Economic Opportunity Act, the Departments of Agriculture and Interior were to operate the Job Corps conservation centers, and planning to establish and operate them had, by comparison with other problems, gone very smoothly. In October, Job Corps had received commitments from the two

agencies to open 43 centers in Fiscal Year (FY) 65.²⁸ Soon afterward, OEO announced that the first construction funds -- some \$15 million -- were being assigned to Agriculture and Interior to build and refurbish sites for the conservation camps.²⁹ OEO also quietly arranged with the Army to provide medical services and pre-enrollment physicals for Job Corps enrollees.³⁰ Planning and coordinating the opening of Job Corps conservation centers was an activity directed entirely from Washington, and Shriver and Singletary had done a remarkable job of coordination. But just before the first Job Corps conservation center was to open, Shriver pushed one last point which would assure OEO's ascendancy over the Departments of Agriculture and Interior in conservation center operations. In an inter-agency agreement with Agriculture and Interior, Shriver agreed to allow the Departmental Secretaries to select camp sites and develop a work program only if they permitted the Director of OEO to formulate policy and develop corpsman activity programs. Shriver made sure the first Job Corps camp would not open until the agreement was official. Secretary of Interior Stuart Udall signed the agreement on January 15, 1965.³¹ That same day, the first Job Corps camp, Camp Catoctin in Maryland, opened its doors to corpsmen.

Camp Staff Selection

With the first center finally opened, the Job Corps staff did not settle down into a routine operating mode right away. Before the staff could allow themselves that luxury, several more months of intense organizational activity would have to be completed. It was time to address the issue of selecting and recruiting staff for Job Corps camps nationwide. Staffing of the urban centers was not an issue: as specified in the urban center contracts, those procedures were left to the contractors themselves. The conservation centers, directed by OEO, had been another matter. Congress' late passage of the Economic Opportunity Act meant that Job Corps had no authority to establish a procedure to classify instructor positions in the conservation camps until late August.³² That date conflicted with staffing for public schools, which were about to open for the year. Shriver had always been acutely aware that established public education interests could threaten the existence of Job Corps, and had very early taken steps both to forestall potential attacks and build good relations. His appointment of Vernon Alden to be titular head of the Job Corps planning effort had been one measure, and naming Singletary as Director was another. Shriver had also reassured public schools that he would not "rob" school systems of their

teachers.³³ Only after passage of the bill did a more emboldened Wade Robinson publicly declare, "If I were a superintendent of schools, . . . I'd fight to get my teachers into this program."³⁴ To his credit, Shriver's handling of the perceived threat from public schools and his positive presentation of the program garnered over 5,000 requests for employment in Job Corps camps.³⁵

But the short amount of time available posed other problems in screening staff for the conservation centers. In August, 1964, an admittedly "hasty" document was sent out for "interviewers of Conservation Camp Staff." In it, Job Corps headquarters identified, in very general terms, the characteristics a qualified staff should possess:

Intelligence. A quick mind, alert and responsive to a variety of situations, will be essential in this camp life. Even in the brief conversation of an interview, the response of the applicant can be an indication of his general aptitudes
 . . .
 Sensitivity and Understanding. A difficult quality to identify, but certainly important
 . . .³⁶

These general guidelines ultimately prompted some criticism by Hubert Humphrey to an OEO official: "I am intrigued by these reference application blanks with that checklist you have. Now how in the devil would anyone know 'capacity for adjustment to life in an isolated rural area?'"³⁷

Still, early in 1965, Job Corps was preparing to open

other camps in the time President Johnson wanted. Job Corps needed a field-based administrative structure to manage the program effectively, and the bureaucracy in Washington was not accustomed to accommodating a program that moved as quickly as Job Corps needed to. Even after Catoctin had opened, Singletary was having problems "getting an approved staffing pattern (both supergrade and below supergrade) so we know what positions and what level of position we have to fill." Singletary also needed "desperately" to hire field personnel to handle recruiting.³⁸ A regional office structure to accommodate OEO programs wasn't expected to be completed until April.³⁹ Although Shriver was known to actively dislike "Approved Practice,"⁴⁰ he was ultimately forced to ask the Civil Service Commission to recruit and screen Job Corps teachers throughout the country until Job Corps was prepared to do so.⁴¹ Job Corps still needed five more months of Civil Service assistance before it could recruit center staff on its own.⁴² Shriver's efforts paid off: by Spring, 1965, Job Corps was actively seeking the involvement of public education.⁴³ From that point, a qualified staff for Job Corps conservation centers was assured.

Corpsmember Recruiting

Shriver always had a nagging concern about Job Corps:

although he was on record promising 40,000 enrollees by June 30, 1965, he did not know whether there were enough disadvantaged adolescents in the country to justify a Job Corps. And if that population existed, neither he nor any of the Job Corps staff knew how they would ever be located, identified, and processed for intake into Job Corps centers. If not enough potential corpsmembers could be found who would show an interest in Job Corps, the program would quickly lose all credibility, and with it, its funding. Shriver and Singletary both disliked having to depend solely on USES for recruiting and screening, and they, with most of the Job Corps staff, had discussed their doubts about USES in October, 1964. Not only did the staff feel that USES might not have access to the disadvantaged population Job Corps sought, they doubted whether USES could mobilize the recruits quickly enough.⁴⁴ Indeed, it had taken months for USES to locate, screen and process the first corpsmembers for Camp Catoctin. Their efforts had produced only 30 disadvantaged youths from an area between Kentucky, Wise County, Virginia, and Baltimore. From that experience, Job Corps was forced to revise its projected enrollment downward to 25,000 by the end of the fiscal year. In an attempt to meet that figure, the Job Corps staff knew they had to use an existing mechanism to recruit and screen Job

Corps applicants because it would be impossible to create a new apparatus quickly enough.

The staff decided on a decentralized approach: politically, it made sense to formally agree to utilize the Employment Service, and on January 26, 1965, Singletary announced that an agreement had been negotiated with the Labor Department to use the Employment Service to screen applicants for the remainder of FY 65. USES would be kept busy: 62 conservation centers were announced at the same time, six contracts for men's urban centers had been negotiated, and one women's center was about to open, with negotiations for two others nearing completion.⁴⁵ With women's centers about to open, a group from the National Council of Catholic Women, National Council of Jewish Women, National Council of Negro Women, and United Church Women formed a volunteer organization known as Women in Community Service (WICS) to recruit and screen female applicants for Job Corps.⁴⁶ At the same time, Job Corps attempted a community action approach: they placed public service announcements with 4200 local radio and television stations, sent a press kit to nearly every newspaper in the country, and bought advertising space on 9,000 billboards. Through all these means, they sought to utilize school counselors, extension agents, social workers, settlement and neighborhood houses, and civil

rights groups to encourage the target population to apply to Job Corps.⁴⁷ This decentralized approach thus prevented total reliance on USES.

But delays in launching the supplemental recruiting campaign made Job Corps' revised enrollment goal of 25,000 unrealistic. Shriver was not about to admit defeat. Ever mindful of the President's needs for a visible, functional program, he in March 1965 committed Job Corps to enrolling 10,000 corpsmembers by the end of the fiscal year.⁴⁸ The staff groaned: Wade Robinson thought 2,000 a more realistic figure, but Shriver was adamant: we've turned the country upside down, he said, pushed legislation through, gotten hundreds of millions of dollars, and people have a right to expect some action.⁴⁹ Thus "Operation 10,000" was launched.

Other than Shriver, there were only two staff members who thought a goal of 10,000 enrollees was possible. One was Lew Eigen, who, on a visit home in New York City, went outside his house in the Stryker's Bay area one evening and set up a card table. The curiosity of the neighborhood youth was too much for them to resist, and they began to ask questions. Before long, Eigen had enrolled hundreds of youth for the program.⁵⁰ Another staffer, David Gottlieb, had arranged with Howard University students in Washington to distribute Job Corps

literature in the city's black neighborhoods. They also distributed invitations to a Saturday-morning "information session" at a local theatre Job Corps had rented.

Gottlieb was a professor of sociology, and expected negligible turnout, especially when it rained the morning of the "information session." He was astonished at the response: over 300 youth, none of them white, attended. Gottlieb obtained 72 registrations alone that morning.⁵¹

From their own recruiting experiments, Eigen and Gottlieb were convinced that a team of 20 recruiters traveling throughout the country could recruit the required number of corpsmembers. But Shriver prevailed, saying that staff was needed in Washington to iron out programmatic details. Shriver recalled the successes he had had with recruiting Peace Corps volunteers, and he, Singletary, and Wade Robinson set up a Peace Corps-style recruiting effort in which simple applications were to be sent directly to Washington on postcards. These "opportunity cards" were distributed through USES' Job Corps packets.⁵²

While the opportunity cards were being sent out, the Job Corps staff realized that if 10,000 enrollees were to be placed in Job Corps centers by June 30, the first large urban men's center, Camp Gary in San Marcos, Texas, would have to be opened much sooner than planned. The site was

in Johnson's home Congressional district, and the contract for the center had already been negotiated with the Texas Educational Foundation, a state agency. The physical site for the center, however, was an abandoned military base, and it needed extensive renovation which the Pentagon had continually delayed. When Eigen and Milton Friedman, the Job Corps contracting officer, learned that the center might be opened in the next fiscal year, they paid a quick visit to the Pentagon to persuade the appropriate official to speed the renovation. When he refused, Eigen and Friedman excused themselves and made a quick phone call to explain the situation to Shriver. In a few minutes, the stunned Pentagon official received a phone call from an irate President, who was quickly assured that Camp Gary would indeed open before the end of the fiscal year.⁵³ From that point, Job Corps had 10,000 slots for enrollees available.

But would the opportunity card campaign, along with other recruiting efforts, result in widespread interest for Job Corps, much less qualified applicants? The answer was quick in coming: in a few months, over a quarter of a million opportunity cards flooded into the national office.⁵⁴ It quickly became apparent that although the recruitment drive had documented vast interest for a Job Corps, Operation 10,000 soon illustrated serious drawbacks

in Job Corps' operation. There was no administrative structure to follow through to the flood of applicants, and of the hundreds of thousands of cards the opportunity card campaign generated, the vast majority were never acknowledged, much less processed. In view of a lack of processing ability at the time, Singletary felt the opportunity card campaign had needlessly raised the expectations of potential enrollees.⁵⁵

The stepped-up USES recruitment and community-action campaigns revealed another programmatic weakness. It was impossible for center openings to keep pace with the numbers of qualified candidates that had been generated. As a result of Operation 10,000, 7164 enrollees were in a pool waiting to be assigned to the 5230 openings available at the operation's conclusion. In a memo two weeks into the new fiscal year, Eigen said that more enrollees were being processed every day, which meant that

throughout the "long hot summer" there will be thousands of youth around the country who . . . will have to wait three months or more (before enrolling at a Job Corps center). The complaints are starting to come in loud and clear.⁵⁶

Still, the enrollment push enabled Job Corps to open seven urban centers by the end of July, 1965, which alone housed over 5000 enrollees.⁵⁷ And by late summer, over 22,000 youth had been assigned to centers.⁵⁸

Programmatic Weaknesses

In May of 1965, one Job Corpsman described a typical day at a Job Corps center: Up at 6:00 am, breakfast at 7:00, vocational class from 8:00 am until noon ("culinary art," he wrote, "just some big word for cooking"), lunch until 1:00 pm, then "academic sessions" until 3:30 -- "communication, social education, math and science." From 3:30 until 5:00, the Corpsman had physical education, and supper from 5:00 until 6:00. After supper, group meetings were held, followed by free time until 11:00 pm. "I shoot pool, play all kinds of games. Every kind of game you can think of." Lights out was at 11:00 pm. Of his experience, the corpsman wrote

The food they have up here is wonderful. And up here you not just another drop out you are someone. No one up here is over anybody else. The heads up here is just wonderful.⁵⁹

This experience, an enriching one at a camp with well-rounded activities provided by a humanistic staff, seemed to be the exception as both the Job Corps staff and the press began to discover shortcomings soon after camps began operation.

There was little doubt among the Job Corps staff that, in view of the speed with which preparations had been made, some problems were bound to develop within the camps. Wade Robinson had suggested before any camps

opened that a "Hot Line" be established in the Job Corps national office for centers' use in reporting emergencies.⁶⁰ But the shortcomings involved with the rapid startup phase soon began to be noticed. The first Job Corps center to open, Catoctin, was the first to notice troubling problems. In an official visit to the Catoctin center, one staffer noted little evidence of a planned orientation and recreation program,⁶¹ and corpsmembers were dropping out in large numbers. Al Maxey, the first Center Director at Catoctin, blamed a high dropout rate on inadequate and poorly trained staff as well as corpsmember misperceptions. The Job Corps staff had had no idea what kind of dropout rate to expect, or if large numbers of corpsmembers dropping out was indicative of serious programmatic weaknesses.⁶² What the Job Corps staff did know was that publicity about a perceived high dropout rate could cripple the program, and as the national office received reports of high dropout rates from other centers, a means was quickly devised to address the problem. On March 29, 1965, Job Corps staffers met. Perhaps the corpsmen were having difficulty adjusting to a daily schedule, or perhaps enrollee selection and placement as handled by USES was deficient. To counter corpsmembers' misperceptions about the program, a thorough orientation was called for. The idea of Job

Corps "reception centers" was proposed: three Job Corps centers, Kilmer, New Jersey; Custer, Michigan; and Parks, California, would be enlarged to handle intake for Job Corps. By utilizing reception centers, Job Corps felt it could better control the selection and assignment process, give a thorough orientation, and introduce enrollees to a "rigorous daily schedule."⁶³ But after operating for less than a year, the experimental processing centers were discontinued. The processing centers did not "significantly" reduce the logistics of intake at regular centers, and far from reducing the dropout rate, may have exacerbated it.⁶⁴

What some staffers had feared as programmatic weaknesses may have caused some of the dropouts. But another reason, one less verbalized by exiting corpsmen, was homesickness. From the first camp opening, Job Corps had served the War on Poverty ideal of removing an adolescent from a disadvantaged background and placing him in an environment of opportunity. Many corpsmembers had never been more than a few miles from home and the shock of being suddenly transported across the country was too much. Singletary had always opposed sending enrollees far from their homes, preferring to keep them closer. But in the interest of achieving integration or a racial mix acceptable to both local communities and elected

officials, Job Corps had to send its enrollees to all parts of the country. That fact underlay the enrollees' being assigned to a center rather than choosing one for themselves.⁶⁵ The experimental processing centers had thus attempted to address what was essentially an emotional strain through a programmatic means: going to such a center and quickly relocating to a "regular" center, however, was doubly wrenching for most enrollees.

The Job Corps staff had thus failed to stem the numbers of dropouts by May, 1965, when Newsweek reported a 17.5% dropout rate in the five months since centers were opened. Shriver immediately ordered a statistical survey to determine the actual dropout rate, the reasons corpsmembers gave for dropping out, and the general implications for Job Corps.⁶⁶ Within a month, Shriver had some answers: the national dropout rate was over 18%. Three-quarters of the dropouts spent less than a month in Job Corps; the typical stay was only 7-10 days. However, if the enrollee stayed at least 30 days, the chances of retention were much better: only 3.2% of enrollees who had remained at least 30 days dropped out.⁶⁷

Before the Job Corps staff could address the results of this survey, the New York Times reported on its front page that 30% of the first enrollees at Camp Catoctin had

dropped out.⁶⁸ This report fueled Republican opposition to the Job Corps program at a time when the original legislation was up for Congressional review. The dropout problem was a continuing one for Job Corps and it was repeatedly discussed throughout the remainder of Singletary's tenure as Job Corps Director. "All of us have been very much concerned about the . . . dropout rate in conservation centers," read one memo to Singletary.⁶⁹ Certain corrective actions were instituted late in 1965: an evaluation system to rate Center Directors on their ability to retain enrollees, closer supervision of conservation centers to permit policy direction, formation of trouble-shooting teams to visit centers with especially high dropout rates, and retaining celebrities to visit Job Corps centers to encourage enrollees to stay in Job Corps.⁷⁰ On occasion, a "circle-the-wagons mentality" was apparent.⁷¹ Sometimes staff members suggested sending psychologists to centers, other times a 30- to 90-day commitment was advocated, and sometimes staffers argued over not releasing the dropout rate vs. having some figure on hand to give out publicly.⁷² No resolution was forthcoming in Job Corps' first year of operation, and some Job Corps officials went on record admitting to "inadequate preparation, delays in processing,

mis-screening and misinformation, malassignments and mismatching of enrollees to the proper areas as contributing factors."⁷³

Camp Disturbances

To a degree, the "inadequate preparation" cited by Job Corps officials had resulted in a dropout rate that had alarmed some of the staff. Inadequate preparation also resulted in programmatic weaknesses which led to violence at many Job Corps centers throughout the summer of 1965. President Johnson had wanted a poverty program set into operation quickly, and with Job Corps being the first national poverty program started, it captured a great deal of media attention. When corpsmembers engaged in violent acts on Job Corps centers, they too captured media attention.

An early indication that Job Corps staff, both national- and center-level, were ill-prepared to deal with disadvantaged youth came in a letter from a Job Corps resident counselor early that summer. He detailed the case of a black professional athlete who was sent to visit his center for a number of days and did "nothing constructive" the whole time there. With some justification, he feared the corpsmembers would regard the athlete who slept most of the time and drove a fancy car as a role model. Also of concern to the counselor was

that a number of black corpsmembers called Washington, claiming the Ku Klux Klan was after them at the center. Their call prompted a visit by Dave Gottlieb, who flew to the center to investigate. Although the charges were "completely unjustifiable," the corpsmembers saw that they could get someone from Washington to come to the center on the basis of a phone call, and their actions became bolder.⁷⁴ Although the Job Corps staff may have overreacted in that instance, they certainly gained some insight to center operations. In that same month, however, Governor Mark Hatfield of Oregon called for federal intervention at the Tongue Point center to keep discipline after a racial fistfight, and corpsmembers at the Atterbury center were arrested by the FBI and charged with committing a group sexual assault.⁷⁵

Throughout the summer, reports of drinking, drug use, assaults, and shootings at Fort Rodman in Massachusetts; Fort Custer, Michigan; Collbran, Colorado; Parks, Redding, and Lewiston, California; Gary and Cottella, Texas; Charlestown, West Virginia; and Breckenridge, Kentucky, all made wire service headlines and helped create an image of Job Corps as unworkable and badly administered. In one case, Atterbury in Indiana, university administration was found to be "deficient" and its contract was taken over by Westinghouse. In another instance, Job Corps had

contracted with the Pinellas County School Board to operate a women's center in a quiet residential neighborhood in St. Petersburg, Florida. After repeated reports of promiscuity and drunkenness, the St. Petersburg center was closed. Job Corps had tried to contract with a school system to operate a residential center and the attempt had failed.⁷⁶

As Job Corps faced reappropriations that summer, negative publicity mounted, Republicans planned an attack, and the future of the program appeared to be clouded.

1965 Amendments to the Economic Opportunity Act

But the 89th Congress swept into Washington on the strength of the Johnson landslide in 1964. As they set out to exercise their legislative handicraft, Washington insiders knew that the Johnson legislative package was in safe hands. Even before the new Congress began debate on amendments to the War on Poverty, the House Education and Labor Committee had raised OEO's requested appropriation for FY 66 from \$1.5 billion to \$1.895 billion.⁷⁷ With the 89th Congress, OEO only had to worry about minimizing the damage Republicans could bring by citing negative publicity.

Republicans quickly attacked Shriver's administration of OEO, and described the way the program was being run as "disillusioned BB shots instead of a war on poverty."⁷⁸

Their rhetoric could not dim the Democrats' enthusiasm, however. Hearings before the Education and Labor Committee were notably cordial. That committee called Job Corps "impressive" in its startup and only offered a few amendments to the original legislation: other than requiring the Job Corps Director to issue regulations preventing Job Corps completers from displacing employed workers, Job Corps was allowed to continue much as it had been.⁷⁹

The Senate also strongly endorsed the first year of the War on Poverty and approved the Economic Opportunity Act amendments by a vote of 61 to 29. After conference with the House, OEO was appropriated \$1.785 billion, nearly \$300 million more than OEO originally requested. The War on Poverty and its Job Corps had survived its first year and received Congress' blessing. In Shriver's mind, the War on Poverty, like all wars, had its SNAFUs. In that context, he felt, many criticisms were exaggerated.⁸⁰

Revised Administrative Procedures

Although Job Corps had escaped Congressional review intact and essentially unchanged, the Job Corps National Office quickly took advantage of its support by Congress to work directly with Job Corps centers to get additional support for them in case of future outbreaks. Although

Job Corps officially downplayed the camp violence of the summer of 1965, "the order of the day was 'tighten up.'" Clearer definitions and responsibilities were outlined and Job Corps staff concentrated on auxiliary programmatic aspects such as community relations and counseling.⁸¹ Within Job Corps headquarters, a directive system for men's urban centers was established and policies regarding bail bond/legal services policy was drawn up.⁸²

After nearly a year of operation, Job Corps staff had made considerable headway in learning how to administer a national residential training program and what some staffers had considered a first-stab "shakedown" phase was coming to an end.⁸³ For his part, Singletary was looking forward to his return to Greensboro.⁸⁴ In September, he began interviewing candidates for the Director's position.⁸⁵

Although the Job Corps staff felt it was moving into a "steady-state" phase, relations with the public and some elements of Congress were still tenuous, as illustrated by the 1965 Christmas leave plan. In November Job Corps announced that eligible corpsmembers could use their earned leave time to go home for the Christmas holidays. Since corpsmembers only made \$30 a month, OEO would pay any transportation charges for the 16,000 corpsmembers Job Corps estimated would participate. It was to be a crucial

test of Job Corps' ability to facilitate and keep track of corpsmembers in transit in "thousands of communities across the country," as well as test Job Corps' ability to retain enrollees who were going home for the first time after being in a Job Corps center.⁸⁶

The reaction from the press and Congress was swift. Typical was one editorial cartoon showing a Job Corpsman on the "Gravy Train," on his way home for the holidays "at taxpayers' expense," bypassing a forlorn-looking serviceman "getting home the best way he can."⁸⁷ Letters from Congress and the public poured into the Job Corps offices. Yet, when the operation had concluded, over 90% of the 13,500 corpsmembers who participated had returned.⁸⁸

Still, the Job Corps was being criticized for waste and poor administration. The new Job Corps director would have plenty to address.

A New Job Corps Director

While still serving as Director, Singletary had been impressed with one particular candidate to be his successor. In recommending Franklyn A. Johnson, Singletary said, "He is an articulate person and will generally make a good impression for the program. He has had sufficient administrative experience to at least suggest that he can handle that end of the job."⁸⁹

Johnson had impressive credentials: after receiving his Ph.D from Harvard, Johnson had been a Fulbright scholar. He was decorated on a number of occasions in World War II, and served as British Chief intelligence officer for the CIA for two years. In civilian life, Johnson had been a co-recipient of the George Washington honor medal from the Freedoms Foundation.⁹⁰ At the time of his appointment to be Director of Job Corps, Johnson was serving as President of California State College in Los Angeles. Although some senior staffers had their reservations, Shriver apparently still saw Job Corps as an educational program, and favored having an educator in the Director's position.⁹¹ The reservations held by some of the Job Corps staff were well-founded, however. Within a year under Johnson's tenure, the Job Corps they had fought to establish and head toward a "maintenance" phase, very nearly disintegrated.

The Job Corps Johnson took over had 17,386 corpsmembers in 69 conservation centers (7,813 corpsmembers), 8 men's urban centers (8,130 corpsmembers), and five women's urban centers (1,443 corpsmembers).⁹² Johnson also inherited persistent problems: corpsmembers were still dropping out of Job Corps centers at an alarming rate. The New York Times reported on January 12, 1966 that white corpsmembers were dropping out of Job

Corps four times faster than blacks.⁹³ Meanwhile, morale among center staff was deteriorating. In the heady first days of the War on Poverty, creative brainpower and energies flowed freely. But after administrative responsibilities had been clarified following the "long hot summer" of 1965, field staff began to feel stifled. The director of one men's urban center, whom Shriver regarded as an "able fellow," wrote

...this job is rapidly losing many aspects of being enjoyable. And I think, if I may be blunt about it, the reason lies in the OEO and the way the relationship between OEO and this center appears to be developing. . . .(administrative) procedures have been piling up; there are more and more reports to get out; and the opportunity that I, as director, have had to be creative and do 'imaginative' work with the corpsmen is steadily being reduced.⁹⁴

The opportunity was ripe for the new Director to harness the energy and creative flow of his staff to address these problems. But when Johnson officially began his duties as Job Corps Director on January 3, 1966, he had already acknowledged a lack of credentials to direct a poverty program. In his own words, Johnson was ". . . not an idea man on the poverty program (I obviously have had no personal experience with these matters.)"⁹⁵

To address the persistent problems in Job Corps, Johnson resurrected a number of ideas that had been developed in Singletary's term. To keep corpsmembers in

Job Corps, and thereby increase retention, Johnson endorsed the idea of having enrollees sign a pledge that they would stay in Job Corps for at least 90 days.⁹⁶ Then, Johnson made a baffling decision: after spending some time studying "the pros and cons of opening one or more Corpsman Processing Centers based on the experimental processing centers" of the previous year, Johnson sought to reopen such centers as a pilot, hoping to "move toward 100 percent use of processing centers." Johnson hoped that the processing centers would "make for a more effective and comprehensive program at the centers themselves."⁹⁷ Johnson was demonstrating fairly early in his tenure a complete lack of understanding of both the nature of center problems and the lessons learned from one year of Job Corps operations.

Johnson also thought that boosting enrollment at Job Corps centers would counter the dropout problem and he set out to mount a recruiting "Operation 20,000" based on the previous year's successful "Operation 10,000." In Operation 20,000, Johnson set the goal of having 20,000 corpsmembers in Job Corps centers by Washington's Birthday in 1966. He even tapped Lew Eigen, who had been credited with the success of Operation 10,000, to head the new effort. But unlike Singletary, who had understood Shriver's wants and needs and had been able to clearly

communicate them to his staff, Johnson had little feel for Shriver's approach, or the fact that in response to Congressional and public outcry against waste and mismanagement, Shriver needed to make Job Corps a paragon of efficient management. In a confidential memo to Johnson, Eigen said that Job Corps could get 20,000 enrollees, but the costs would be great. To reach a corpsmember population of 20,000, Eigen said Job Corps would

have to arrange to have a medical examination given by physicians within the centers, on the planes, on buses, or in depots awaiting transportation. . . .

It will cost us approximately \$30,000 in extra funds to provide travel for regional office personnel and other expenses that normally would not be necessary.

It will cost roughly 50 kids in dropouts to the buildup in centers more rapidly than they had contemplated.

There will probably be four or five centers whose morale will be sufficiently affected negatively by our lack of planning.

Our records will be fouled up for a while and will require a good deal of time and effort to put them back together.⁹⁸

But Johnson believed Job Corps should proceed with this stepped-up recruitment drive. He forwarded his intentions and Eigen's memo to Shriver and Bernard Boutin. An incredulous Shriver immediately fired back a response emphatically saying "No" to the major points of the memo, which he said sounded "semi-hysterical." The extra cost, Shriver said, was "ridiculous."⁹⁹

"Operation 20,000" was never formally undertaken. In a few months, without any clear direction from Job Corps headquarters, the dropout rate in Job Corps centers had topped 25%.¹⁰⁰ With regard to the white dropout rate, Johnson could only suggest that the "white input" to a large men's urban center be kept "very high."¹⁰¹

It became clear early in Johnson's tenure that he sought to administer Job Corps as if it were an ongoing academic venture. After assessing both his role and that of the Deputy Director, held by David Squire, Johnson told his staff that the two top Job Corps officials would be concerned with "public affairs, speeches; communication with the field on policy matters; evaluation of Job Corps programs. . . .(and) long-range planning."¹⁰² Johnson did not understand that both the gains and missed opportunities of Job Corps' first year needed to be aggressively clarified, and that clear, efficient means of administering the program in a less chaotic atmosphere was urgently needed. His gentle manner was unsuited to this task, and it brought this warning from Boutin:

. The more I read the Inspection reports on our Urban Job Corps centers the more concerned I become. It is readily apparent that strong affirmative actions should be taken immediately. . . . many of the defects seem to be our own fault because we either do not have firm policies or where we do they are not being enforced In summary, Frank, what I am trying to point out is that, while up to now in the new program we

have had to feel our way, do things often on a crisis basis, and further do a great deal of experimenting, we have now reached the point where we ought to do a lot less dreaming and a lot more planning and firming up our position. . . . Now is the time to move and move real hard.¹⁰³

Johnson seemed incapable of any consistent direction or making any progress administering Job Corps, and senior OEO officials were well aware of it. Shriver even sent a memo admonishing Job Corps for allowing letters to accumulate unanswered.¹⁰⁴ In turn, Johnson often gave Shriver's staff the impression of being a naive outsider or, worse, a slow learner. Two months after receiving the "get with it" memo from Boutin, Johnson acknowledged that ". . . the time has come for a much more aggressive, informal program vis-a-vis the educational community I am thinking here of talks to national educational associations (and) state groups." Johnson also remained convinced that he could improve relations with Congress merely by spending ". . . four or five hours a week on the Hill, just dropping into offices to comment on criticisms or talk about Job Corps, without really asking for anything."¹⁰⁵

Still, Shriver was known to be "incredibly loyal" to his staff.¹⁰⁶ Owing either to this loyalty, or an unwillingness to admit a mistake in bringing Johnson on the Job Corps staff, Shriver directed Johnson to visit as

many Job Corps centers as possible in the summer and fall of 1966. This was a period when the Job Corps centers, after a vigorous startup phase, were smoothing out their own operations and maintaining their educational programs, and the Director of Job Corps' presence at Job Corps centers was a tremendous boost to their operations. It was an especially opportune time to build good relations with Job Corps centers because during the summer and fall of 1966, there were three times as many Job Corpsmembers as the year before, and the violence of the previous year had not been repeated.¹⁰⁷ Some staffers also suspected Shriver's sending Johnson to the field had another purpose: it got Johnson out of the office.¹⁰⁸

Even though Johnson's visits had taken him far from Washington, he managed to sour relations with Congress on two occasions. Johnson made the mistake of sending a form letter to Congressmen after each visit. Rep. Carl Albert had two Job Corps centers located in his home district, and in response to Johnson's letter about visiting "the" center located there, Albert pointedly wrote Johnson, "You didn't indicate which of the two you had visited."¹⁰⁹ Rep. Melvin Laird was sharply critical and dashed off two letters, one to Johnson and one to Shriver. To Johnson, Laird said

I hope that in the future you will notify me, as the ranking Minority member of the committee handling appropriations for the Office of Economic Opportunity with a particular interest in Job Corps problems, of any plans you have to visit my District.¹¹⁰

To Shriver, Laird wrote

The Office of Economic Opportunity lists a great many people working in the area of public relations. Evidently there must be so many people working in this area that they have forgotten about the little niceties of political life.¹¹¹

Still, Johnson continued making what were essentially public relations visits of about three hours' duration each to most of the Job Corps centers by September.¹¹²

During his site visits, Johnson had once complained to Shriver that his travels "(took) a great deal of time and (kept him) from other pressing duties."¹¹³ One pressing concern was high turnover among senior, experienced staff. Lew Eigen had left Job Corps in March.¹¹⁴ John Cheston and Pat Healy, who had developed and coordinated the Job Corps educational program from the time Humphrey had envisioned a Youth Conservation Corps, left shortly thereafter.¹¹⁵ Other staffers who had been present from the original War on Poverty task force also took their leave.¹¹⁶

Intra-office communications had become a shambles. Benetta Washington, Director of the Women's Centers, had somehow been overlooked when a meeting of Job Corps

Regional Directors and Women's Center Directors was planned. She complained,

I cannot accept . . . the manner in which you have put together and distributed your agenda. I note but a single reference to the women's program Are you aware of the fact that this directorate was not placed on distribution for copies of your agenda? It became rather clear that my presence was an after thought when the operations' center duty person called my home to "remind" me of the meeting.¹¹⁷

During Johnson's administration, so little attention had been given routine administrative detail that frustrations were openly expressed to Johnson's Deputy Director:

Without pointing my finger at anybody or any office, I am compelled to say that in my experience and in my opinion the financial management of our agency is all screwed up. After being here six months, I couldn't begin to articulate what Wolfrey's role is or Fogelman's or Cummin's or mine. . . . I repeatedly hear assertions by different people that we are out of FY 65 money, or conversely, that we have \$30 million of it stacked away somewhere. . . . Let me tell you, it's a fight to cram a PR through this blasted place and I have never seen the equal of this circuitous process in my ten years in the Government. What to do: Were I you, and someday when you are feeling good, I'd have Kelly, Wolfrey, Fogelman, Cutler, Cummins, and Gottlieb locked in a room with me for two hours and see if we could do anything to break this logjam.¹¹⁸

For his part, Johnson's deputy could only agree with what had been said.

By the end of 1966, with Job Corps centers open throughout the country and with nearly 30,000 corpsmembers

recruited for training programs, Job Corps was in very real danger of an administrative collapse in Washington. For his part, the enigmatic Mr. Johnson could have been only too happy to quietly take his leave in mid-December.¹¹⁹

1966 Amendments to the Economic Opportunity Act

Johnson also left behind a Job Corps whose operations were being more restricted by Congress. Republicans, knowing that there had been scattered violence in Job Corps Centers, had, by the previous May, amassed a 100-page compendium of criticism of OEO and urged that Job Corps be placed within the Labor Department.¹²⁰ Even though the move did not take place, their criticisms had had some impact: the Administration's requests for \$228 million for Job Corps were cut back.

In the 1966 Amendments to the Economic Opportunity Act, Congress required Job Corps to place enrollees in the same geographic region as their homes, and OEO was subdivided into seven such regions. Congress also limited the number of enrollees permitted in Job Corps, and the cost per enrollee was to be reduced to \$7,500.¹²¹

During the hearings before the House Education and Labor Committee, Job Corps had no strong voice to speak in its defense: Johnson had not been allowed to testify in behalf of the program he had been named to direct.

A New Direction for Job Corps

Even as Johnson was preparing to leave Job Corps, Shriver knew whom he wanted to be the new director.¹²² William P. Kelly, who had been Assistant Director for Management and Administration of OEO, was named by Shriver to serve as Acting Director until the Senate could confirm his nomination. Kelly was no stranger to Job Corps: he had joined the War on Poverty Task Force in May of 1964. He was also well-known to Shriver and enjoyed his support, having previously worked as a Peace Corps staffer earlier in the decade. Shriver's nomination of Kelly marked a turning point in the administration of Job Corps. Unlike his predecessors, Kelly was not an educator,¹²³ but a career civil servant. And with Job Corps experiencing Congressional restrictions and facing a questionable future, Shriver could no longer depict Job Corps as a purely educational program.¹²⁴ What Job Corps needed was a director experienced in both the program's operation and the Washington bureaucracy to fight for its survival.

Kelly seemed particularly well-suited to both the task and the times. Aggressive, blunt, and capable of expressing a hot temper, Kelly had a clear idea of the problems facing Job Corps. His experience in both OEO and other government agencies also gave him a clear idea how to address them. From the outset, Kelly knew that

Congress was set to begin debate in June on authorization for Job Corps' possible continuation. The problems at first seemed insurmountable: the national office was disorganized, and morale there and in the field was poor. The 114 existing Job Corps centers were operating far below capacity: Kelly was especially dismayed that, although over 30,000 youth had been recruited, only around 25,000 had actually been physically enrolled.¹²⁵ Costs were mounting, the public image of Job Corps was poor and relations with Congress were practically non-existent. Kelly himself admitted that ". . . this thing is so messed up, it really won't work and (Shriver and President Johnson) were just throwing their money down a rat hole."¹²⁶

But Kelly was clearly cut out to play an authoritarian role and he succeeded in rebuilding morale almost immediately. Within days of becoming Acting Director, Kelly "significantly" reduced the amount of paperwork required of Center Directors.¹²⁷ Kelly respected the Center Directors and he let his respect be known throughout Job Corps. The urban Center Directors of both men's and women's centers, he said, "are an extremely important group of people. More than any other single group of people, their ability and performance can make or break us."¹²⁸ From the outset, Kelly was giving the

national office and the field the impression of a competent, capable administrator and relations were bound to improve throughout the organization. For one thing, Center Directors were able to spend more time on their own administrative details, and the incidents of fighting and violence that once plagued Job Corps all but disappeared.¹²⁹ Relationships with women's centers and their director, always a troublesome issue, became noticeably more cordial.¹³⁰

But Kelly wasn't interested in merely building cordial relations within the National Office. To make its operations more efficient, Kelly effected a reorganization of the office so those staffers receptive to the Job Corps Director's ideas were given more visibility.¹³¹ Like Singletary before him, Kelly needed and depended upon good, competent staff, and they were in turn given opportunities to develop innovative approaches to vocational education.¹³² Still, as an authoritarian director, Kelly kept tight rein over their activities, and he was attuned to specific details: when he learned of a Job Corps dropout who had trouble finding a job, Kelly demanded of two senior staffers, "I want this kid to have a job by Monday, March 13 -- and not as a dishwasher! Someone get on the phone immediately and call him."¹³³

Once he established policy, Kelly allowed no one to

revise the Job Corps operating plan without his concurrence. Transgressors received a terse memo, and quite frequently, white-hot displays of anger behind closed doors.¹³⁴ The net effect of Kelly's approach, however, was seen by a number of observers as "putting spine and direction into the organization."¹³⁵

But rebuilding Job Corps' organizational structure and staff loyalty wouldn't make any difference to a Congress that was becoming critical of the cost of training Job Corpsmembers. Early in Kelly's tenure, some Congressional leaders were well aware that Job Corps was capable of handling 38,000 enrollees, but with only 25,000 corpsmembers enrolled, the cost per enrollee was about \$9,000, far in excess of the Congressionally-mandated amount of \$7,500.¹³⁶ To reduce the cost per enrollee, Kelly decided to fill up all available slots in the Job Corps centers and pledged to have 41,000 enrollees in the centers by the end of the fiscal year. To achieve this end, Kelly set an intermediate goal of 35,000 by mid-April, 1967. Kelly sought to utilize every intake mechanism available to him: the USES, WICS, and state and local employment agencies. Further, Job Corps staff kept up almost daily contact with agencies and local Job Corps centers concerning intake figures.¹³⁷ In at least two cases, Kelly exploded with anger when he felt two state

employment agencies were dragging their feet. "Screw them!," he raged at one point. "Let's get them out of our business."¹³⁸ Kelly's "lead, follow, or get out of the way" attitude began to pay off, however. By mid-April, over 36,000 corpsmembers were enrolled in the centers.¹³⁹ Two days shy of the end of the fiscal year, Job Corps reached its enrollment goal with 41,608 corpsmembers enrolled in the centers.¹⁴⁰ With that enrollment figure, per-unit costs per enrollee dropped to \$6,700.

Kelly's efforts were noted in two quarters. The Bureau of the Budget, still adhering to old resentments of the program, had sternly recommended a Job Corps enrollment ceiling of 34,000. Still, a beaming Shriver offered Kelly warm congratulations on his achievement.¹⁴¹ With reason, Congress would be unable to attack Job Corps on grounds of cost-effectiveness.

But from his experience in Washington, Kelly knew that Congress would likely find plenty of other areas to attack. Moreover, Kelly knew that as Director of a program in the Executive Office of the President, he would have to testify before Congressional committees and submit to detailed questioning. Remembering the Job Corps of a year earlier, this Congress had had ample reason to curtail or even eliminate the program, and Kelly set out

to establish a power base in Congress. Kelly had already built up considerable goodwill in Congress before and during his confirmation hearings as Director of Job Corps -- the Senate had unanimously confirmed his appointment on March 7 -- and with the reauthorization hearings coming up, he set out to build upon his contacts. Kelly lined up appointments with every member on the House Education and Labor Committee "so when I walked into the room they wouldn't say, 'Is he some guy from Iowa? Who appointed him?'"¹⁴² Kelly also took care to deal with issues which affected centers in particular Congressmen's districts. Whenever a member of the House forwarded the Job Corps office a constituent inquiry, Kelly directed his staff to get as much information as possible on the subject, supervised any corrective action and personally delivered both a written and oral explanation of the situation.¹⁴³

His frequent and positive contacts on the Hill illustrated a central point to Kelly: even after three years of operation, most of the members of Congress simply did not understand what Job Corps was all about, and they were likely to ask damaging or irrelevant questions during hearings on Job Corps reauthorization. In preparation for his testimony, Kelly made careful notes about members of the Education and Labor Committee.¹⁴⁴ Kelly also sought

to make a comprehensive presentation to the committee designed to answer all their questions and counter their attacks in advance. For weeks before his scheduled testimony, Job Corps staffers accumulated a detailed report with flip charts and illustrations.¹⁴⁵ Kelly specifically requested his senior staff members to develop a list of "unfavorable (nasty, embarrassing, and tough) questions which hit the weakness or mistakes in (their) areas."¹⁴⁶ Their responses were used in Kelly's testimony, which he described:

. . . I stood with a pointer in my hand for an hour and I pulled all (the committee members') teeth. Everybody was sitting there waiting to say 'Well what does it cost to run Job Corps centers and how does that compare with . . .?' And we could show them and when it was all over, there weren't any questions. People were racking their brains trying to figure out what the hell to ask. It had all been answered (already) . . .
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Kelly's presentation had had the desired effect on Congress. Although the committee members did ask pointed questions, contrary to Kelly's recollection, Kelly was unflappable. By October, when the full Congress acted on the House Education and Labor Committee's recommendation, Job Corps had received \$295 million and a few minor amendments which differed only slightly from what the administration had proposed: the enrollment age for Job Corps was dropped to 14 years, certificates of completion were mandated, the residential capacity was limited to

45,000 enrollees, and in a concession to Republicans eager to dilute OEO's responsibilities, the Secretary of Labor was required to determine the progress and continuing needs for education and training.¹⁴⁸

Congress had little reason to change Job Corps: in less than a year under Kelly's direction, Job Corps screeners were giving enrollees a clearer picture of what to expect in Job Corps, the orientation program was changed, the time between screening and center assignment had been shortened, center behavior codes had been tightened, and corpsmembers were being assigned to centers nearer their homes.¹⁴⁹ Relations with labor unions -- the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America and the Operating Engineers, for example -- strengthened.

Ironically, in view of these successes for the program, Job Corps encountered opposition from an unexpected quarter. Late in 1967, the Bureau of the Budget, still stung by Kelly's expanding Job Corps enrollment above its recommended ceiling, announced it was impounding \$20,000,000 from Job Corps' budget. Despite appeals to the Bureau and the White House by Shriver and Kelly, the funds in question remained impounded, and Job Corps was forced to close 16 centers or risk breaking the law by operating in a deficit. Yet, in closing the 16

centers, objectively chosen on the basis of relatively poor performance, the Job Corps staff was surprised at the strength of both the local outcry and concern among the Congressmen involved. Closing the centers was also demoralizing to Job Corps staffers, who had experienced a boost in their morale under Kelly.¹⁵⁰

Still, Job Corps was beginning to operate as an established program, and by 1968, the future of the program seemed more assured than ever before. But Job Corps was still to face its most serious test. In March of 1968, Shriver was named Ambassador to France and Bertrand M. Harding named to be his successor as Director of OEO.¹⁵¹ Job Corps had lost one of two effective spokesmen for the poverty program, but even Shriver's continued presence could not have defended Job Corps against the all-out assault on the War on Poverty that was just shaping up.

FOOTNOTES

¹Singletary Interview.

²OEO, p. 256.

³US OEO, "Handbook for Job Corps Screening Agency," draft, Office of Economic Opportunity, 11/20/64, pp. I.1 - I.3, Box 774, NA OEO.

⁴Weeks, p. 165.

⁵OEO, p. 255.

⁶Ibid., p. 258.

⁷Wayne Morse, October 19, 1964, to Sargent Shriver, Box 792, NA OEO.

⁸OEO, p. 255.

⁹Albert D. Rosselini, December 3, 1964, to Otis A. Singletary, Box 792, NA OEO.

¹⁰J. Hugh Aaron, December 10, 1964, to Otis A. Singletary, Box 792, NA OEO.

¹¹OEO, pp. 257-59.

¹²John W. Carley, December 2, 1964, to Barney Old Coyote; John W. Carley, December 16, 1964, to Clare Hendee; Albert D. Rosselini, January 5, 1965, to Sargent Shriver; John M. Dalton, December 16, 1964, to Sargent Shriver, Box 792, NA OEO.

¹³Ray Royster, December 10, 1964, to Internal Distribution, Box 773, NA OEO.

¹⁴Hubert Humphrey, January 8, 1965, to Sargent Shriver, Box 781, NA OEO.

¹⁵Gottlieb Interview.

¹⁶Eigen Interview.

¹⁷Gottlieb Interview; Eigen Interview.

¹⁸Singletary Interview.

¹⁹Interview with Alice M. Irby, Science Research Associates, Washington, DC, 14 May 1984. (Hereafter referred to as Irby Interview.)

²⁰E. Hunter Smith, Jr., December 22, 1964, to Milton A. Fogelman, Box 779, NA OEO.

²¹William A. Capron, December 24, 1964, to Otis A. Singletary, Box 779, NA OEO.

²²James N. Adler, October 12, 1964, to Otis Singletary, Wade Robinson, and John Carley, Box 792, NA OEO; Shriver Interview.

²³OEO, pp. 250-51.

²⁴James N. Adler, December 7, 1964, to Otis A. Singletary and Wray Smith, Box 792, NA OEO.

²⁵Jeanne Noble, October 13, 1964, to Internal Distribution; John N. Adler, October 12, 1964, to Otis A. Singletary, Wade Robinson, and John Carley, Box 774, NA OEO.

²⁶Jeanne C. Noble, November 15, 1964, to Dr. Otis Singletary, Box 774, NA OEO.

²⁷US OEO, "Recommended Guidelines for Vocational Education in Women's Training Centers," packet for December 3, 1964, briefing, Box 780, NA OEO.

²⁸E. Hunter Smith, Jr., October 27, 1964, to Clare Hende, Box 773, NA OEO.

²⁹OEO, p. 42.

³⁰U.S. Department of Army--DA999960-152345Z, January 1965, Box 781, NA OEO.

³¹US OEO, Office of Economic Opportunity--Department of the Interior Agreement, signed by Sargent Shriver 13 January 1965; Morris Udall, 15 January 1965, Box 781, NA OEO.

³²Robert A. Cruzen, August 18, 1964, to William S. Lynch, Box 779, NA OEO.

³³Patrick Healy, July 23, 1964, to Wade Robinson, Box 779, NA OEO.

³⁴"Job Corps Seeks Teachers," New York Times, 30 August 1964, Sec. IV, p. 19.

³⁵Sargent Shriver, September 16, 1964, to John E. Fogarty, Box 780, NA OEO.

³⁶Marie O'Donohue, August 20, 1964, to Interviewers of Conservation Camp Staff, Box 779, NA OEO.

³⁷Hubert Humphrey, June 16, 1965, to Hy Bookbinder, Box 773, NA OEO.

³⁸Otis A. Singletary, January 26, 1965, to Sargent Shriver and Jack Conway, Box 793, NA OEO.

³⁹John W. Carley, January 12, 1965, to Col. W.H. Leach, Box 785, NA OEO.

⁴⁰Eigen Interview; Irby Interview.

⁴¹Sargent Shriver, February 15, 1965, to John W. Macy, Jr., Chairman of U.S. Civil Service Commission, Box 781, NA OEO.

⁴²Thomas M. McKenna, July 29, 1965, to Edward A. Denton, Deputy Director, U.S. Civil Service Commission, Box 785, NA OEO.

⁴³William G. Carr, April 22, 1965, to Adam C. Powell, Box 783, NA OEO.

⁴⁴Eigen Interview; Irby Interview

⁴⁵Otis A. Singletary, January 26, 1965, to Sargent Shriver and Jack Conway, Box 793, NA OEO.

⁴⁶US OEO, "WICS Screen Female Applicants for Job Corps," no date, Box 782, NA OEO.

⁴⁷Ibid., "Recruitment Program," no date, Box 781, NA OEO.

⁴⁸Irby Interview; OEO, p. 261.

⁴⁹Eigen Interview.

⁵⁰Ibid.

⁵¹David Gottlieb, no date, to Lew Eigen, Box 782, NA OEO.

⁵²OEO, p. 256.

⁵³Eigen Interview.

⁵⁴Singletary Interview.

⁵⁵Ibid.

⁵⁶Lew Eigen, July 15, 1965, to Dr. Singletary, Mr. Weeks, and Mr. Smith, Box 793, NA OEO.

⁵⁷E. Hunter Smith, Jr., July 30, 1965, to Christopher Weeks, Dr. Singletary, Wray Smith, and E.V. Svenson, Box 793, NA OEO.

⁵⁸Harold E. Brewer, September 9, 1965, to L.D. Eigen, Box 775, NA OEO.

⁵⁹Wesley Anderson, May 17, 1965, to Mr. Shaw, Box 776, NA OEO.

⁶⁰Wade Robinson, December 30, 1964, to Otis A. Singletary, Box 793, NA OEO.

⁶¹US OEO, "Preliminary Report," Jack Williams, 26 February 1965, Box 774, NA OEO.

⁶²OEO, p. 262.

⁶³Unsigned, 6 April 1965, Memo for the Record, Box 783, NA OEO.

⁶⁴J.W. Dienema, 16 November 1965, to Lewis D. Eigen, "Draft memo for Job Corps Bulletin 66-4," Box 786, NA OEO.

⁶⁵Irby Interview.

⁶⁶OEO, p. 262.

⁶⁷Ibid.

⁶⁸New York Times, 12 June 1965.

⁶⁹J.W. Dienema, November 2, 1965, to Otis A. Singletary, Box 793, NA OEO.

⁷⁰Ibid.

⁷¹Interview with Barry Argento, TEAM Associates, Washington, DC, 7 June 1982. (Hereafter referred to as Argento Interview.)

⁷²US OEO, Minutes of Agriculture/Interior/Job Corps Meeting, 9 December 1965, Box 791, NA OEO.

⁷³OEO, p. 263.

⁷⁴Raymond Ledford, June 28, 1965, to Whom It May Concern, Box 788, NA OEO.

⁷⁵OEO, pp. 261-63.

⁷⁶Irby Interview; OEO, pp, 63, 263-65, 267-68.

⁷⁷Senate Record, FY66, p. 17487.

⁷⁸Ibid., p. 17507

⁷⁹OEO, p. 266.

⁸⁰Shriver Interview.

⁸¹OEO, p. 265.

⁸²US OEO, Minutes, Job Corps Staff Meeting, 16 November 1965, Box 776, NA OEO.

⁸³Argento Interview; Eigen Interview.

⁸⁴Otis A. Singletary, August 3, 1965, to Dean N. Bond Fleming, Box 793, NA OEO.

⁸⁵Otis A. Singletary, September 15, 1965, to Sargent Shriver, Box 793, NA OEO.

⁸⁶Otis A. Singletary, 19 November 1965, to Center Directors, Box 790, NA OEO, US OEO, "Office of Economic Opportunity Press Release," 25 November 1965, Box 777, NA OEO.

⁸⁷Sen. Clinton P. Anderson, December 22, 1965, to Ed Heringer, Box 285. U.S. Library of Congress. Manuscript Division. The Papers of Clinton Presba Anderson.

⁸⁸The Washington Post, 3 January 1966.

⁸⁹Otis A. Singletary, September 27, 1965, to Sargent Shriver, Box 793, NA OEO.

⁹⁰Marquis Who's Who, Inc., Who's Who in America, 38th ed., Vol. 1, (1975), p. 1595.

⁹¹Gottlieb Interview; Eigen Interview.

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⁹³New York Times, 22 January 1966.

⁹⁴Jerome M. Ziegler, January 24, 1966, to Sargent Shriver, Box 809, NA OEO.

⁹⁵Franklyn A. Johnson, January 29, 1966, to Mr. Clark C. Monroe; Franklyn A. Johnson, December 16, 1965, to Herbert Kramer, Box 796, NA OEO.

⁹⁶OEO, p. 263.

⁹⁷Franklyn A. Johnson, February 18, 1966, to Bernard Boutin, Box 796, NA OEO.

⁹⁸Lewis Eigen, February 5, 1966, to Franklyn A. Johnson, Box 796, NA OEO.

⁹⁹Sargent Shriver, no date, to Franklyn A. Johnson, Box 796, NA OEO.

¹⁰⁰US OEO, "Draft memo re: Community Representatives Advisory Council Meeting of June 4, 1966," Box 803, NA OEO.

¹⁰¹Franklyn A. Johnson, March 11, 1966, to Lew Eigen and Marion Parsons, Box 796, NA OEO.

¹⁰²Franklyn A. Johnson and David Squire, February 21, 1966, to Associate Directors and Staff, Box 801, NA OEO.

¹⁰³Bernard Boutin, March 12, 1966, to Franklyn A. Johnson, Box 796, NA OEO.

¹⁰⁴Sargent Shriver, April 4, 1966, to Franklyn A. Johnson, Box 796, NA OEO.

105Franklyn A. Johnson, May 14, 1966, to Bernard Boutin, Box 796, NA OEO.

106Eigen Interview.

107OEO, p. 278.

108Interview with Gerard W. Herbert, Job Corps, Washington, DC, 25 May 1982; Eigen Interview.

109Carl Albert, August 30, 1966, to Franklyn A. Johnson, Box 796, NA OEO.

110Melvin Laird, September 1, 1966, to Franklyn A. Johnson, Box 796, NA OEO.

111Melvin Laird, September 1, 1966, to Sargent Shriver, Box 798, NA OEO.

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114Franklyn A. Johnson, August 14, 1966, to Job Corps Staff, Box 796, NA OEO.

115Franklyn A. Johnson, August 16, 1966, to Stanley Zimmerman; Franklyn A. Johnson, August 16, 1966, to Walter Stellwagen; Box 796, NA OEO.

116Franklyn A. Johnson, August 30, 1966, to John Cheston; Franklyn A. Johnson, September 9, 1966, to Patrick Healy; Box 796, NA OEO.

117Benetta B. Washington, September 20, 1966, to Robert Young, Box 806, NA OEO.

118Robert Lane, November 2, 1966, to David Squire, Box 807, NA OEO.

119Franklyn A. Johnson, December 13, 1966, to Mr. Clifton B. Chadwick, Box 796, NA OEO.

120OEO, pp. 88-89.

121Ibid., 277.

122Bill Kelly, December 20, 1966, to Sargent Shriver, Box 808, NA OEO.

123U.S. Congress. Senate. Committee on Labor and Public Welfare. Stenographic Transcript of Hearings 90th Cong., 1st sess., March 6, 1967, Box 809, NA OEO.

124Harvard Business School, Job Corps. Case Study 9-375-152. (Boston: , 1974.). (Hereafter referred to as HBS.)

125W.P. Kelly, "Statement before the Senate Committee on Labor and Public Welfare," March 6, 1967, Box 809, NA OEO; HBS, p. 2.

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127W.P. Kelly, January 20, 1967, to All Center Directors, Job Corps Correspondence 1967-69, NA OEO.

128William P. Kelly, May 25, 1967, to Milt Fogelman, Benetta Washington, and Dave Gottlieb, Job Corps Correspondence 1967-69, NA OEO.

129"Job Corps Comes Up to a Test," Business Week, 14 October 1967, p. 36.

130Benetta B. Washington, January 24, 1967, to William P. Kelly, Job Corps Correspondence 1967-69, NA OEO.

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132David Gottlieb, April 14, 1967, to Chester R. Lane, Job Corps Correspondence 1967-69, NA OEO.

133Bill Kelly, no date, to Dave Gottlieb and Bob Young, Job Corps Correspondence 1967-69, NA OEO.

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135Business Week, p. 36.

136HBS, p. 2.

137Leveo V. Sanchez, May 23, 1967, to William P. Kelly, Job Corps Correspondence 1967-69, NA OEO.

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139 Bob Young, April 23, 1967, to William P. Kelly, Job Corps Correspondence 1967-69, NA OEO.

140 William P. Kelly, June 29, 1967, to All Job Corps Regional Administrators and All Job Corps Center Directors, Job Corps Correspondence 1967-69, NA OEO.

141 HBS, p. 3; Sargent Shriver, June 29, 1967, to William P. Kelly, Job Corps Correspondence 1967-69, NA OEO.

142 HBS, p. 8.

143 HBS, pp. 7-8.

144 William P. Kelly, June 13, 1967, to The Files, Job Corps Correspondence 1967-69, NA OEO.

145 Gottlieb Interview.

146 Robert Cantrell, June 1, 1967, to David Gottlieb, Milton Fogelman, Benetta Washington, Jack Dienema, Bernie Diamond, Robert Young, and Wray Smith, Job Corps Correspondence 1967-69, NA OEO.

147 HBS, p. 11.

148 OEO, p. 281; Bob Golten, December 15, 1967, to William P. Kelly, Job Corps Correspondence 1967-69, NA OEO.

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CHAPTER 5

TRANSFER OF JOB CORPS TO THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

Sentiment for a Transfer

The War on Poverty began in the political arena and would continue in the political arena. As the most highly visible component of the War on Poverty and a favorite of Lyndon Johnson, Job Corps was bound to receive considerable press and political attention. As is the nature of the American political system, members of the opposing party frequently attempt to discredit the party in power by attacking its policies and programs. That was especially true with Job Corps, where "the Republicans never ceased trying to dismantle the apparatus Johnson had created."¹

The attacks had begun even before Job Corps was enacted. In a press conference in April 1964, the previous Republican candidate for President, Richard Nixon, called the War on Poverty a "cruel hoax."² One

of the most frequent charges against OEO and Job Corps was that they were duplicating efforts already being performed by old-line agencies. To some observers, Job Corps looked very much like a training program for the disadvantaged -- a "manpower" program, in other words. Why not have the Labor Department, with its manpower agency, manage the program? Other critics looked at Job Corps' educational component and wondered why the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW) wasn't managing Job Corps. Because Job Corps operated centers on former military bases, some called for the Defense Department to run Job Corps.³ As reports of violence, mismanagement, and cost overruns became more frequent in Job Corps' first few years of operation, the voices of those critics became louder and were expressed in Congress.

Congressional attacks on Job Corps began in earnest in 1966, when the first serious attempt was made to transfer Job Corps to the Labor Department. Republicans said Job Corps had "failed more noticeably" than any other War on Poverty program, and Senators Fannin and Murphey offered an amendment to the Economic Opportunity Act Amendments which would transfer Job Corps to the Labor Department ". . . to be administered in coordination with programs being carried out under the Manpower Development and Training Act."⁴ Although that amendment was defeated,

the logic of the argument remained. As Job Corps became identified as a manpower program, the perception grew that the government was operating a dual manpower delivery system at a high cost. The Labor Department was sympathetic to this view: since Humphrey's Youth Conservation Corps was debated, the Department had wanted a youth corps program of its own and had never warmly endorsed a Job Corps operated by any other agency. Moreover, the Bureau of the Budget, first stung by President Johnson's rejection of their community action approach and second by William Kelly's exceeding their recommended cap on enrollment, began to look askance at the amounts of money OEO was spending. The Budget Bureau had eventually succeeded in impounding \$20 million of Job Corps funds.

Those sentiments persisted. When the Economic Opportunity Act came up for renewal in 1967, Job Corps staff was aware of the possibility their program would be transferred to a Cabinet-level department. As early as March, Job Corps staff was conferring with the Budget Bureau about the language of the proposed bill, seeking to make appropriate changes to ". . . foreclose delegation to the Labor Department." An internal paper circulated among Job Corps staff before the House Education and Labor Committee hearings anticipated questions regarding a

transfer to the Department of Labor. The paper acknowledged that, as a job training enterprise, Job Corps could be operated by the Labor Department "with substantial reductions in costs of program planning, program coordination, program direction and monitorship."⁵

At the same time, Republican challenges to the War on Poverty and its Job Corps became even stronger in the 1967 Congressional session. In the Spring, 10 Republican Congressmen began to push for a new poverty program by proposing that OEO be dismantled and its programs reassigned to various agencies. In this attack, Republicans sought to transfer Job Corps to HEW.⁶ However, Job Corps presented itself as more than a manpower program. Its dealing with corpsmembers' "health and emotional problems, dental and visual problems, counseling and adolescent problems to an even greater extent than . . . vocational training" could not be addressed by the Labor Department, which was not "so oriented."⁷ This approach, enunciated by William P. Kelly, swayed Congress as did the Administration's bill which proposed tightened administration and clearer disciplinary controls in Job Corps centers.

Job Corps survived early attempts to transfer or dismantle it largely because it began to demonstrate

successes in areas where sentiment had run against the program. The Republican amendment to transfer Job Corps was defeated, ironically, by Southern Democrats.⁸ Three years before, Southern Democrats had, almost to a man, been skeptical of the War on Poverty and its Job Corps, which was proposing to operate integrated camps. But in the intervening years, the camps had become an accepted part of the community: for one thing, Job Corps centers offered jobs to local administrators and skilled tradesmen to operate and teach in the centers. Clerical and maintenance support positions in the centers were filled by local residents. In addition, Job Corps centers made their purchases within the communities themselves. Kelly had seen that the urban contract centers as well as conservation centers purchased food, clothing, medical supplies, and lumber so that the centers had become interwoven in the local economic fabric. Any threat to the Job Corps centers threatened the well-being of innumerable people and localities and instead of rejecting Job Corps centers, many local communities strongly supported them. Job Corps also had a strong supporter in the Chairman of the House Education and Labor Committee, Carl Perkins of Kentucky. For economic reasons as well as a belief in vocational education, Perkins was able to gather House support for Job Corps.

The Republicans wouldn't give up the attack, however. Rep. Albert Quie said that the Republicans were likely to make poverty a "party issue."⁹ Quie was right. The following year, 1968, was an election year, and the Republican candidate, Richard Nixon, had been one of the War on Poverty's first critics. At different points in the campaign, he pledged to abolish Job Corps. Even the night before his election, Nixon said on national television that Job Corps was a failure and that he planned to eliminate it.¹⁰ When Richard Nixon was elected President, a pall was cast on the Job Corps national office and William Kelly knew his days as Director of Job Corps were numbered.

Yet, a number of variables began to surface which made Nixon's campaign pledge more difficult to carry out than he had imagined. Instead of acting right away to abolish Job Corps, Nixon sought to buy time to examine the opposing point of view. In less than a month in office, Nixon formally proposed transferring Job Corps to the Department of Labor.¹¹ There he hoped Job Corps would die a bureaucratic death. Rep. Dan Flood recognized Nixon's strategy. Of the transfer to the Department of Labor, he said, ". . . I know about transfers -- that's the kiss of death."¹²

Controversy Over the Transfer

During the 1968 campaign, Nixon had focused on the cost of Job Corps and made it a political issue by rehashing various criticisms that had been present very early in the program. Nixon had no idea how the program was to be disposed of, or, in view of industry, labor, and political support for Job Corps, if it should be terminated. In the Job Corps matter, the Nixon White House was, above all, interested in saving face. While Nixon continued his demands that Job Corps die, ways were sought to at least keep enough elements of the program intact to satisfy its supporters while giving the impression that the costly Democratic program was being eliminated.

OEO itself was a political entity, and some Job Corps staff members had always assumed it would be drastically transformed, if not wiped out entirely, after the passing of the Great Society.¹³ Whether or not Job Corps would survive a post-Johnson administration was also a matter of considerable speculation. An early indication of Job Corps' fate was made less than two weeks into the Nixon Presidency. Nixon had made a campaign promise which would be hard to reconcile with his pledge to kill Job Corps. At one point, Nixon had pledged greater involvement of private industry to solve America's social problems.

Shortly after the inauguration, representatives of Litton, Xerox, Burroughs and Westinghouse, which were operating Job Corps urban contract centers, drafted resolutions to save Job Corps. While they wanted the centers and the Job Corps concept to remain, they indicated they were willing to change the name "Job Corps."¹⁴

Nixon had probably been long aware that killing Job Corps outright would incur the wrath of both industry and Congressional leaders like Carl Perkins. Moreover, the AFL-CIO was a strong supporter of the program,¹⁵ and Nixon couldn't run the risk of alienating labor unions early in his Presidency. The Nixon White House thus made its proposal to transfer Job Corps to the Department of Labor, a move which would give the program far less autonomy and bring it under the more stringent controls of a cabinet-level agency whose head, George Shultz, was a Nixon appointee.

But in reacting to the White House's proposal to transfer Job Corps to the Department of Labor, Shultz surprised the White House by defending Job Corps. In a 5-page memo to Presidential aide Daniel P. Moynihan, Shultz noted that Job Corps

has sought out and served some of the most severely handicapped and disadvantaged young people. It has developed innovative training methods and curricula. And it has improved the relations between the centers and the neighboring communities.¹⁶

Although Job Corps had its weaknesses, Shultz saw them as opportunities: its relationship with the "vocational education community should be strengthened," and enrollee retention could be improved. But for the time being, the existing Job Corps administrative structure would be adequate to address those changes, and Shultz wanted to avoid disruption. He favored retaining Job Corps intact in the Labor Department's Manpower Administration to reassure Job Corps' "staff, the enrollees, the public agencies, and private firms administering Job Corps facilities."¹⁷ Shultz also suggested that the size and number of both urban and conservation centers remain unchanged.

But Shultz was also interested in reorganizing the Manpower Administration. As the largest component of the Labor Department, the Manpower Administration he inherited was a giant: with over 4,500 Federal employees, the Manpower Administration administered \$2.4 billion annually and operated 8,500 contracts at the community level.¹⁸ In just under three years of operation under OEO, Job Corps had enrolled nearly a quarter of a million youths,¹⁹ and a program with such a massive intake would fit well into the "comprehensive manpower service system" Shultz envisioned. He clearly informed Moynihan at the White House that "the transfer of the Job Corps adds a

significant component to the cluster of manpower programs presently administered by the Department" The acquisition of Job Corps by the Department of Labor, said Shultz, made it appropriate to reorganize the Manpower Administration by strengthening the top management capability in the Administration, eliminating unnecessary layers of administration in Washington, and decentralizing major operating responsibilities to the Regional Offices.²⁰

Shultz's memo was something the White House hadn't counted on. In the first few days of his Administration, Nixon planned to make good a number of his campaign pledges. He especially wanted to quickly and decisively conclude what he felt was a wasteful War on Poverty by breaking up OEO and either closing or parceling out its programs. Once in the White House, he found a scenario that was different from the one he had depicted: the Economic Opportunity Act was scheduled to expire on June 30, 1970 and its authorization was to run out June 30, 1969.²¹ Under those circumstances, it would be far easier to give OEO an additional year of funding than to cause disruption and create controversy by taking it apart before its Congressionally-mandated conclusion. Nixon was an experienced politician, and he recognized the trouble he could get himself into on the Hill by suddenly

eradicating a Job Corps which had been gaining supporters. So, to give the appearance of ending Job Corps, Nixon's advisors had developed a concept of smaller residential training centers to be located in or near inner cities. The new centers would be designed to save money by offering vocational training through existing manpower programs or through on-the-job training. The Labor Department seemed uniquely qualified to handle such a program. Nixon had wanted to announce early in February that he intended to introduce legislation in April to revise and extend the Economic Opportunity Act for one year as well as transfer Job Corps to the Department of Labor. But Shultz had endorsed the concept of Job Corps much as it existed under OEO, and of the new centers, Shultz only said that their potential effectiveness had to be measured against the existing urban centers.²² Very early in the new Administration, Job Corps was the cause of some consternation in the White House.

In a meeting to decide how Nixon should handle the announcement of the extension of the Economic Opportunity Act and the transfer of Job Corps to the Labor Department, the Urban Affairs Council recommended that, ". . . instead of announcing a decision on delegation, the President should refer to his Congressional mandate to study the programs and promise a decision after consultation with

Congress." Raymond K. Price, in a memo to Shultz and members of the Council, acknowledged that although the transfer of Job Corps was a matter of executive jurisdiction, the word 'consult' was used, "which falls short of promising to obey." He also suggested the President, in his demurrer of transferring Job Corps, use the phrase "our conclusions," which leaves a measure of

ambiguity as to whether those are Executive or Executive-Legislative conclusions. We might want to let the ambiguity remain; we might want to be more specific.²³

Nixon was buying time to plan his next move. The ambiguity Price had described would remain. Although Nixon went ahead with his message in the manner suggested by the Urban Affairs Council, there is no evidence that Nixon consulted with Congress on the matter.

Nixon was determined to do something with Job Corps despite the presence of a strong Job Corps ally in the White House, Daniel Moynihan. In response to a Nixon memo to Shultz pushing the transfer of Job Corps, Moynihan quickly fumed to Nixon that the President's memo rested ". . . on what is in effect a misstatement of fact." Nixon's memo, Moynihan continued,

state(d) that there are reports showing the Job Corps to be a 'costly failure.' I know of nothing of the sort. There is what practically amounts to a literature of cost valuation studies of the Job Corps, with results ranging from 'Great Success' to 'Not Quite Returning the Cost.'²⁴

Further, Moynihan warned, if Nixon's memorandum was made public, "you will be fiercely attacked for having defamed the programs without basis in fact and in advance of the orderly review which you promised Congress and the Nation in your message."²⁵

In response to White House pressure, Shultz submitted a proposal to reorganize the Manpower Administration and Job Corps to include the smaller residential manpower centers. Again, Moynihan agreed with Shultz and wrote Nixon

surely at this point the Job Corps can claim as much, if not considerably more, success than . . .
. Head Start

In view of your statement yesterday that the reorganization of the manpower department would make possible a correction of the inadequacies of the Job Corps, it would seem to me that no further statement is necessary at this time.²⁶

But Nixon did have some further statements about Job Corps in private. He knew that he was in a bind: politically, he couldn't eliminate the Job Corps program, but was strongly minded to wipe out the vestiges of the Johnson War on Poverty. By the end of March, Nixon had decided to keep a residential youth program, but was determined to wipe out Job Corps as much as possible just short of killing it. He wanted the upper hand and was determined to get it through "jawboning."

At a March 20 staff meeting, Nixon considered Shultz's

proposals for a reorganized Job Corps and found them wanting. In a terse memorandum for Shultz, John Ehrlichman said the President saw Job Corps as

" . . . an unsuccessful program which should not be perpetuated; its many troublesome and unsatisfying aspects should be totally discontinued now. What is constructive and will remain, newly named, should be dovetailed into your Department"²⁷

Ehrlichman sent a copy of the Shultz memo to Presidential Counselor Arthur Burns with a memo which said " . . . the President advocates abolition of the Job Corps (He) feels this is a dramatic move and that it could then be followed with some positive, constructive steps that would bring home the fact that we are making changes for the better."²⁸ Despite his outward decisiveness, and despite campaign rhetoric, Nixon knew that there would be some program resembling a Job Corps in his administration. His real desires were indicated in a handwritten note to Burns: "Arthur -- We must above all change the name of the Job Corps."²⁹

Shultz saw the unmistakable signs from the White House: move and move quickly. He called Ehrlichman that Friday and Saturday to discuss Nixon's reactions. Ehrlichman was not reassuring, and only restated Nixon's position: substantially change Job Corps, in "form and substance," from that of the Johnson Administration. In

order to be acceptable, any proposal dealing with Job Corps "must include a reduction of force and budget."³⁰

And Shultz performed admirably for his President. In just over two days, Shultz submitted a new proposal to the President ". . . recommending a substantial cutback in the Job Corps and a redirection of its operations." What he proposed would proscribe the operation of Job Corps for the next few years: "The Job Corps budget would be reduced from \$280 million to \$180 million. The number of centers would be sharply reduced with the greatest cuts made in conservation centers"³¹

Shultz also decided to "de-emphasize the identity of the Job Corps as a distinct, separate program. Those centers that (would) be continued would be identified as Residential Manpower Centers and administered as an integral part of the Manpower Administration."

The Administration concept of smaller residential skills centers was endorsed and Shultz pledged to

(a) fashion programs which are more responsive to the special needs of different groups in our target population, (b) recruit, train, and place youth entirely within their home State or area, (c) better serve young people who need residential support but are unwilling or do not need to move to distant locations, (d) add another tool to deal with problems of the inner cities, and (e) reduce Job Corps costs by using the resources and facilities of their manpower programs in the community.³²

The Secretary also proposed, but did not elaborate upon, a number of changes to improve job placement, reduce dropouts, and win greater involvement of the private sector and more use of volunteers. In short, Shultz said, ". . . we recommend that the Job Corps program be continued but sharply curtailed"33

The breadth of Shultz's memo was remarkable in view of the short amount of time it was written. Politically, much of its content was good news for both the President and the Secretary of Labor. By cutting out a large number of conservation centers, operated by the Departments of Agriculture and Interior, power could be concentrated in the Department of Labor. Five years earlier, the original legislation for the Economic Opportunity Act had been criticized for its vagueness. No criticism was heard about the vagueness of Shultz's language, but without specific recommendations for program improvements, Shultz was free to use program elements successfully pioneered by Job Corps, retain experienced staffers, and supplant unworkable OEO procedures with established Department of Labor procedure.

Nixon, ever eager to get the Job Corps issue behind him, agreed to Shultz's reorganization plan and on April 11, formally announced the transfer to the Labor Department.³⁴

One last point remained. Nixon wanted to change the name of Job Corps to Residential Skill Centers, and he expected Shultz ". . . to put this (change) into effect."³⁵ Shrewdly, Shultz waited until just before the transfer was official to respond. He formally reminded Burns of

". . . the fact that the name 'Job Corps' was prescribed by statute requires its use on documents of legal significance -- appropriation requests, enrollment forms, regulations, etc. We can, of course, use another name in referring to individual centers. In view of the recent controversy over the closing of the centers, I recommend we proceed cautiously in this regard, and not make any deliberate references to a name change at this time."³⁶

The White House never again pursued the matter.

Plans for a Department of Labor Job Corps

The "controversy" Shultz mentioned had started the day Shultz sent his Job Corps reorganization plan to the White House. Just before the memo was sent, the Bureau of the Budget had told the Job Corps Director, William Kelly, that Job Corps would be reduced by \$100 million.³⁷ A livid Kelly quickly fired off a memo to Shultz describing the results of the cut. His predictions would be remarkably accurate: 48 communities would lose their centers, taxes on the Job Corps center payrolls and contracts for Job Corps center supplies would be lost, "blue chip" contractors like Litton, Xerox, GE and Ford

would lose their contracts, "dozens of Congressmen and Senators will be sore as hell," "reporters will have a field day comparing this action to the rhetoric of the President's February 19 message to the Congress (promising a 'searching examination')," and the Department of Labor should be prepared to answer a great deal of angry inquiries. Kelly also said, "It takes little imagination to concoct the nasty questions that Perkins will ask you." Kelly asked that his office not participate in any hearings that may arise, but, recognizing his own vulnerable position, told Shultz he was prepared to execute his intentions "loyally and efficiently."³⁸ In a last-ditch effort to save the program, Kelly went to Capitol Hill to enlist the help of those members of Congress he had rallied before.

Meanwhile, Shultz, having communicated to the President his intentions to substantially cut Job Corps, immediately went about to make good on his plan. The day after his memo proposing a significant reduction of Job Corps, Shultz had compiled a report with as much information on the program he could possibly obtain. The resulting 46-page document with extensive appendices set forth the basic premises of a continuing Job Corps effort along with more specific plans to achieve the reduced program Nixon had settled for. Intended as a "Report to

the President" in case the White House asked for more information, the paper became the basis of Job Corps policy for FY 70.

As the Department of Labor intended to operate it, Job Corps would, like its OEO forebear, provide a "totally new environment" for youth to learn skills "unhampered by deprivation at home."³⁹ The Labor Department found that ". . . the premise of residential service, for some youth, seems to have proven sound and should be retained as an essential element in manpower training."⁴⁰ Recognizing previous problems of high dropouts due to homesickness, the Labor Department intended, however, to locate enrollees in centers even closer to their homes than had OEO.⁴¹ Shultz and his assistants had an adequately clear perception of both the Manpower Administration and Job Corps and they thought Job Corps could be integrated into existing manpower programs: remaining Job Corps centers should only train for those skills needed within the local labor market, and the remaining conservation centers would have their basic education programs augmented by additional skills training for more "desirable" jobs in the labor market. The identity of Job Corps as a unique program would be de-emphasized, said the Labor planners, and thus be more able to utilize community manpower services such as "Concentrated Employment

Program, Job Opportunities in the Business Sector, Manpower Development and Training Act, (and) Neighborhood Youth Corps" In short, the Labor Department saw Job Corps as a tool to ". . . multiply the effectiveness of all our efforts."⁴² As part of its plans to redirect Job Corps, the Department of Labor strongly endorsed the Administration's concept of Residential Manpower Centers, a smaller version of urban Job Corps centers to be located in or near inner cities. The Labor Department recognized eleven different occupational-training clusters used previously in Job Corps and would attempt to standardize vocational curricula throughout Job Corps accordingly:

Business Skills

Data Processing

Drafting

Printing and Duplicating

Laundry and Drycleaning

Clerical and Sales

Keypunch and Machine Operator and Repair

Tailoring

Commercial Arts

Warehousing

Agricultural

Horticulture/Landscaping

Livestock

Farm Equipment

Forestry/Conservation Work

Metal Trades

Metal Fabrication and Welding

Machining

Sub-Professional

Beauty Parlor Operators

Teacher's Aide

Food Services

Cooking

Waiting

Baking

Meat Cutting

Automotive

Motor Vehicle Service and Engine Repair

Plastics

Molding

Patternmaking

Health Occupations

Hospital Services

Practical Nursing

Nursing Aides

Construction Trades

Building Services

Carpentry

Plumbing

Masonry

Painting

Electrical/Electronics

Electrical Appliance Repair and Equipment Repair and
Assembly

Transportation and Heavy Equipment

Bus Driving

Trucking

Parts Mechanic⁴³

Shultz was wasting no time in setting up the procedures by which Job Corps would be integrated into the Labor Department. By late March, an interagency task force had been set up to establish liaison, interview Job Corps staff, prepare legal instruments, and handle public

relations and Congressional contact.⁴⁴ Especially critical were the plans to achieve the \$100 million reduction in budget Shultz had promised the White House.

In order to achieve the budget cut of \$100 million, it was obvious that a number of centers would be closed and input temporarily suspended. To the Labor Department, the closing of Job Corps centers was an opportunity to weed out centers which had had disciplinary problems, poor enrollee retention rates, poor job placement, and other troubling characteristics the Department preferred not to deal with. But the decision to close certain Job Corps centers couldn't appear to be an arbitrary one. Quickly, elaborate criteria were drawn up to justify which centers were to be closed. The performance of a Job Corps center would be compared with others in terms of:

1. Cost expressed in dollars spent per man-year.
2. The number of months an enrollee stayed at the center.
3. The percentage of dropouts leaving before 30 days.
4. Gains in reading and math.
5. Arbitrary "measures of the center's success" and
6. Percentage of enrollees placed in jobs after leaving the center.

Each center was to be ranked for its performance in each criterion: the center with the lowest performance was

ranked one, the next lowest, two, etc. When the rankings were added, the centers with the lowest rank scores were selected for closing.⁴⁵ Thus, when Nixon formally announced the transfer of Job Corps to the Labor Department on April 11, 1969, he also included a list of 59 Job Corps centers, 50 of them conservation centers, which would be closed by the official transfer date, July 1, 1969.⁴⁶ In all, 16,541 corpsmembers would be affected.⁴⁷ Shultz dutifully preceded Nixon's announcement by sending 79 telegrams to affected Senators and Congressmen informing them of the decision, and OEO Director Bertrand Harding coordinated a telegram campaign to the Directors of the centers to be closed.

The April 11 closing announcement indicated that the "redirection" of the Job Corps would result in a reduction of 11,000 enrollees from the 35,000 enrolled at the time.⁴⁸ To achieve the desired reduction in corpsmember strength at centers, the Labor Department notified state employment security agencies to temporarily suspend all Job Corps recruiting.⁴⁹ The corpsmembers affected by the closings had to be transferred, and the Labor Department quickly sketched a plan which involved Job Corps counselors meeting with enrollees to determine their desires about continuing in Job Corps. Arrangements were then made to transfer corpsmembers who wanted to stay in

Job Corps to other centers.⁵⁰ The Labor Department also arranged to have local USES employees visit centers to refer other corpsmembers to suitable jobs, on-the-job training, or other manpower programs.⁵¹ Interagency subcommittees were set up to dispose of or transfer real property in the affected Job Corps centers, and OEO was asked to freeze all personnel vacancies in Job Corps.⁵²

But despite the appearance of a well-ordered and planned procedure for closing Job Corps centers, the criteria the Labor Department established to shut certain centers down were largely spurious. The Washington Post reported the day of the announcement that the centers that were scheduled to be closed had not been inspected, nor were the Center Directors consulted. The mass center closings looked like an obvious policy decision made at a high level.⁵³

Shultz had been forewarned by Kelly that he would face criticism from a wide spectrum of the nation, members of Congress, the press, and the public if the Labor Department hastily cut a number of Job Corps centers. The Department and Shultz's office received complaints from Congress for months after the April 11 closing announcement, and editorials against the center closings appeared throughout the country.⁵⁴ Anticipating questions about the "considerable amount of criticism"

over the camp closings, the Labor Department even prepared a response for Nixon to use in a May press conference in which he would deny the Administration would "abandon" any youth presently in Job Corps,⁵⁵ and a task force was established to "receive groups who wish(ed) to be heard concerning the Job Corps situation."⁵⁶ From the White House, Ehrlichman sent a confidential memo to Shultz encouraging that matters dealing with the Job Corps center in Carl Perkins' home district ". . . should come through (Nixon-appointed OEO Director) Don Rumsfeld in order to maximize Don's relationship with Congressman Perkins."⁵⁷

Meanwhile, Kelly had been successful in rallying support on the Hill, and full-scale hearings in both the House and Senate were scheduled to examine the closing of the Job Corps centers. During the hearings, Shultz was questioned on matters ranging from the rating system the Department of Labor had used to determine which Job Corps centers would be closed -- Congressmen's ratings were compared to the Labor Department's ratings -- to Labor Department estimates of corpsmembers that would be terminated from the program. The April 11 closing announcement had hinted that the Job Corps enrollment would continue to drop to about 24,000,⁵⁸ and Shultz testified that 2,200 enrollees had been transferred to other centers, 300 graduated, 1,400 opted for other

manpower training, and 800 dropped out.⁵⁹ Actually, no one in the Labor Department really knew how many corpsmembers were being lost in the transfer, but the numbers were larger than Shultz had indicated. By the next month, there were only 18,534 corpsmembers in Job Corps, whose capacity was 19,688.⁶⁰

During the hearings, Kelly's predictions of a "nasty" reception on the Hill became uncannily accurate. Kelly himself had written some of the questions asked by the Committees, and in Kelly's words, Shultz had gotten "eaten alive" Shultz himself said, "Nobody should be required to go through that kind of questioning."⁶¹ Still, any glee Kelly felt at Shultz's showing before the Congressional committees was short-lived. The decision to transfer Job Corps, an agency in the Executive Office of the President, to the Department of Labor, was, ultimately, an Executive decision. The transfer process and Congressional hearings had allowed those opposing the move to express their opinions, but neither public nor Congressional reaction could forestall the Nixon White House. On July 1, 1969, Job Corps became incorporated into the Manpower Administration of the Labor Department.

FOOTNOTES

¹Gelfand, p. 133.

²OEO, p. 28.

³Ibid., p. 276.

⁴OEO, p. 276; Senate Record, October 3, 1966, p. 24798.

⁵Bob Golten, March 6, 1967, to The File, Job Corps Correspondence 1967-69, NA OEO.

⁶The Washington Post, 23 June 1967; Edward K. Shanahan, "Drumming Up Votes for the Poverty Program," The New Republic, 17 June 1967, pp. 7-8.

⁷Milt Fogelman, June 6, 1967, to Bob Lane, Job Corps Correspondence 1967-69, NA OEO.

⁸OEO, p. 280.

⁹Kondracke, Morton, "Shriver: Poverty War Outlook Dark," Chicago Sun-Times, 19 February 1969, p. 3.

¹⁰The Washington Post, 18 March 1969

¹¹"Message from the President of the United States," in Congressional Record, 91st Cong., 1st sess., 1969, 115, pt. 15, p. 23373.

¹²Robertson, Nan, "Proposed Closing of a Job Corps Camp in Honolulu Stirs a Controversy," New York Times, 4/17/69, p. 18.

¹³Gottlieb Interview.

¹⁴The Washington Post, 2 February 1969.

¹⁵George Meany, 11 April 1969, to Richard Nixon, in U.S. Congress. Senate. Subcommittee on Employment, Manpower, and Poverty of the Committee on Labor and Public Welfare. Closing of Job Corps Centers. April 18, 25, 25, and May 2, 1969.

¹⁶George Shultz, February 5, 1969, to Daniel P. Moynihan, Box 21, Records of the Secretary of Labor, National Archives (Hereafter referred to as NA DOL.)

- 17George Shultz, February 5, 1969, to Daniel P. Moynihan, Box 21, NA DOL.
- 18George Shultz, February 7, 1969, to Urban Affairs Council, Box 128, NA DOL.
- 19George P. Shultz, March 27, 1969, to Dr. Arthur Burns, Box 22, NA DOL.
- 20George P. Shultz, February 5, 1969, Box 21, to Daniel P. Moynihan, Box 27, NA DOL.
- 21U.S. Department of Labor. (Hereafter referred to as US DOL. "Proposed Statement on OEO, 2nd Draft, February 8, 1969, 5:00 pm," Box 129, NA DOL.
- 22George P. Shultz, February 5, 1969, to Daniel P. Moynihan, Box 21, NA DOL.
- 23Raymond K. Price, February 8, 1969, to George P. Shultz and Urban Affairs Council, Box 128, NA DOL.
- 24Daniel P. Moynihan, February 22, 1969, to The President, Box 22, NA DOL.
- 25Ibid.
- 26Daniel P. Moynihan, March 14, 1969, to The President, Box 22, NA DOL.
- 27John D. Ehrlichman, March 20, 1969, to The Secretary of Labor, Box 23, NA DOL.
- 28John D. Ehrlichman, March 20, 1969, Box 29, to Dr. Burns, Box 23, NA DOL.
- 29Alexander P. Butterfield, March 26, 1969, to Dr. Arthur Burns, Box 23, NA DOL.
- 30John D. Ehrlichman, March 24, 1969, to The Secretary of Labor, Box 23, NA DOL.
- 31George P. Shultz, March 27, 1969, to The President, Box 29, NA DOL.
- 32Ibid.
- 33Ibid.

34US DOL. "DOL Press Release 10-280," April 11, 1969, Box 104, NA DOL.

35Arthur F. Burns, April 29, 1969, to Hon. George P. Shultz, Box 28, NA DOL.

36George P. Shultz, June 6, 1969, to Hon. Arthur F. Burns, Box 29, NA DOL.

37HBS, p. 16.

38William P. Kelly, March 27, 1969, to Hon. George P. Shultz, Box 26, NA DOL; Office of the White House Press Secretary to the Congress of the United States, February 19, 1969; Box 26, NA DOL.

39"Report of the Secretary of Labor to the President on Job Corps Changes," March 28, 1969, p. 2, Box 29, NA DOL.

40Ibid, p. 8

41Ibid, p. 11.

42Ibid., pp. 20-23

43US DOL. "Urban Job Corps--1965-1968 Experiences of Industry and Voluntary Agencies, no date. Ibid., Appendix.

44"Report of the Secretary of Labor to the President on Job Corps Changes," March 28, 1969, p. 2, Box 29, NA DOL.

45US DOL. "Explanation of Process by Which Job Corps Centers were Selected for Closing," attached to Department of Labor Press Release 10-380, April 11, 1969, Box 89, NA DOL.

46US DOL. "DOL News Release 10-393," April 18, 1969, Box 89, NA DOL.

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49US DOL. "DOL News Release 10-393," April 18, 1969, Box 89, NA DOL.

50George P. Shultz, "Statement before House Education and Labor Committee," May 8, 1969, Box 129, NA DOL.

51Ibid., "Statement before Senate Labor and Public Works Committee," in U.S. Congress. Senate. Subcommittee on Employment, Manpower, and Poverty of the Committee on Labor and Public Welfare. Closing of Job Corps Centers. April 18, 25, 25, and May 2, 1969.

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61HBS, p. 16.

CHAPTER 6

JOB CORPS UNDER THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR, 1969 - 1973

Job Corps as a Manpower Program

A little over a month after the transfer of Job Corps to the Department of Labor had become official, Secretary of Labor George Shultz reported to the President on the various measures that had been taken to redirect Job Corps. The restructuring of Job Corps, Shultz said, involved four major aspects in line with the "objectives and programs of the new Administration:" the "least effective" centers had indeed been closed, administrative changes were being made in Washington, original Job Corps centers were being revised, and smaller centers would be opened to link with existing manpower programs. These changes, said Shultz, would be done to "reflect our new integrated direction (and) to achieve more efficient operations."¹ Nixon responded enthusiastically: he was

reported to be "extremely pleased with the progress made to date on the project."² Nixon thereafter had little to say about Job Corps.

But if Nixon had thought the transfer would bury Job Corps in the bureaucracy, where it would keep special interest groups happy but have little visibility, he was mistaken. Shultz could hardly have been more pleased with the arrangement. After ten years of speculation, Job Corps had finally been transferred to the Labor Department, where it could become an important part of the Manpower Administration. The Job Corps that was transferred to the Department of Labor consisted of 53 centers with 18,534 enrollees.³ He had long felt that Job Corps was "sufficiently established" so the "experimental" programs begun by OEO could now be transformed into linkages with other manpower programs.⁴ Job Corps could readily fit into a system of comprehensive manpower services, and the size of the program meant that Job Corps could draw in more dollars to the Manpower Administration's budget. There was no question that, with a new ideological orientation, Job Corps would experience substantial changes. But, contrary to Nixon's wishes, Job Corps grew and emerged as a viable manpower program, albeit with less visibility than before.

Administrative Changes in Washington

The Order that effected the transfer of Job Corps to

the Department of Labor read that Job Corps was ". . . hereby assigned intact, including the field structure, to the Manpower Administration. The Job Corps is headed by a Director who reports to the Manpower Administrator. As soon as possible the field structure of the Job Corps should be integrated with the field structure of the Manpower Administration."⁵ It was one thing to transfer the Job Corps program on paper. It was quite another to integrate the administration of Job Corps into the administration of the Manpower Administration. That process was left to the new Director of Job Corps, William Mirengoff.

An unassuming man, Mirengoff would have been an unlikely candidate to direct Job Corps under OEO. But his credentials and experience in the Manpower Administration made him a good choice to direct Job Corps under the Department of Labor.

As Deputy Associate Manpower Director, Mirengoff had made a case for Job Corps' transfer to the Department of Labor late in the Johnson administration on the grounds that Job Corps was essentially a manpower program and the Labor Department was the manpower government agency. So when the transfer became official, Job Corps staffers from OEO regarded Mirengoff as something of an "angel of death."⁶ But Mirengoff was firmly in the Department of

Labor line of communication, and owing to Shultz's tacit support of the program, Mirengoff never received any directive to eliminate Job Corps.⁷ Without such a directive, Mirengoff set out to establish Job Corps as a viable program under the Labor banner.

But there were times when Mirengoff wondered whether the program would even survive the transfer. Although Mirengoff had argued earlier for Job Corps' transfer to the Department of Labor, he knew very little about the program. What he inherited was disheartening: at the outset, Mirengoff saw serious organizational problems in Job Corps. Internally, staff relations were difficult. Although their ranks had diminished over the past five years, a small group of "ideological poverty warriors" was still very much in evidence at Job Corps headquarters. More recently, it seemed to Mirengoff, a second group -- ex-military officers who were more interested in the administration and operation of programs -- had gained prominence. The two groups were in frequent conflict.⁸

Moreover, morale among Job Corps staff was again at a low point. Wranglings and hand-wringing over the transfer had hastened a number of key resignations, and the swiftness of the cutbacks had all taken their toll.⁹ Job Corps was thus in "considerable disarray." By the time Job Corps was transferred, there were two separate

Job Corps organizations -- a men's Job Corps and a women's Job Corps. The civilian conservation centers had a uniform educational program, but the contractors who were operating the men's and women's urban centers had developed widely disparate educational programs.¹⁰ A decision was made early, however, to retain the Job Corps staff the Labor Department had inherited from OEO, and "develop it to think and function as part of a broad manpower family."¹¹

Other operational problems had emerged from the sudden closings of the 56 Job Corps centers. With many affected corpsmembers being transferred, the corpsmember population at some of the remaining centers had burgeoned. To restrict that population, recruitment had been shut down, and for months, the recruiting apparatus had grown rusty. That was part of the operational problem. Another problem the Manpower Administration saw was that the previous Job Corps Director had spent so much time on Capitol Hill lobbying for Job Corps' survival that operational questions were "swept under the rug." The Manpower Administration, as the agency responsible for all federal manpower programs, decried Job Corps' lack of linkages with other manpower activities. With justification, the Manpower Administration pointed out that the functions of intake, vocational education, counseling, residential

living, and placement were handled by different organizational activities loosely related to each other. Moreover, the conservation agencies had been regarding the civilian conservation centers as an extra resource to accomplish conservation work rather than provide vocational training.¹²

The transfer of Job Corps to the Department of Labor also presented the new Job Corps Director with a new set of administrative details. Job Corps had been assigned intact to the Manpower Administration in the Department of Labor.¹³ An immediate result was that the Job Corps Director would never enjoy the kind of autonomy or visibility as had his predecessors: instead of reporting to a Director of an agency in the Executive Office of the President as was the case with OEO, the transfer placed the Director of Job Corps further down in a large bureaucracy. Within the Department of Labor, the Job Corps Director reported to the office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Manpower and Manpower Administrator, a slot occupied by Malcolm R. Lovell, Jr. It was the Manpower Administrator who in turn reported to the Secretary of Labor. Yet, this chain of command did not bury Job Corps bureaucratically. As a long-time senior Department of Labor staffer, Mirengoff enjoyed good working relations with Lovell. In Mirengoff's contacts

with Shultz, moreover, the Secretary was always positive and supportive toward Job Corps. Bearing this support in mind, Mirengoff took further stock of the changes the transfer had wrought.¹⁴

Job Corps had survived a critical year in 1968 because of the strong leadership of William Kelly. But the order transferring Job Corps to the Department of Labor guaranteed that subsequent directors of Job Corps would never again be able to wield that kind of power. Capitalizing on the 1967 Amendments to the Economic Opportunity Act that established geographic administrative regions, a Manpower Administration Order, clarifying the transfer to the Labor Department, diluted the Director's autonomy. Job Corps Regional Directors (RD's) were given greater authority to assign enrollees to certain Job Corps centers or reject them altogether and they were given direct responsibility for monitoring center operation. The Job Corps Director had only final authority on matters of enrollee selection and placement, and could set regional recruitment and placement quotas. The Job Corps Director and his staff were also responsible for developing "general policies, rules, and regulations."¹⁵ The transfer to the Labor Department allowed the existing interagency agreements with Agriculture and Interior to stand with regard to

conservation center operation, and the Job Corps Director retained authority to implement any needed changes in those agreements.

In effect, the transfer largely limited the role of Job Corps Director to administering matters in Washington. And, in becoming part of the Manpower Administration, Job Corps had to adopt established procedures as its own. Every contact with a member of Congress had to be recorded and filed, and a number of instructions and bulletins were prepared for Job Corps centers advising them of changes in forms, operating procedures, etc. This phase of activity was beneficial to the Job Corps staff that had been retained: they were able to learn Labor Department procedures that had not been practiced at OEO.

But Mirengoff was determined that if Job Corps were to remain a viable program, he would have to act as decisively as he could within the parameters of the new administrative arrangement so as to avoid power struggles with the Job Corps Regional Directors, who, under the new arrangement with the Department of Labor, were eager to stake a large claim in the power vacuum. Mirengoff chose the area of recruitment to assert his authority in the Job Corps hierarchy. When the Labor Department took over Job Corps' operations, Secretary Shultz wanted to demonstrate

that his department could run the program effectively, and he confidently projected that the Department could quickly boost Job Corps enrollment to over 21,000.¹⁶ If Job Corps were to attain that enrollment, Job Corps would need 1,150 male applicants a week,¹⁷ and Mirengoff needed to get the recruitment program unstuck.

As his first order of business, Mirengoff set out to rebuild the recruiting program. Although there was already a sizeable backlog of female applicants, the directive was given to resume female recruiting on Mirengoff's first day as Director.¹⁸ Furthermore, exercising his role in setting regional recruiting standards, he sent letters of encouragement to RD's from the Manpower Administrator and arranged to have radio spots produced. But two months after the transfer, it was becoming apparent that substantial problems existed in enrolling Job Corpsmembers. One was the obvious lack of strong support for the program from the Nixon Administration, and another was the slow rate with which regional offices could be staffed.¹⁹ And, once the regional offices were functional, official lines of communication per Labor Department standard operating procedure had to be established. It was a time-consuming procedure: for any directive to take effect, each of the

RD's had to give their concurrence.

Mirengoff knew that if results were to happen quickly, he would have to work within the regions instead of gaining inter-regional concurrence. He made sure that corpsmembers recruited from a particular region were sent to a Job Corps center within the same region and he did not allow cross-regional transfer as he could have done.²⁰ By concentrating on intra-region recruitment and center placement, regions could proceed at roughly their own pace to rebuild their recruitment programs. That way, he could avoid foot-dragging by the Regional Directors in getting their concurrence on national policy. Concentrating on regional recruitment and placement served another purpose. Mirengoff had been concerned with integrating Job Corps structure and staff into the Labor Department. The RD's had been particularly troublesome, and had been in a position to influence national policy and recruiting standards. By allowing each RD to control his own recruiting, they began to focus their attention on intra-regional matters. That -- and the threat of firings -- had the desired effect.²¹ By October, 1969, Job Corps' on-board strength was 97.3% of its capacity, the highest since the April closing of Job Corps centers. With these results, the Manpower Administration confidently -- and accurately -- predicted

that they could fill centers to over 100% capacity to build up a pool of enrollees and offset earlier losses.²²

Revision of Original Job Corps Centers

The second major area to be addressed was the "redirection" of the existing Job Corps centers. Per Shultz's memo to the President that the original Job Corps centers would be revised, Mirengoff made quick visits to a number of Job Corps centers. He soon found that occupational terminology being used in Job Corps was far from being uniform, and that course content from one center to another often had major differences.²³ That had happened for a number of reasons. The variety of contractors operating men's urban centers had developed vocational education programs independently of each other. Within the Job Corps National Office, a number of staffs had responsibility for developing various aspects of a vocational education and basic education program, and standardization had been of little concern. Shortly after becoming Director, Mirengoff set up a Redirection Task Force to "set milestones for specific performance achievement."²⁴

The Redirection Task Force set out to centralize and unify all aspects of the Job Corps educational program. Immediately, they coordinated all program development activities into one staff, set up one central review and

monitoring operation, and began to establish one set of vocational training standards. Their work essentially redirected the Job Corps educational program away from the micro-level approach adopted by Eigen, Healy, and Cheston when a Youth Conservation Corps was first planned, and moved it toward a macro-level approach. In setting out to make Job Corps more of a manpower program, the manpower planners for the first time specifically set out to "design training to meet specific labor demands with emphasis to predetermined placement programs." The vocational training component of Job Corps was to be supplemented with a standardized program of basic education. The Redirection Task Force examined the basic education program used in the civilian conservation centers, and pronounced it capable. That basic education program, established in and administered from Washington, could easily be expanded to all Job Corps centers. The Redirection Task Force allowed one large component of individualization to remain: an arbitrary 50-50 time split between vocational education and remedial education was eliminated, and allowances were made for each corpsmember to participate more heavily in either vocational education or basic education according to his own needs.²⁵ These standards were soon written into contracts for private groups who operated Job Corps

centers under contract.

Within a year, the redirection of vocational education in Job Corps meant that a number of standardized vocational courses were offered at Job Corps centers:

Baking

Diesel Mechanic Helper and Technician

Carpentry

Plumber

Painter

Masonry

Sheet Metal Worker²⁶

Specialized courses such as clerical occupations through the Brotherhood of Railway and Airline Clerks were allowed to be offered through contract and courses in the areas of Waiting, Tailoring, Nursing, and Livestock were deleted.

The civilian conservation centers were approved to offer vocational training in these areas:

Automotive

Building Maintenance

Bricklaying

Carpentry

Cooking

Heavy Equipment

Graphics

Masonry

Painting

Plasterer

Warehousing

Welding²⁷

Smaller Centers' Link with Manpower Programs

It had long been the desire of the Labor Department to build a network of linkages among manpower programs. As a manpower program, Job Corps could easily fit into such a network. Part of Shultz's plans to redirect Job Corps, as described to the President, was to open smaller Job Corps centers that could link with existing manpower programs. That was one purpose. Another was to demonstrate that Department of Labor could open and operate Job Corps centers in a more efficient manner than had OEO.

In April, 1969, Shultz announced his goal of establishing 30 new, smaller Job Corps centers in FY 70.²⁸ In August, a task force began work on developing guidelines for the new centers, called Residential Manpower Centers (RMCs), and "to make them operational at the earliest possible date."²⁹ The RMC concept was new to Job Corps and was established as a cost-cutting measure. RMCs were to be located in or near urban areas and would either provide vocational training or utilize existing vocational training in MDTA skill centers. In turn, the RMCs' "around-the-clock" support services -- residential,

medical, counseling, and food service -- would be made available to existing local manpower training programs. To counter the dropout problem experienced in the first Job Corps centers, the RMCs would accept applicants only from the immediate geographical area in which the RMC was located. Doing so would allow an enrollee to participate in Job Corps or local manpower training in a number of ways: the enrollee could live at the Job Corps center and receive training there, he could be a non-resident but receive RMC training and support services, or could live at the center and be trained at a local skill center. In an effort to break down the distinction between a men's and women's Job Corps, the RMCs would accept enrollees of either sex. The planned linkages with existing manpower programs and the elimination of the distinction between men's and women's Job Corps was projected to cost an average of \$5200 per man-year, compared with \$5500 at men's centers and \$5800 for women's.³⁰

And, with plans made for a redirected Job Corps, they were put into action.

Difficulties in Redirecting Job Corps

But the redirection of Job Corps would be no easy matter. In many respects, the transfer of Job Corps to the Department of Labor, and its reorganization and plans for new RMCs resembled the startup phase Job Corps had

experienced under OEO. Job Corps staffers were puzzled by the difficulties they encountered, and the Department of Labor's promise to administer a cost-effective, well-organized Job Corps in a Nixon Administration never materialized. Job Corps' first year as a Labor Department program had decidedly mixed results.

Shultz's goal of opening 30 RMCs in Job Corps' first year under the Labor banner was overly optimistic. Halfway through the year, the Manpower Administration acknowledged the goal could not be met: suitable sites for the RMCs were difficult to find, and once any sites were located, the property was often more expensive than the RMC planners had envisioned. Local political currents were difficult, and, as was the case with the first Job Corps centers, there was considerable local opposition.³¹

It was expensive just to counter local opposition -- doing so delayed startup times. But the RMC planning team also failed to recognize other expenses that were involved in establishing new centers. Construction to rehabilitate facilities was costly and slow, and staff recruiting and the resumption of corpsmember intake was also more expensive and time-consuming than was first thought. The Department of Labor acknowledged that it was difficult to attract "responsible and effective" contractors to operate the RMCs, a difficulty experienced some five years earlier

by Job Corps of the OEO. To induce contractors to operate RMCs, the Labor Department offered fixed-fee contracts in which all contractor costs were reimbursed. At that, only six RMCs were opened in the time frame originally set by Shultz. The only contracts let to operate RMCs that first year went to Thiokol for an Atlanta RMC, Packard-Bell in Phoenix, AVCO in Cincinnati, Training Corporation of America in Washington, Bendix in Detroit, RCA in New York, and General Learning Corporation in St. Louis. Delays in starting the new centers and related cost overruns meant that Job Corps obligated a total of \$169,782,000 in FY 70.³²

The point was immaterial to Shultz as Secretary of Labor, however. He left his position as Secretary on July 1, 1970, to become Director of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), formerly the Bureau of the Budget. His successor, James D. Hodgson, never showed Shultz's enthusiasm for Job Corps, but was not a detractor, either. Mirengoff knew Shultz's departure would mean no significant changes for Job Corps.

As Mirengoff began his second year as Job Corps Director, then, he was able to keep his attention on establishing the RMCs. Overall recruitment for the other Job Corps centers had been no problem. In fact, many in the Job Corps National Office were surprised when, after

the transfer, letters poured in from former Job Corpsmembers begging to get back into Job Corps. Mirengoff utilized this interest in Job Corps to its advantage, and kept existing centers operating at above their design capacity to reduce per-enrollee costs.³³ Eager to maintain high enrollee percentages, the Manpower Administration sent out stern rejoinders whenever on-board strength fell below 100 per cent.³⁴ And on the face of it, Job Corps' termination rate for the first year under the Department of Labor was just over four per cent, a figure far superior to any previous year.³⁵

There were persistent problems with the Job Corps civilian conservation centers. The conservation centers had always had higher per-enrollee costs than urban centers. Even though only 100 to 200 corpsmembers were enrolled in a conservation center, they needed the same administration, staff, and support services that the larger centers had. But in capitalizing on widespread youth interest in Job Corps to fill centers beyond capacity, the Manpower Administration allowed the screening process to remain lax, and the Forest Service reported its continuing frustration with "enrollee retention and behavioral incidents."³⁶ The urban centers, in contrast, by then had disciplinary matters well under control.

Aware that the problems in conservation centers could become worse if left unchecked, Job Corps attempted to revise screening procedures by resurrecting an old idea for a third time. Incredibly, Job Corps again seized the reception center concept, which had twice proved unworkable, and set out to establish "Residential Support Centers (RSCs) . . . particularly for high-risk youths who ordinarily have high dropout rates" The RSCs, with a capacity of 30, would conduct no training of their own. Instead, they were designed to orient disadvantaged youth to residential living and group life "to enhance their success in daytime manpower training activities."³⁷ The RSCs were also designed to alleviate materiel problems at the civilian conservation centers. The civilian conservation centers had not been able to keep adequate supplies of clothing on hand for their corpsmembers, and the RSCs were to serve as a supply point for the civilian conservation centers.³⁸ The staff who planned the RSCs had again failed to take into account the effects of a double relocation on disadvantaged youth, and without a planned training program, were doomed to failure. Even though some RSCs were established, they had no impact on the problems at Job Corps civilian conservation centers.³⁹ Meanwhile, those problems continued to simmer.

Mirengoff knew that the first year of Job Corps under the Manpower Administration had mixed results. He was also quick to act on them, and in July, 1970, streamlined Job Corps administration by eliminating the associate directorships of Program Management and Recruiting, Screening, and Selection, and concentrated all activities under the Associate Directorships of Planning, Operations, and Evaluations.⁴⁰ This streamlining accomplished two purposes: ostensibly, it made the national Job Corps structure more responsive to needs arising from the transfer. But, more important, it also enabled Job Corps to fit into Nixon's plans for manpower programs.

Since the Republicans had come into office a year and a half earlier, thinking in the Labor Department had been that, along with many government services, manpower programs would be turned over to localities in what Rep. Gerald Ford called a "new Federalism."⁴¹ Until the President enunciated a plan for manpower programs, officials in the Manpower Administration played out an interesting dilemma: how could they uphold the party line without yielding their programs and their substantial budgetary amounts? The RMCs were one answer -- they were expressly designed to create a strong link in the manpower chain, and their considerable expense had already been demonstrated. In endorsing the RMCs, Job Corps sought to

engage in a program of local linkages, but keep the program administration essentially intact in Washington. In taking this approach, the Manpower Administration, unlike OEO before it, had considerable support in OMB.

After George Shultz became Director of OMB, Arnold R. Weber moved from his post as Deputy Manpower Administrator to become Associate Director of OMB. A year earlier, Weber had approved Mirengoff's plan for RMCs and had forwarded it to Shultz. In early 1971, while rumors flew about how the White House would move to decentralize manpower programs, Malcolm R. Lovell wrote Weber that the RMCs were "being created as part of the local scheme."⁴² For his part, Weber was pleased with the RMCs, even though only a few had been opened and at considerable expense. Nonetheless, the Manpower Administration was doing its part to establish costly linkages. Weber wrote Lovell in the Manpower Administration that he was "especially pleased to see at least a few of our fantasies have come to fruition. You've sold me -- now the big question is can you persuade Chairman Perkins."⁴³

Carl Perkins, of course, was a defender of a strong Job Corps. But before Lovell could lobby Perkins for a Job Corps that appeared to be decentralized, but still to be controlled by the Department of Labor, the President

spoke. On March 4, Nixon proposed a Manpower Revenue Sharing Act to replace MDTA. He asked for two billion dollars so manpower programs could be conducted through the range of "categorical grants to special revenue sharing."⁴⁴ The Labor Department would coordinate manpower programs, and Nixon asked for \$40 million for Job Corps. Nixon's 1971 position was a turnaround from his stance two years before when he was a candidate. Perkins, recognizing the requested legislation as something of a godsend, endorsed it.

Thus, Job Corps received a sideways blessing from Nixon. No matter how Congress acted, Job Corps had won oblique support from the White House to operate as a national program of local linkages. The Job Corps National Office then continued its efforts to establish RMCs. In no particular hurry, Job Corps had by the end of the fiscal year planned four more RMCs, identified five other sites and worked to overcome considerable local opposition to establishing new centers.⁴⁵

Trouble at Centers

Job Corps passed its first year in the Manpower Administration fairly quietly. The incidents of misbehavior at urban Job Corps centers before the transfer had all but disappeared. But very soon, incidents reappeared at the centers that rivaled earlier

incidents in seriousness. Unlike OEO, the Manpower Administration kept a decidedly low profile in dealing with the incidents, and they received little publicity.

The Department of Labor's concern with image and public relations was indicated in a memo to the Manpower Administrator about "unrest" at the Edison, NJ, center. This first incident following the transfer suggested the "need for much better liaison between the Job Corps and the Department's Information Specialists."⁴⁶ But before that relationship could be formally agreed upon, there was another incident at the Gary Job Corps center in which 250 - 300 corpsmembers were involved in a fighting and rock-throwing melee.⁴⁷ The Job Corps response was low-key. Instead of calling attention to the incident, Mirengoff decided only to meet with the Chairman of the Texas Education Foundation, the contractor for the center. Mirengoff was especially eager to avoid a discussion with the Governor of Texas, because the contractor had close ties with the Governor's office. Mirengoff let it be known that this incident was a center problem, not a Job Corps problem: Job Corps, he said, did not want to defeat "the self-analysis, self-correction work we want the center to undertake."⁴⁸

Job Corps' efforts to play down incidents of

misbehavior were successful for the most part. One reason the center incidents did not gain the amount of press attack as they had under OEO was that Job Corps had become a low-priority program which the Nixon administration had scaled back, at least in outward appearance. Secondly, the Manpower Administration did not want anything to happen that would jeopardize continued funding for any of its programs. But publicized or not, the continuing incidents at Job Corps centers indicated serious weaknesses the Department of Labor experienced in administering a program it promised to administer effectively.

The rush to fill centers beyond their capacity in order to lower per-enrollee costs became more burdensome on the civilian conservation centers. After the transfer of Job Corps to the Labor Department had taken place, the Inspector General of the Forest Service's Audit Division reviewed its operation of the civilian conservation centers:

The auditors reported that the degree of protection afforded the corpsmember was below a standard conducive to providing a safe, healthy, moral climate Violence and adverse behavioral problems at the centers appeared to be a well known fact among Agriculture's Job Corps officials

. . . The underlying causes of the problems (were) found to be the low level of supervision at the close of the normal day's activities and the receiving, and sometimes retaining in the

program, a high percentage of enrollees with behavioral problems. . . . The inadequate protection of corpsmembers against personal injury by other corpsmembers, the serious corpsmember incidents, and the high percentage of noncompleters show a serious need for the Forest Service to reevaluate its management of the program.⁴⁹

The transfer of Job Corps into a bureaucracy as large as the Manpower Administration reinforced a tendency that had been growing with Federal management of the civilian conservation centers. "Many (civilian conservation center officials) seemed to be concerned with defending bureaucratic methods or systems than improving the chances of a corpsmember succeeding in the program." The cause of many of the shortcomings at the civilian conservation centers was that

the Department of Labor seemed to be primarily interested in getting all recruits necessary to keep the centers full, regardless of the type of recruits and the effect upon the program.⁵⁰

The Department of Labor had earlier been critical of the way Job Corps had begun, in an all-out, crash effort. After the transfer, apparently, it was guilty of the same approach and with similar results.

The Department of Labor also shared OEO's inexperience at establishing Job Corps Centers, and, like OEO before it, experienced disciplinary problems at the centers. The problems experienced by the Labor Department also arose at the RMCs. The RMCs had been established very slowly during

the first year after the transfer, a fact which probably accounts for few incidents of violence. But as more centers were opened,⁵¹ the incidents increased. At the Washington, DC, RMC, for example, one corpsmember was shot and left in critical condition.⁵² The next month, eight corpsmembers at the same RMC were involved in the firebombing of an off-duty policeman's car. Other policemen then beat a number of corpsmembers next to the center, and the corpsmembers rapidly grew militant. Lovell himself considered the incident "serious."⁵³

The Manpower Administration experienced other on-going problems at Job Corps urban centers. Recruiting and retention at the centers left "substantially higher" numbers of black corpsmembers at the centers, a source of some concern.⁵⁴

Mirengoff, however, would not have to deal with these problems. On September 1, 1971, Mirengoff was appointed Director of the Emergency Employment Program, and left Job Corps "reluctantly." His successor, John Blake, would have to carry on.⁵⁵

Continued Mixed Results

John Blake did not have the command of the Washington bureaucracy as had Mirengoff, nor, apparently, was he as effective an administrator. During his Directorship, a number of forces were at work to transform Job Corps even

further from a semi-autonomous program with some visibility to just another program in a comprehensive manpower services approach.

One of the mixed results Mirengoff had achieved with Job Corps was designed to streamline the administration of the program. Mirengoff's reducing the number of associate directorships to three and the turf battles with the Departments of Agriculture and Interior were lost on Blake, however. Just over a month after taking over the position, Blake wanted to contract with an outside management consulting firm to review "Job Corps management policies, practices, and procedures." Blake acknowledged that he still faced

problems with overlapping areas of responsibility as well as fragmentation of responsibilities and unclear channels of communication within the national office and between the national office, regional offices, and Job Corps centers.⁵⁶

But Blake's requests for extra dollars to again streamline administrative procedures were outweighed by other more pressing concerns. The placement rate of Job Corpsmembers had begun to drop,⁵⁷ and costs of operating Job Corps centers had begun to rise. Job Corps never reached an average per-enrollee cost of \$5200 that the Labor Department had proposed to the White House, and the startup problems associated with the new RMCs had begun to strain Job Corps' budget. In FY 71, the per-enrollee cost

reached \$6,341. Although that figure compared favorably with FY66's per-enrollee cost of \$8,470, inflation and overall operating expenses forced Blake to seek an additional eight to ten million dollars "to put the centers back into good condition."⁵⁸

For his part, Lovell knew that the larger the center, the lower the per-enrollee cost. And even though Job Corps had doubled the capacity of all its 100-man civilian conservation centers, the costs of the smaller RMCs -- with capacities sometimes as low as 125 -- were regarded as a problem.⁵⁹

Top officials in the Labor Department also knew Job Corps had "some serious problems with the program as it (was then) operated," and the transfer to the Department of Labor had not automatically corrected them as originally hoped. Malcolm Lovell was especially aware of the situation. As an old-line Manpower Administrator, Lovell shared the prevailing view that although manpower programs were being decentralized in the Nixon Administration, Job Corps was still a source of budgetary revenue. If it were to continue as a viable program, hence source of dollars, then the Department of Labor still had to make Job Corps the efficient, well-run program it had promised to deliver. The Administration's request for \$40 million for Job Corps in 1971 had saved

the program, but that amount was too little to correct the on-going problems. Perhaps it was time to further develop Job Corps linkages with local manpower programs and begin to shift the burden of program operations away from Washington. In the Spring of 1972, Lovell began to plan combining Job Corps with MDTA institutional training to create a new component to be administered by states and local governments.⁶⁰ The next month, both he and Hodgson continued that effort by requesting a specific in-house analysis of what the problems in Job Corps were and a plan for meeting them.⁶¹

The results of the analysis were a concise review of Job Corps' performance as a Labor Department program: Job Corps did a better job than the public schools in developing basic reading and math skills among disadvantaged youth. However, the proportion of corpsmembers successfully completing Job Corps had "declined sharply in the last few years," and the performance of the RMCs was ". . . disappointing so far. They appear(ed) to have higher costs than the older centers but (were) not more effective."⁶² The civilian conservation centers, which had been operating with little substantial change since OEO, had achieved much lower unit costs. But that increase in operating efficiency was offset by a significant decline in performance as measured

by completion rates and wage rate gains made by enrollees. In short, the internal review

point(ed) up the need to improve program performance of the Job Corps. Since the length of time an enrollee remain(ed) in Job Corps (was) positively related to job placement, wage rate gains and other output measures, efforts should be made especially to turn around the recent decline in completion rates.⁶³

But program improvements for Job Corps were again slowed by the Nixon Administration's attempt to further decentralize manpower programs.

A Strengthened Job Corps

When Nixon introduced legislation for the Manpower Training Act in August, 1969, he let his intentions about manpower programs under a program of neo-Federalism be known. What he sought was legislation that would transfer millions of dollars away from the Manpower Administration to local communities. These funds would then be used in a form of revenue-sharing so that linkages could be developed locally with existing manpower programs to provide employability training geared toward the local market. But Congress passed a bill which called for workers to have permanent, subsidized employment, and Nixon had vetoed it.⁶⁴ As the Department of Labor headed into FY 73, rumors again spread about the future of Job Corps and other large aspects of the Manpower Administration itself. Nixon was still known to be

pushing for increased revenue sharing, and all national manpower programs had been cut by 5%. Job Corps' cutback amounted to ten million dollars, and Blake suggested that Job Corps forego opening two planned centers.⁶⁵ In face of that cutback, Job Corps began FY 73 with 72 centers.

Under the Labor Department, Job Corps had grown somewhat: four of the centers were large (1400 - 3000) urban centers, operated either by corporations, or in the case of Texas, the state educational foundation. Twelve of the centers were exclusively for women. All 32 civilian conservation centers had 200 men, and their vocational training was conducted by AFL-CIO building trade unions. The Labor Department had established 17 RMCs and seven RSCs. But as the fiscal year began, the Manpower Administration received a formal inquiry as to the status of Job Corps to be used by the President in a forthcoming message on manpower programs. Given the budget constraints and Nixon's earlier stand against the program, Lovell could only say that no expansion of the program was anticipated. In fact, Lovell more closely aligned Job Corps with the department's other manpower programs by calling Job Corps "part of the comprehensive manpower plan."⁶⁶ That approach was sure to avoid trouble with the White House.

With the official inquiry from the White House, the

senior Manpower Administration staff knew that Nixon would again likely propose a comprehensive manpower effort to be staged at the local level. If the Manpower Administration were to have viable programs with which linkages could be established, it meant that those programs had to be moved closer to the local level. The Presidential election was at hand, and Nixon looked like a landslide winner. The strength of his coattails would mean Nixon would have a greater chance of getting manpower legislation passed in the coming year. Job Corps would have to be made ready to fit into any plans. In July, the Manpower Administration resumed its steps to further decentralize the program. Except for activities that were "clearly national in scope," such as dealing with national organizations, the Department of Labor Regional Offices and the Deputy Manpower Administrator's office favored a rapid transfer of "at least one-half of the Job Corps national office to the regions."⁶⁷

But Blake, as Director of Job Corps, opposed such a move. Aware that he stood to lose a great deal of control over the program, Blake only wanted a token decentralization of the program, and sought to issue an order which would only allow the negotiation and execution of RSC contracts to Regional Manpower Administrators. Blake, like almost everyone else in Job Corps, knew that

the future of the RSCs was doubtful anyway, so he in effect sought to give up nothing.⁶⁸ Blake's demurrer rankled his superiors. He had been blasted by Lovell for an "increasing number of complaints from cities, law enforcement officials, and parents regarding the security around Job Corps centers,"⁶⁹ and Lovell was becoming increasingly concerned that the Job Corps placement rate had continued to plummet, reaching 58%. Moreover, the process of enrollee recruitment and screening was taking about six weeks to complete.⁷⁰ Senior Manpower officials were also chagrined that Blake had been involved in a possible conflict of interest by attending the dedication of a Job Corps center building in his name. To the Manpower Administration, this act was "blatent (sic) insubordination."⁷¹

But it was still in the interest of the Manpower Administrator's offices to keep Blake in his post. He was clearly not doing his job, but to replace him with a strong administrator would make it difficult to decentralize in accordance with the apparent party line. And the party line might turn out to be that Job Corps would not be projected as a categorical item in upcoming legislative proposals.

On January 29, 1973, Nixon sent a budget message to Congress that stated Job Corps would remain as a national

program.⁷² It was obvious that Job Corps would be proposed to fall under the provisions of the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA).

While Congress debated the budget, an innocent event strengthened Job Corps as it was about to fall under CETA. Without a budget, Congress passed a continuing resolution which designated Job Corps to receive a \$183.4 million "new obligation authority" with an additional \$33.2 million from other sources. That meant that Job Corps received over \$50 million than Manpower Administration officials had expected. Labor Department officials gleefully implemented a plan to increase Job Corps enrollment from 18,740 to 20,850. Job Corps, it seemed, would not only become part of CETA, but a bigger part than originally thought. The Manpower Administration, it seemed, stood to profit by holding on to a larger portion of Job Corps.

FOOTNOTES

¹George P. Shultz, August 11, 1969, to The President, Box 130, NA DOL.

²Kenneth R. Cole, Jr., Special Assistant to the President, September 15, 1969, to Secretary George Shultz, Box 130, NA DOL.

³E. Hunter Smith, Jr., June 25, 1969, to William Mirengoff, Lovell Papers.

⁴George P. Shultz, July 13, 1969, to Arthur Burns, NA DOL.

⁵US DOL. "Secretary's Order No. 30-69," July 1, 1969, Box 49, NA DOL.

⁶Interview with William Mirengoff, Bureau of Social Science Research, Washington, DC, 17 July 1984. (Hereafter referred to as Mirengoff Interview.)

⁷Mirengoff Interview.

⁸Mirengoff Interview.

⁹US DOL. "Confidential progress report, 'Redirecting the Job Corps,'" 9 February 1970, Box 49, NA DOL. (Hereafter referred to as Redirect.)

¹⁰Ibid; Mirengoff Interview.

¹¹Redirect.

¹²Redirect.

¹³US DOL. "Secretary's Order No. 30-69," July 1, 1969, "Manpower Administration Order No. 8-69," July 1, 1969, Box 49, NA DOL.

¹⁴Mirengoff Interview.

¹⁵US DOL. Manpower Administration Order No. 8-69, July 1, 1969, Box 49, NA DOL.

¹⁶George P. Shultz, September 19, 1969, to Hon. John E. Moss, Box 49, NA DOL.

¹⁷E. Hunter Smith, Jr., July 1, 1969, to William Mirengoff, Lovell Papers.

¹⁸E. Hunter Smith, Jr., April 2, 1979, to William Mirengoff, Lovell Papers.

¹⁹William Mirengoff, August 20, 1969, to Arnold R. Weber and Malcolm R. Lovell, Lovell Papers.

²⁰Mirengoff Interview.

²¹Ibid.

²²Arnold R. Weber, October 30, 1969, to The Secretary, Lovell Papers.

²³Mirengoff Interview.

²⁴Ibid.; Redirect.

²⁵Redirect.

²⁶US DOL. "Job Corps Screening Bulletin No. 70-1, October 14, 1970," Box 49, NA DOL.

²⁷Ralph J. Conroy, July 7, 1970, to All Job Corps Regional Administrators, Lovell Papers.

²⁸Saul Hoch, August 8, 1971, to The Under Secretary, Lovell Papers.

²⁹E. Hunter Smith, Jr., September 30, 1970, to The Record, Lovell Papers.

³⁰US DOL. "Residential Manpower Centers. Recruitment, Screening, Selection and Assignment Centers, March, 1970, Lovell Papers; Redirect; US DOL, "Material Submitted for the Record of the Senate Subcommittee on Employment, Manpower and Poverty," Box 49, NA DOL.

³¹Redirect; Joint Statement by Charles H. Percy, Ralph Tyler Smith, and John N. Erlenborn, April 9, 1970, Box 49, NA DOL.

³²Redirect; Malcolm R. Lovell, September 29, 1970, to The Secretary of Labor, Lovell Papers.; E. Hunter Smith, Jr., September 30, 1970, to The Record, Box 49, NA DOL.

³³William Mirengoff, February 17, 1970, to Malcolm R. Lovell, Lovell Papers.

³⁴Brad Reardon, August 27, 1970, to Bill Haltigan, Lovell Papers.

³⁵E. Hunter Smith, Jr., September 9, 1970, to The Record, Box 47, NA DOL.

³⁶D.R. Leisz, March 19, 1970, to William Mirengoff, Lovell Papers.

³⁷US DOL. "Proposed Guidelines. Inner-City Residential Support Center, pp. 2 - 3, Lovell Papers; E. Hunter Smith, April 7, 1970, to Carl Auvril, Lovell Papers.

³⁸US DOL. "Minutes of the Third Meeting of the Task Force on 'Selection Centers,'" November 6, 1970, Lovell Papers.

³⁹E. Hunter Smith, Jr., June 16, 1970, to Mr. Lee Diggs, Lovell Papers.

⁴⁰Arthur E. Worthington, July 23, 1971, to David O. Williams, Lovell Papers.

⁴¹House Record, 91st Cong., 2nd sess., 116, 1970, pt. 4, p. 5134.

⁴²Arnold R. Weber, January 28, 1971, to Malcolm R. Lovell, Lovell Papers.

⁴³Arnold R. Weber, February 1, 1971, to Malcolm R. Lovell, Lovell Papers.

⁴⁴House Record, p. 5133.

⁴⁵Malcolm Lovell, April 29, 1971, to The Secretary; The Under Secretary, August 2, 1971, to Saul Hoch, Lovell Papers.

⁴⁶Joseph A. Loftus, July 17, 1970, to Malcomb (sic) Lovell, Lovell Papers.

⁴⁷William Mirengoff, July 29, 1970, to Malcolm R. Lovell, Lovell Papers.

⁴⁸William Mirengoff, August 5, 1970, to Malcolm R. Lovell, Lovell Papers.

⁴⁹David O. Williams, March 1, 1971, to Malcolm Lovell, Lovell Papers.

⁵⁰David O. Williams, March 1, 1971, to Malcolm Lovell, Lovell Papers.

⁵¹U.S. DOL News Release, 71-413, July 29, 1971, Box 47, NA DOL.

⁵²William Mirengoff, May 10, 1971, to Malcolm Lovell, Lovell Papers.

⁵³William Mirengoff, June 28, 1971, to Malcolm Lovell, Lovell Papers.

⁵⁴M.R. Lovell, August 10, 1971, to The Secretary, Lovell Papers.

⁵⁵Mirengoff Interview.

⁵⁶J.L. Blake, October 14, 1971, to Malcolm R. Lovell, Lovell Papers.

⁵⁷J.L. Blake, January 14, 1972, to Malcolm R. Lovell, Lovell Papers.

⁵⁸J.L. Blake, April 11, 1972, to Malcolm R. Lovell, Lovell Papers.

⁵⁹Malcolm R. Lovell, May 3, 1972, to Assistant Secretary Moskow, Lovell Papers.

⁶⁰Michael H. Moskow, April 10, 1972, to Malcolm Lovell, Lovell Papers.

⁶¹Malcolm Lovell, May 11, 1972, to Mr. Fasser; Michael H. Moskow, June 9, 1972, to The Secretary and Under Secretary, Lovell Papers.

⁶²Michael H. Moskow, June 9, 1972, to The Secretary and Under Secretary, Lovell Papers.

⁶³Michael H. Moskow, June 9, 1972, to The Secretary and Under Secretary, Lovell Papers.

⁶⁴Record, pp. 41855-56, 91st Congress, 2nd Session.

⁶⁵J.L. Blake, June 13, 1972, to Paul J. Fasser, Lovell Papers.

⁶⁶James H. Falk, June 20, 1972, to Malcolm R. Lovell; Malcolm R. Lovell, June 22, 1972, to The Hon. James H. Falk, Lovell Papers.

⁶⁷Paul J. Fasser, Jr., July 20, 1972, to Malcolm R. Lovell, Lovell Papers.

⁶⁸Harold O. Buzzell, September 8, 1972, to Paul J. Fasser, Lovell Papers.

⁶⁹Malcolm R. Lovell, July 13, 1972, to John L. Blake, Lovell Papers.

⁷⁰William B. Hewitt, September 14, 1972, to Malcolm R. Lovell, Lovell Papers.

⁷¹Holograph from Paul Fasser to "Mac" on a memo from Robert B. Lagather to Fasser, no date, Lovell Papers.

⁷²Peter J. Brennan, June 5, 1973, to Mr. James S. Lee, Lovell Papers.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

In 1973, Job Corps fell under the provisions of the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA). As an umbrella program, CETA was designed to bring together the full range of employment and training programs in the United States to serve all its disadvantaged populations. For Job Corps, the passage of CETA meant that the program would thenceforth be regarded officially as one such program among many. The predominance it had achieved in the War on Poverty as the leading program of remedial and vocational education for disadvantaged youth would be diluted, supplanted with a proliferation of employment and training programs at the local level. Yet, Job Corps had survived serious threats from both within and outside the program to become part of a law administering comprehensive employment and training services. A review of the first ten years of Job Corps' existence, as contained in this study, provides the opportunity to draw

the following conclusions.

Conclusions: The Creation of Job Corps
The Link with the Civilian Conservation Corps

There would have been no Job Corps had Hubert Humphrey not kept the ideals of the CCC alive. Therefore, a clear link exists between the two programs.

In his attempt to revive the CCC, Humphrey attempted to revive the program's positive aspects. Humphrey knew that the CCC had been a popular success for many reasons. Among them was the fact that the CCC had been established in a matter of days, and thousands of boys (as they were called in the 1930s) poured into the camps as soon as they could be opened. Moreover, the CCC boys were virtually unanimous in praising the CCC's affective dimension: they profited from gaining a healthy respect for work, and claimed the CCC changed their lives.

Although Humphrey was never successful in getting his conservation corps bills through Congress, his efforts led the Labor Department to draw concrete plans for a Youth Conservation Corps. Those plans became Job Corps plans under the Economic Opportunity Act.

The Johnson Administration's Impact on Social Programs

President Johnson, too, remembered the successes of

the CCC and of Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal. During his Congressional career, Johnson was recognized as a New Dealer: a member of the bloc of Democrats who favored social programs on the scale Roosevelt had implemented. Johnson knew first-hand the power the New Dealers had wielded in Congress for over 20 years, and how that power had contributed to the success of Roosevelt's presidency, based on broad social-action programs.

After a quiescent three years as John Kennedy's Vice President, Johnson wanted to quickly reassert his liberal credentials. It was only natural that Johnson responded enthusiastically to the poverty program that had been only recently discussed in the Kennedy administration. Johnson saw a campaign against poverty as the cornerstone of his domestic policy, and his forthright support of an umbrella poverty bill was reminiscent of Roosevelt's approach to his presidency. In the Economic Opportunity Act, the New Deal's "alphabet soup" agencies became the War on Poverty's Head Start, Follow Through, Upward Bound--and Job Corps.

The War on Poverty, essentially, was nothing new. But in that fashion, Johnson pressed for the establishment of a Job Corps.

Job Corps in the War on Poverty

The entire War on Poverty certainly did not revolve

around Job Corps. It was, however, a key component of the antipoverty effort. Vocational education was a large component of the program: it reflected the interest and capabilities of the private sector, and the lack of the same from public education.

Vocational Education. When the Economic Opportunity Act was in the planning stages, its planners focused on two aspects to attack poverty: youth and jobs. Their approach was reasonable and justifiable. The Job Corps planners took a long-term view to fighting poverty, knowing the best they could achieve was not a victory, but a reduction. With a finite amount of money, the planners focused on youth, and sought to provide, among other things, job training. Hence, vocational education was assured a role in Job Corps. The biggest contribution the Job Corps program made to vocational education was that it was the first, and only, program specifically designed to provide vocational education to disadvantaged youth in a residential setting nationwide.

But creating a program of residential vocational education was not the sole focus of Job Corps. To provide vocational education in residence, Job Corps needed a full range of ancillary services: food, counseling, medical, clothing, remedial education, and affective training. For that reason, Sargent Shriver, Director of the War on

Poverty, brought in the experts in those areas to design the program. Their efforts were obvious in the program that became Job Corps: it was not planned to be, nor in fact did it become, solely a vocational education program.

Public Education Interests. In establishing Job Corps, attempts were made to involve components of public education on a large scale. But public education never became a significant factor in the development and subsequent operation of Job Corps. Representatives of public education continually failed to understand Job Corps' purpose and failed to contribute anything of lasting import.

Shriver expected considerable opposition from the public schools over the establishment of an alternative school system in Job Corps. But public schools paid little attention to educational programs of the War on Poverty, and conflict never materialized. When Shriver sought to involve other public educators in Job Corps' development, he was continually frustrated by their approach. Vernon Alden never spent enough time with Job Corps' planning for Job Corps to bear the stamp of public education. Universities proposing to operate Job Corps centers stated their inability to establish centers quickly enough. Other universities neglected to mention any form of vocational education in their plans. One

university's contract to operate a Job Corps center was terminated. The Pinellas County School Board's failure to operate a center further pointed out public education's inability to manage residential programs of education and training.

Private Sector. With public education not a significant force in planning or administering Job Corps, Shriver recognized private industry to be better-equipped in those areas. The private sector was familiar with moving men and materiel, and it knew how to prepare detailed specifications for contracting.

These factors account for a Job Corps containing, among other things, a large component of vocational education with greater private-sector influence.

Conclusions: Politics in the War on Poverty

If ever two sides could be drawn clearly on an issue, the War on Poverty is that issue. Its Job Corps component is no exception, because Job Corps, like the War on Poverty, was a political creation. While the Democrats played up the successes of Job Corps, Republicans just as easily played up Job Corps' failures. There were enough of each.

To quickly reestablish his good standing as a liberal, Lyndon Johnson wanted to set the poverty program in place

with great speed. That mode of operation suited Shriver perfectly. Both men had every reason to expect quick action: they had succeeded in getting nearly \$1 billion for the program, Shriver had recruited the best talent in the country, and was determined to show the nation that the United States could address poverty forthrightly. But that approach led to two major problems: unlike the 1930s, poverty in the 1960s was an invisible problem. The lack of research in the area led the poverty planners to work in a vacuum to fight a problem they considered amorphous and many of their assumptions would naturally be erroneous. Another problem in the rapid deployment of poverty programs was the planners had to forfeit valuable planning time.

To the credit of the Johnson Administration and Shriver's Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO), the War on Poverty was launched in the 1960s with a speed roughly equivalent to the pace Roosevelt had launched the New Deal in the 1930s. In the absence of a body of knowledge about poverty, the Job Corps planners did establish, in effect, an unprecedented national residential school system. Job Corps did enroll and train thousands of youth in a very short time.

But that same pace also clouded Job Corps' accomplishments. Little planning had been given regarding

corpsmember recruitment and intake. Moreover, planning for Job Corps residential life and vocational programs was delayed until corpsmembers arrived at the centers. The result was violence and high dropout rates at the centers, and instead of receiving job skills quickly, thousands of youth were quickly disappointed instead.

Republican detractors were quick to pick up those themes. Again and again, they pointed accurately at many examples of waste and poor planning. To their credit, Job Corps staff acted without any precedent, and they acted quickly to correct organizational problems. But Republicans never abandoned the attacks begun when Job Corps was first established, thus leaving a widespread impression of Job Corps as a failure.

In this case, there were no clear winners or losers in the bipartisan debate over Job Corps under OEO. The election of Richard Nixon seemed to settle the issue five years into the War on Poverty.

Conclusions: The Transfer of Job Corps

Nixon was familiar with Job Corps, and he personified the Republican attacks on the program. Nixon had been on record for years either denouncing Job Corps or calling for its outright elimination. But Job Corps was never a

matter of top priority in the Nixon White House. In fact, Nixon had no consistent employment and training policy. Ironically, the lack of such a policy made it difficult to eliminate Job Corps.

Job Corps in a Republican Administration

When he assumed office, Nixon was eager to push conservative programs in place of the Great Society. But he saw considerable opposition to eliminating Job Corps from diverse and influential quarters: organized labor, big business, the public, and his own Secretary of Labor, George Shultz. In the absence of clear policy regarding employment and training programs, Nixon chose a tradeoff: he transferred Job Corps to the Labor Department's Manpower Administration where enough of the program could be kept intact to satisfy Job Corps' supporters. Moreover, the transfer would cause the program to yield its considerable autonomy under OEO. Under the Labor Department, Job Corps seemed likely to sink out of sight.

Shultz was happy to receive Job Corps in the Manpower Administration. He knew that Nixon, as a conservative Republican, was likely to turn such programs over to state and local governments in a program of revenue-sharing. The potential losses to the Labor Department in terms of money and power could be offset by the acquisition of Job Corps. It is a measure of Job Corps' success that Shultz

used it to reinforce the Manpower Administration in his own Department, and it served the Labor Department's interests not to lose the program.

But one fact emerged from Job Corps' transfer to the Department of Labor. The Nixon Administration no longer looked at Job Corps in terms of its value to people. Instead, Job Corps was examined for its value as a program. In that light, Job Corps' emphasis shifted from a micro-level approach, dealing with individuals, and adopted a macro-level approach. That approach defined Job Corps' years as a program of the Manpower Administration.

Conclusions: Job Corps Under the Department of Labor

Soon after Job Corps was transferred to the Department of Labor, there were two indications of Job Corps' impending focus on macro-level concerns. One indication came when Job Corps' staff took account of local labor-market conditions instead of individual needs. Another indication occurred when interest was expressed in the political survival of the program as a prelude to revenue sharing. In each instance, Job Corps lost more of its identity as a poverty program.

Labor Market vs. Individual Needs

In line with the conservative, Republican approach to government, personnel in the Manpower Administration

sought to make Job Corps more responsive to local labor market needs. The Job Corps that was transferred to the Labor Department had yielded \$100 million, and could no longer recruit as many corpsmembers as before. The transfer, then, meant that Job Corps would no longer attempt to train as many youth as possible with basic job skills. Instead, vocational programs would be determined largely by the demands of local labor markets. This approach was designed to make Job Corps more effective: although fewer numbers were served, the corpsmembers had a better chance of finding a job for which they were trained. Vocational training was still supplemented by remedial education, but under the Labor Department, Job Corps gave less emphasis to affective training toward personal care and attitudes toward the workplace.

Job Corps and Political Survival

In the face of revenue sharing, it was important for Manpower Administration officials to demonstrate they could operate Job Corps more efficiently than had OEO. A strong, effective program was less likely to experience severe reductions, and it was in the interest of the Labor Department to demonstrate its capability quickly. But redirecting Job Corps meant that the program had to undergo a second startup phase. The first startup, done rapidly, had had a negative impact on the program. That

fact was lost on the Department of Labor.

The Labor Department was also guilty of some instances of program mismanagement. Renewed violence at centers, delayed startup times for new centers, and problems with recruitment were all reminiscent of Job Corps under OEO. The Labor Department's startup phase was largely unnecessary: the Job Corps client group was better-understood than five years earlier. Moreover, the Labor Department planners did not have to operate in a vacuum. OEO's Job Corps had generated considerable literature on operating a residential program of vocational education, but that body of knowledge was ignored by the Department of Labor. And it was not in the interest of Republicans to publicize programmatic failures under the Labor Department. Democrats, on the other hand, also were not about to criticize a former Great Society program. Under the Department of Labor, Job Corps weathered negative publicity because there was little of it: negative incidents were either downplayed or ignored.

Thus, when extra dollars were located to fund employment and training programs until CETA was passed, much of it went to Job Corps, a program the Labor Department could claim it was running more effectively than ever before. But it was the political management of the program that the Labor Department handled better.

Summary

For the first ten years of its operation, Job Corps can be said to have made a positive contribution to the employability of disadvantaged youth. The need for such a program -- large numbers of unemployed, disadvantaged, and largely minority youth -- existed in 1963 and continues to exist. That fact justifies the existence of Job Corps.

So, to fight poverty, the Federal government created and operated the program, which included a large component of vocational education. As such, Job Corps' first ten years represented anything but an element of the welfare state: they were, instead, a positive, long-term approach to address a persistent problem. That original view is the chief strength of Job Corps.

But the Federal government's role in the program also assured Job Corps' place in the political winds, represented by matters of funding, partisanship, and the attention of special-interest groups. The fundamental problem with Job Corps arose from the fact that it was a creature of the Federal government. Although the Federal government is the agency that is best-equipped to fund and administer a program on the scale of Job Corps, the Federal presence also made Job Corps a target.

Nonetheless, if one is to make a critical judgment of Job Corps' first ten years, it is Job Corps' contributions

-- to residential vocational education, to community relations, to the body of knowledge about poverty in the United States, and finally to the clients themselves -- that must receive the more favorable attention.

Importance of the Study

The present study brings together, for the first time, the following topics:

- 1) a narrative link between Job Corps and its ancestor, the CCC,
- 2) an account of how the educational and vocational education programs of Job Corps were designed and put into operation during its first ten years,
- 3) the personal opinions of Sargent Shriver, Otis Singletary, William Mirengoff, and members of the War on Poverty Task Force that established Job Corps,
- 4) an account of Job Corps' survival of Richard Nixon's threat to dismantle the program, with documentation from internal White House correspondence, and
- 5) Job Corps' transformation under the Department of Labor.

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JOB CORPS TO 1973

by

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Vocational and Technical Education

(ABSTRACT)

The largest of the War on Poverty programs, Job Corps, was created to alleviate poverty by providing affective, remedial, and vocational training for disadvantaged youth throughout the country. Job Corps was the first attempt in the United States to establish and operate a national program of residential vocational education. Legislation and plans for the program were drafted in a very short period of time, and the gains and failures of Job Corps' first ten years can be attributed to the speed with which the program was enacted. Despite early shortcomings, Job Corps survived a political attack by President Nixon, and emerged as a viable poverty program in the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) legislation.

Records of the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO),

Department of Labor, and the White House were reviewed. Interviews were taken with former OEO Director Sargent Shriver, two Job Corps Directors, and Job Corps staff so the first ten years of the program could be documented. Job Corps' planning and establishment, its operational problems and innovations, and its transformation from a program of vocational training in a Democratic administration to a politically-viable entity in a Republican administration, are described.