

[May 28]

SENATOR HUBERT H. HUMPHREY AND CAPTAIN WILLIAM ANDERSON

SENATOR: I'm very pleased today to have as a special guest, Captain William Anderson, Retired, of the United States Navy, who, by the way, has had a brilliant career in our Navy which has included the command of the first nuclear-powered submarine, the Nautilus. This within itself would qualify Captain Anderson as a unique and unusual individual, because that command required, of course, special confidence on the part of the higher authorities of our Government in Captain Anderson. Now, I mentioned a moment ago that the Captain is retired, but you can see by looking at him that he is still a very young man and he is here now in Washington, D. C., working on the preliminary steps for the National Service Corp which we will discuss during our visit with you. He is actually a Presidential consultant to the National Service Corp, giving of his time, his experience, and his background to the establishment of this very important new program of acting service for the welfare of the American people. Now, Captain, I said you were retired, but very frankly, you look mighty healthy and rugged to me. What's this retirement business about?

CAPTAIN ANDERSON: Well, Senator, actually this word retirement I think is just another word in the dictionary because I think I have been working harder since I retired from the Navy than possibly I

did before.

SENATOR: How many years in the Navy?

CAPTAIN: 20 years.

SENATOR: 20 years of distinguished service in the United States Navy. That must have been an experience, that first nuclear-powered submarine command that you had.

CAPTAIN: Well, these are tremendous ships they have got, magnificent capabilities and the incorporation of nuclear-power into a submarine has really put us out ahead in the area of combat-potential, both the attack-type submarine that can get at the other submarines and the polaris missile-firing submarines which are based on your wonderful support of these programs, and they represent a tremendous potential deterrent for the country.

SENATOR: Well, I don't want to keep you on the matter of submarines, but have you been in command of a polaris submarine?

CAPTAIN: No, Senator, I have not. I've worked with that program but I haven't had . . .

SENATOR: I know you'd been working with the program. Well, we're very pleased to have you with us, Capt. Anderson, and I want to just for a moment draw you out on the National Service Corp, what it is, and how it will operate, but I think maybe for this moment we might

just distinguish between the Youth Employment Act which it was my privilege to introduce here in the Congress. The President backed this program and the National Service Corp. As I see it the Youth Employment Act had two sections to it, one the Youth Conservation Corp that provided jobs for young men out of school ages 16 thru 21. This was employment program to provide jobs in the forests, and the parks, and the conservation of public lands. Something along the lines of the old CCC camps. Then there was a second feature in the Youth Employment Act which we called the hometown youth corp which provided jobs again for school drop-outs and unemployed men and women working in the community projects, on civic projects approved by local government and and by state government. These are what I'm talking about in these two programs. They are essentially work programs, I mean they are designed to give jobs ^{TO THOSE} who are out of jobs. Now the National Service Corp that you are so closely affiliated with as I understand it is the assignment of skilled men and women regardless of age.

CAPTAIN: Exactly, Senator.

SENATOR: To help meet the most critical human needs in our country today. Is that right?

CAPTAIN: Senator, that is exactly right. May I first say that I view the Youth Employment Act which you have sponsored and worked so hard for as being an Act which at best . . . if we don't do

something for these young people, they're going to become really our number one domestic problem in the years ahead. And certainly that is a very fine act. But as you have distinguished it so well the National Service Corp or the so-called domestic Peace Corp does represent an opportunity for people of all ages, starting at 18 all the way up to come in and to serve the needs of our unfortunate citizens to help them to help themselves. Yes.

SENATOR: Yes, now you mentioned the you call it like the domestic Peace Corp. It was my privilege to be the author here in the Senate of the Peace Corp which is international which serves overseas. It's doing wonderful work, I'm sure you've come in contact with it. I have seen it at work in several countries, and I must say this is to me one of the finest programs that we have and it is well administered by the Director, Mr. Shriver who is extremely capable administrator. We've learned some lessons, have we not, out of the international out of the Peace Corp internationally that applies domestically?

CAPTAIN: Senator, exactly, as a matter of fact, the concept of the domestic Peace Corp, the National Service Corp, comes from the great success and the inspiration that has been shown by the overseas Peace Corp. This bill is patterned after that and almost precisely. Based on the feeling that there are needs certainly that are worldwide where the United States is able to help out with the overseas Peace Corp, so successfully at the same time we have great pockets of need here in the United States we need to do something about

those and it is the inspiration of the Peace Corp that has led to this concept.

SENATOR: You know, many people, Captain, were of the opinion that in the Peace Corp all you took in were the youngsters, so to speak. I mean the younger group. Those around the ages of the 20's, but as you witnessed and I surely have there are people of age 50, 60, 40 many of them in the overseas Peace Corp. Now that will be true of the National Service Corp as well.

CAPTAIN: Absolutely, Senator, I heard about a fellow in the Peace Corp the other day who is in his 70's actually. And the National Service Corp will represent an opportunity to people of all ages. I think the only essential will be we want people who are still young in heart and who really want to get out and do a valuable service to the American people who do have real problems.

SENATOR: Now, this will require the recruitment of persons that are skilled in certain lines of endeavor. Is that correct?

CAPTAIN: Senator, certainly so. We will endeavor to get if the bill is enacted, people who first of all regardless of age have a great maturity, a great concern, and a great depth of ability to address themselves to the roots of these problems that so many of our citizens face. And we feel that we'll get an excellent response particularly from the young college students, those who will soon graduate and also from among the people who have retired, who still want to serve, who want to do something else besides just fish and we've gotten

and expression of wonderful interest from both of those groups and many in-between also.

SENATOR: Well, I would imagine that this National Service Corp would offer a true, wonderful opportunity to people who say they have retired and maybe people are a little older than you are, Captain, you retired after 20 years of service in the Navy which is surely your right, and now you're giving as great a service to your country in this effort. But we have a large number of people in the late 50's and 60's that are still vigorous physically and mentally and they are so qualified by vast experience that it's a pity to let them be regulated to less than full time activity.

CAPTAIN: Certainly so.

SENATOR: And this National Service Corp could offer a means for this particular group to lend themselves to the solution of or the help towards the solution of vital problems in our country.

CAPTAIN: Absolutely, Senator, I believe that actually we will have examples if this program is enacted where retired people such as you mentioned will come in and serve for a year and will look back on that year of service during their so-called retirement as being the most rewarding and active year of their lives. I believe it will work that way.

SENATOR: Well, now we have covered the point that most anybody that is eligible that is a good citizen that is of good moral character

and reasonably well physically and, of course, well-balanced and adjusted emotionally and mentally. That's correct, isn't that correct?

CAPTAIN: Precisely, Senator. One other qualification, and that is the willingness to go in and to work in areas where unfortunate people do live, Indian Reservations, migrant workers, urban and rural slums under essentially the same conditions as the unfortunate people. This is a call to front line service so to speak under hardship conditions.

SENATOR: Wonderful! You give a very graphic description of what this is about, but Captain, could you tell me just now in a little more detail what kind of project the Service Corp members would be assigned to or they would work on. Now you mentioned areas in our society that were underprivileged. What are some of the things you had in mind where Service Corp members would be on the job?

CAPTAIN: Well, Senator, this concept has developed very much around the local basis^(S). The Corpmen would only come in where they are invited, only where they would be supervised by a local host group working on a project envisioned and carried off by a local group. Now in consonance with that, the President's study group has received from local individuals and local groups already 56 suggestions of where the Corpmen would fit in and provide a valuable service. Essentially these breakdown into five different areas of great need. One, among the rural areas of the country where they have been bypassed by technology and industry and where there are conditions of extreme poverty and

deprivation and lack of opportunity for the people, particularly the young people; another is the situation where we find some of cities, some of our slum areas; another is the situation with the Indians. The Indians still have tremendous problems despite the effort of the country to do something for them. There is another great area of need among the migrant workers. Perhaps you have read the very sad case that happened two weeks ago in Florida, where the bus with the workers who had to take along their young children 5 or 6 years old overturned and they were drown. This would not have happened if there was a good program for helping the migrant workers to look after their children and to carry out their education.

SENATOR: Like a daycare program for the migrant workers' children.

CAPTAIN: Exactly. And then the final area and one which I think is very important is among the institutions for the mentally ill and the mentally retarded. There is a great need for service there, and we feel that the National Service Corpmen in that area and in all of these act as the glue, so to speak, that holds together the current social workers and professional staffs, and the many, many Americans who want to volunteer their time and help this situation out.

SENATOR: In other words, the National Service Corp supplements the existing services that we have, strengthening them and giving them an energizing forward push in these areas, particularly like in the mental institutions, where migratory workers need better care for

children, provide better health and educational opportunities, working in our slum areas I suppose on recreational programs, public health programs in the slum areas. Well, it seems to me that this program offers a great opportunity for the American people to once again demonstrate what President Kennedy said in one of his memorable addresses, and I just quote from a pamphlet I have here called facts on the proposed National Service Program and if anyone wants to learn a little more about this National Service Program, just let me know and we'll send out this pamphlet which was prepared by the President's study group on a National Service Program. President Kennedy said, "We shall be judged more by what we do at home than what we preach abroad." In other words, precept and example.

CAPTAIN: Exactly.

SENATOR: Living our own ideals.

CAPTAIN: Exactly.

SENATOR: And that's the purpose of the National Service Corp. I'm very happy that you joined us today, Captain Anderson, and I want to wish you the very best in this extra endeavor of yours and your working retirement. You have given much to your country in the past and you are doing even as much now. That's all for now. See you two weeks from today.



Minnesota Historical Society

Copyright in this digital version belongs to the Minnesota Historical Society and its content may not be copied without the copyright holder's express written permission. Users may print, download, link to, or email content, however, for individual use.

To request permission for commercial or educational use, please contact the Minnesota Historical Society.



www.mnhs.org