

NLWJC - Kagan

DPC - Box 056 - Folder-003

Service - General

Service - general



03:55:44 PM

Record Type: Record

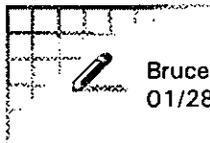
To: Bruce N. Reed/OPD/EOP
cc: Elena Kagan/OPD/EOP
bcc:
Subject: President's meeting with Harris Friday 

According to Jen Palmieri, the President actually asked to meet with Harris to have a general discussion of some sort on service.

I forwarded you a memo Harris sent to the President last week in preparation for this meeting (the one that begins by quoting a 17th century poem, dated January 22). That memo goes beyond service to say that the President's special "trinity" of legacy issues are education, service, and race, and that the President should try to show the link between the three -- that they are all about "one America." He argues that focusing on the 5 summit goals for children is the way to do this, although I never find that argument totally convincing. Steve Silverman is collecting all the recent Harris missives for the President to review prior to the meeting.

The links to race seem most promising -- a town hall taking off from the SOTU, with military, Peace Corps, and AmeriCorps people showing the benefits of serving together; or more effort to bring people together to serve across racial lines. Also, Gomperts has been talking about proposing a "thinkers" conference on service -- to discuss how to bring service "up to scale", and to try to find common ground with "compassionate conservatives" like Coates and Kasich who favor tax credits for charitable contributions to support the volunteer sector.

Bruce N. Reed



Bruce N. Reed
01/28/98 12:05:48 PM

Record Type: Record

To: Diana Fortuna/OPD/EOP
cc:
Subject: Re: Groundhog Shadow Mentoring Day Monday 

I still think this is dopey, and we shouldn't waste a lot of time on it Monday. But it might be nice for the President to say something about it on Tuesday, when he has a big mentoring event at the WH. Can you find out if America's Promise expects any major press on this?

What are the President and Harris meeting about on Friday?



Record Type: Record

To: Bruce N. Reed/OPD/EOP
cc: Elena Kagan/OPD/EOP
Subject: background material for meeting with Harris tomorrow

Attached is stuff cobbled together from Cabinet Affairs, me, and John Gomperts that will form the basis for the briefing memo on tomorrow's meeting that Cabinet Affairs is putting together.

We asked Gomperts what Harris might bring up. No big surprises (reauthorization, race), but 2 little ones: First, he may raise exempting AmeriCorps education awards from taxation. Today they are treated as income. It would cost about \$14 million; it's not in the budget. We were thinking about putting it in our reauthorization proposal, but Gomperts decided not to because he feared having to refer the bill to hostile tax committees. Second, Harris may propose that we require more work-study jobs to be service. I recall that you have not been enthusiastic about that idea in the past. The Education Dept. and the higher ed community doesn't like the idea, and I know it risks too much pressure when added to America Reads and the college-school partnerships, but I think it has merit on its own. (There is also a disability item he may raise that is still a mystery to me.)

The Corporation has accomplished a great deal in the past year, including a growing membership through America Reads and new partnerships with non-profits and faith-based groups; the service summit last April; and the launch of the new high school service scholars program.

Reauthorization of the Corporation for National Service: This is the Corporation's top priority for this year, and Harris will ask you for your active assistance. He will ask you to send a strong signal to the bipartisan Congressional leadership and the Chairs and Ranking Members of the authorizing committees, as well as key White House offices, that reauthorization is a high priority for your Administration. One option is to hold an event in the next few weeks when we officially transmit our legislation to the Hill.

Through the service summit and other vehicles, Harris has reached out extensively to Republicans and to those who have not traditionally supported national service in an effort to build bridges between the service and volunteer sectors. While he has made progress, it is not clear which Republicans have joined our cause and would agree to speak out on behalf of reauthorization. General Powell has done PSA's for AmeriCorps and speaks very positively about the program, but he might not agree to endorse legislation. Harris would like to reach out to the "civic renewal/compassionate conservatives" in Congress such as Sen. Coats to seek ways to work together on citizen service that go beyond AmeriCorps, but which will smooth the path for reauthorization.

Harris may also raise two related items: legislation to exempt AmeriCorps education awards from income tax, and making it more attractive for individuals with disabilities to participate in AmeriCorps. The Corporation decided to drop the tax proposal from its reauthorization proposal late last year because of fears that it would bog down reauthorization. It has a small cost.

One America: Harris wants to follow up on your "One America" theme from the State of the Union, where you spoke about how citizen service can help us create a common identity, and gave as examples the military, the Peace Corps, and AmeriCorps. He will suggest a White House event (either a Conference or other form of interactive event) in which people from the military, the Peace Corps, and especially young people engaged in national service can draw attention to the ways in which their shared endeavors have led to greater understanding across racial and other differences. Obviously, we would want to work with the Race Initiative and others in creating such an event, but we would look to highlight AmeriCorps and other forms of national service (especially youth service) in this event.

In addition, Harris may raise the following issues with you:

National Volunteer Week: Harris will want us to highlight National Volunteer Week and National Youth Service Day in April to draw attention to the value of youth service. Like the Martin Luther King Day of Service, this annual event is an occasion to showcase AmeriCorps and national service, and will take place around the time of the one-year anniversary of the service summit in Philadelphia. The Corporation might propose that you serve with AmeriCorps, or that you speak out about programs that encourage and reward youth service such as your high school service scholars program (which we hope to expand to 10,000 high schools this year), or the new President's Student Service Awards.

Work Study: Harris may raise the option of dedicating more work-study funds to service. He will acknowledge that the Department of Education and the higher education community are not enthusiastic about this idea, but he feels that work-study could be a key tool to make youth service more universal and build on the success of America Reads.

Service-general

CORPORATION
FOR NATIONAL
★ SERVICE

COPY

January 22, 1998

cc Julie Fernandez
Bill Kincaid
+ Elena + Bruce
FMI.
Diana

Dear Mr. President,

As I alerted you at Cardozo, this missive is inspired by Andrew Marvel's 17th century poem about "time's winged chariot," and by the realization that you have a little more than a thousand days left in your presidency.

*Had we but world enough, and time,
This coyness, Lady, were no crime...
But at my back I always hear
Time's winged chariot hurrying near,
And yonder all before us lie
Deserts of vast eternity.*

*Now therefore, while the youthful hue
Sits on thy skin like morning dew...
Rather at once our time devour
Than languish in his slow-chapt power.
Let us roll all our strength and all
Our sweetness up into one ball...
Thus, though we cannot make our sun
Stand still, yet we will make him run.*

As you may guess, my proposition is that the time has come for you to do everything in your power to roll all your "strength" and all your "sweetness" up into one ball. And that the time to begin trying to do that is your State of the Union address. My pitch goes beyond AmeriCorps and national service – though they are central and the reauthorization for the Corporation for National Service needs your championship in the address to Congress and months to follow. I write here not so much as an agent for AmeriCorps but, if I may be so bold, as a coach for America's future and for the next thousand days of your Presidency.

As an old civil rights hand and a veteran not only of national service, but also of the Peace Corps and higher education over the years, I see you on the brink of truly becoming the Education President, the Citizen Service President, and the President who leads us into the new millennium on the road to One America. The three themes of education, service and One America already run through your record as President and in the years before that. They are three themes that people know run deep in you. They are your special trinity.

Now is the time, in an even fuller and stronger measure, to roll your efforts in these three vital areas into one commanding vision and one unified strategy. If you succeed, the whole will be recognized as far greater than the sum of the parts. The parts are not small, but so far most people fail to see how they come together in something very powerful and fundamental.

As of now, one might predict that historians will acknowledge you as a President who, with indomitable spirit, under unprecedented continuous assault, made progress in many increments on many different fronts. If that is all you did, it would be very good. But what I imagine, and more importantly what the spirit of the nation needs, is far more – that you speak and act in these next three years so you stand tall in history as the one who in the last half of this century ushered in a truly great transformation.

Roosevelt led such a transformation in the crucible of the Great Depression. Lincoln did it in the Civil War. You can do it in our more complicated time, even though, as you have noted, it is very difficult when there is not an inescapable, galvanizing crisis.

Yet, as you know, there is a quiet crisis of the American spirit – the civic spirit that made America great. There is the slow-burning crisis of American youth – especially for the 15 million or more who lack the fundamentals for success. There is the profound crisis of American unity – of the two cities of rich and poor, and the divisions of race.

To galvanize the country for action to deal with this compound crisis, I urge you to embrace the strategy we used to organize the Presidents' Summit – which is now our strategy in the post-summit campaign for America's Promise. That is, to focus on the key problems for children and youth and work to bring together all the forces of our society, including citizen service and government at all levels, to solve these problems. And to do it by embracing and giving priority to the measurable goals set at the summit, around which America's Promise and our national service network are mobilizing people, state-by-state, and community-by-community.

The Five Summit Goals encompass the themes of good education for all, citizen service for youth and service by all young people, and common work by young and old, across all the lines that divide us, to build One America. The Goals include a healthy start and access to health care for all children, which is also needed to make America one, and for which you have also done so much.

And the overarching vision is the one you have been articulating so well – One America. It is that vision which connects the three themes. Education is the great equalizer, but to achieve One America that succeeds in self-government, it must be education in the full sense, not just in the classroom and in training for jobs. It must also be education in citizenship, in the ethic and practice of citizen service.

Morally and strategically this focus on children and youth, on their education and on service to and by youth, is the right strategy for our time. It is a common ground on which people of common sense can rally for the common good.

When Martin Luther King and Robert Kennedy were killed the goals set by the Summit were the ones they were pointing to. The nation has paid a terrible price in not achieving those goals for millions of young people who came of age in the last thirty years. If you use the Bully Pulpit of the Presidency, with all your extraordinary power of persuasion, you can make the next years the beginning of Civil Rights II.

In delivering his Dream on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial, Martin said, "We have come to this hallowed spot to remind America of the fierce urgency of now." And he spelled out our mission: "Now is the time to open the doors of opportunity for all of God's children."

The Capitol is not so hallowed a spot, but the State of the Union is the right occasion to summon up the "better angels of our nature."

You conveyed so well the essence and centrality of this vision and strategy in your from-the-heart, stirring words to the volunteers at Cardozo. You also articulated this clearly in your December interview with the New York Times, when you said your Race Initiative "needs to be seen in the context also of what I have tried to do since I got here on citizen service, the whole idea of AmeriCorps, participating in the Presidents' Summit on Service, all that." And your goal in a "larger sense," you said is, "to create an ethic of service across racial lines so that when we begin this new century and when I leave office and go off into the sunset, the typical American will have at least three opportunities for constructive engagement with people of other races – one at work, one at school, and one in community service working on common problems. So I intend to try to work to sort of integrate all that."

With the vision of One America and that strategy for education and service, and with your strong and sustained leadership, I believe you can yet bring this country together around the great, unifying national cause we need.

With respect, warmly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Harris". The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping initial letter and a horizontal line underneath.

Service - generally



16

04:19:36 PM

Record Type: Record

To: Bruce N. Reed/OPD/EOP, Elena Kagan/OPD/EOP, Laura Emmett/WHO/EOP

cc:

Subject: Maria and service/race

FYI, Maria Echaveste has been pushing for an 800 number for the state of the union where the President could refer people who want to volunteer, in connection with the race initiative. The Corporation for National Service told her it couldn't do this, particularly on such short notice, but suggested creating a Corp. web site that would point potential volunteers to existing web sites of the United Way, the big youth service group, United Way, America's Promise, etc. So we'll see. (Previously, Maria tried to get religious orgs to agree to offer service opportunities, but didn't get much response.)



Record Type: Record

To: Bruce N. Reed/OPD/EOP, Elena Kagan/OPD/EOP
cc: Laura Emmett/WHO/EOP
Subject: radio address

I hear that Communications may push to do the radio address on MLK Day and service. Since we have the service project on Monday, that may be overkill, so I'm certainly not pushing it. But, if it becomes the best option, here are my best policy announcements (they're pretty small):

1. President's Youth Service Awards -- The Corporation is planning to relaunch these; I sent you a note on this the other day. But the First Lady may be planning to announce this in her column, so we'd have to call that off.
2. AmeriCorps has a study it hasn't formally released on diversity in AmeriCorps. It's pretty boring -- qualitative stuff about who benefits from diversity and how to support diversity. More interesting is a PC how-to manual by the study authors with examples from successful service programs. The Corporation's conclusion from the study is that national service gives participants a greater respect for others.
3. The Presidential Memorandum asking agencies to report on how they support employees to want to volunteer during the work day is about to go out.
4. We could see if Harris is comfortable announcing a "Saturdays of service" program for AmeriCorps NCCC, similar to CityYear's Young Heroes, where AmeriCorps and JH students work together on Saturdays.

Sendu-
general



Record Type: Record

To: Bruce N. Reed/OPD/EOP, Ann F. Lewis/WHO/EOP, Stephen B. Silverman/WHO/EOP, Elena Kagan/OPD/EOP

cc: D. Stephen Goodin/WHO/EOP, Katherine Hubbard/WHO/EOP

Subject: Harris's proposal for restarting President's Youth Service Awards

I think this is an easy call, but let me know asap if the following raises any red flags.

Harris sent a Dec. 31 memo to the President in which he says the Corporation will relaunch the President's Youth Service Awards. These awards are essentially a certificate similar to the President's Physical Fitness Award, and would go to any youngster who could demonstrate that they completed 100 hours or more of service in a year (part of the summit's goal 5). There is no cost. The program has bipartisan support. But it was suspended in March 1994 after a negative IG report on how it was being administered.

Apparently Gomperts told Melanne about the idea, and my second-hand information is that she liked it very much and the First Lady is seriously considering mentioning it in this week's column, which has a deadline of Thursday. So if there are any problems, we should surface them now.

(The other obvious question is whether we should hold this for him to announce at the service event on MLK Day, but this doesn't seem so appealing, and it's not clear we want an announcement.)

Service - general



16

11:07:10 AM

Record Type: Record

To: Bruce N. Reed/OPD/EOP, Elena Kagan/OPD/EOP

cc:

Subject: Draft memo for your review on Harris's idea to resume Daily Point of Light

Here's a draft memo on Harris's proposal to resume the Daily Points of Light awards. Let me know whether you want the memo to come from you, and whether you want to recommend an option -- I know you've said you really don't care in the past. Steve Silverman would probably be willing to send the memo if you don't want to.

This draft identifies a middle ground option between resuming and not resuming the awards, which is resuming them but not linking them to the President. It's been hard to get closure on where people are on this issue, but I think Ann Lewis opposes it, while Steve Silverman thinks we should do something here. Harris says that the former President will be very disappointed if we reject this idea.

DRAFT

MEMORANDUM TO THE PRESIDENT

FROM:

SUBJECT: Harris Wofford's Proposal to Resume Points of Light Awards

Background: Harris Wofford has written to urge that you resume former President Bush's "Daily Points of Light" awards. He proposes to rename the awards the "Presidents' [plural] Points of Light," with you and President Bush as co-sponsors. Rather than having the White House take responsibility for selecting and vetting the winners on a daily basis, as was the case under President Bush, Harris proposes that the Points of Light Foundation and the Corporation for National Service take on this responsibility. The Knights of Columbus have agreed to fund the costs of this program for one year.

One factor complicating the decision is that Harris has had extensive conversations with the Points of Light Foundation and with President Bush himself on this proposal. Apparently Harris has made it clear that he favors this idea and that the decision rests with the White House. Harris indicates that President Bush will be deeply disappointed if we decide not to resume the awards.

One other timing issue is that you are scheduled to attend the dedication of President Bush's library in November. If we decide to reinstate this program, that event would be an opportunity to announce it, especially given the former President's attachment to the Points of Light program.

Arguments For:

Reinstating the awards is an easy way to keep the issue of service and volunteerism before the public on a daily basis. It would continue to repair the rift between the AmeriCorps concept of service and the more traditional volunteer sector, just as the Philadelphia summit did. AmeriCorps members would be eligible for the awards.

President Bush very much wants the Administration to do this. He will be very disappointed if we do not, and he will see it as the White House's decision because of Harris' conversations with him.

Arguments Against:

The benefits of resuming the awards are minimal. Our efforts to reach out to the volunteer sector at the Philadelphia summit were so successful that it is not clear what this would add. In addition, some would react negatively to such a decision, since the original Points of Light program was derided by many as an empty gesture.

The daily responsibility of selecting and vetting winners will be time-consuming for White House staff, and not worth the effort. Although theoretically we could assign responsibility for vetting the award winners to the Points of Light Foundation and the Corporation for National Service, from a practical standpoint we would probably still feel the need to do a legal and/or political check on award winners.

Options:

Resume the awards as Wofford proposes.

Decline to resume the awards.

Reestablish these awards as the "Daily Points of Light" awards, administered by the Corporation and the Points of Light Foundation, with no connection to the President or the White House. It is not clear how President Bush would react to such a plan.

Service - general



16

11:42:54 AM

Record Type: Record

To: Bruce N. Reed/OPD/EOP, Elena Kagan/OPD/EOP

cc:

Subject: Service summit 6 months later

Several members of the press are planning stories on progress in the 6 months since the service summit. The Times already did one, and the Boston Globe is working on one that may not be positive; it may already have been in the press this weekend. Jonathan Alter will do one that people suspect will be critical. America's Promise is trying to respond by putting together a 6-month update that Powell will reveal in some setting later this month. They have asked all commitment makers for media-oriented nuggets they could use. (I am putting together a package for them on federal agency commitments.) America's Promise remains in a state of flux. They still have not developed their tracking system for commitments, and personnel changes continue.

Steve Silverman and I have talked about us doing a "6 month memo" that would lay out our own progress since the summit and talk about where we want to be at the 1-year point. Let me know if you think that's a good or bad idea. Ideas we could develop are outreach on health insurance, both Medicaid and the new program; and reauthorization of AmeriCorps. You may have seen that Harris just sent the President a memo -- it's a general update on the Corporation, with a plea for making reauthorization a priority by releasing it this year and pushing hard early next year.