



become dazzled by an imposing list of sponsors. The use of names is sometimes unauthorized, sometimes authorized carelessly



fall for high pressure telephone solicitations. A request to "write me about it" usually ends the matter



shell out to collectors who beg for loosely defined church benevolences or obscure charities



give indiscriminately to tag days without knowing the sponsoring organization and the purpose of the collection

advent of public unemployment relief no less than social security. In his support of the first Mobilization for Human Needs in 1931, President Herbert Hoover emphasized the importance of giving as a means of avoiding public assistance, particularly from the federal government.

This viewpoint was expressed by W. M. Kiplinger in a recent editorial in which he stated: "If charities are to be financed by public money, then businessmen will simply pay in taxes what they would otherwise pay in private contributions, and most of them will pay more by the tax route." "It takes only a little arithmetic to suggest that private donations represent a 'bargain.' They are more 'economical.'"

However, most leaders in social work now encourage the development

of both effective public services—and effective voluntary agencies in complementary fields.

From Intellectual and Esthetic Forces

Modern interest in health and welfare activities has its longest and strongest roots, not in impulse and concern for suffering individuals, but in *reason and concern* for the general welfare. It is intellectual and esthetic. Endowments for scientific investigation, for the study of social problems, and coordinated social planning for the support of colleges and universities, for federated financing *per se* and similar gifts, are due primarily to the conviction that the best way to promote human conservation and social advance is by facilitating research, the diffusion

of knowledge and know-how, and planned administration of services.

Organized efforts to improve living and working conditions have their roots in the sense of justice and common decency, as well as in the feeling of benevolence. These considerations have been active in developing the housing movement, health, education, youth services, and other preventive and constructive programs. Neglected children, forlorn old men and women, prostitution, unnecessary disease, unsanitary housing, and all the rest, have become not so much matters of conscience as a challenge to intelligence, taste, and progress. The mind condemns such things as both undesirable and unnecessary and therefore foolish anachronisms, as we lift the levels of life in our American democracy.

Why We Volunteer

CLARICE PENNOCK* and MARION ROBINSON

When Alexis de Tocqueville, the French political philosopher returned from his study of American democracy to lecture to his students he is reported to have prefaced one of his lectures by a remark which may be roughly paraphrased as follows: "These Americans are a peculiar people. When some citizen in a community decides that something is needed, he thereupon communicates this sense of need to his neighbors. Promptly, a committee is brought into existence. And, in a very short time this committee has begun to meet the need. All of this done without reference to any official or any bureaucracy."

Commenting upon this phenomenon,

he then pronounced what he termed a law of democratic health which might be stated thus: *the health of a democracy is to be measured according to the quality of functions performed by volunteers.*

The phenomenon which so astounded de Tocqueville is so important a part of our American way of life that today between thirty and forty million citizens volunteer part of their leisure time to assist in the programs of social, health, civic, religious, and political organizations in countless ways ranging from manual and clerical labors to fund raising, to the responsibility of formulating policies and programs in board and committee groups. During

World War II, eleven million citizens who had never before participated in these activities, were recruited for wartime programs, and many of them have continued in peacetime volunteer jobs.

The complexities of modern living are reflected in the structure and program of our social, civic, and political organizations and thus the job of the volunteer has become more complicated. The need for thorough volunteer training, long recognized but largely unmet, became more urgent in the crowded war years. A courageous

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effort was made, with some success, to tackle this vital problem in the midst of tremendously extended wartime programs; but many different kinds of organizations came through the war with this item well up on the priority list of things still to be done.

If the job of the volunteer has become complicated, so has planning for the kind of training he and she requires. Chief among the questions raised in this connection, particularly in social agencies operating on a philosophy grounded in mental hygiene principles, is the problem of motivation. If training is to start where people are, it seems well to know why volunteers offer their services. What do they hope to give and to get? Is the act of volunteering a fulfillment of citizenship responsibilities? An escape from frustration in other areas of life? An expression of concern for people? A desire for prestige and recognition?

The Advisory Committee on Citizen Participation of Community Chests and Councils of America and the National Social Welfare Assembly, is one of the groups currently attempting to wrestle with this question in connection with its services to a great national network of agencies and organizations to whom the volunteer is a *sine qua non*.

This summer the opportunity for an unusual experiment fell into the lap of this committee. In conjunction with the Vassar Summer Institute of Family and Community Living, directed by Mary Fisher Langmuir, head of the institute, the committee sponsored a three day symposium, July 16-17-18, with Eduard C. Lindeman, professor of social philosophy, New York School of Social Work, acting as chairman. Flanking Dr. Lindeman as panel participants and discussion leaders were Rev. Charles McCormick, chaplain, Vassar College; Dr. Albert N. Mayers, practicing psychiatrist and psychoanalyst of New York City; Dr. Julius Schreiber, director, National Institute of Social Relations, Washington, D. C., and Goodwin Watson, professor of education, Teachers College, Columbia University.

Symposium

A well-rounded picture of the 164 participants of the symposium group was obtained in advance by means of a questionnaire, devised by Mr. Watson in consultation with other leaders. Besides giving "face sheet" facts about these members (see table, page 276)

and facts about their volunteer activities, the questionnaire was designed to show attitudes of the discussants toward themselves, their daily lives, their families, and their volunteer jobs. About 75 percent were currently involved in volunteer work in their home communities, chiefly in church groups, PTA, Red Cross, and social welfare agencies. Thirty percent were also



Eduard C. Lindeman and
Mary Fisher Langmuir

doing work in connection with political and community organizations. (When asked what they would like best to do, the majority indicated work with PTA and social service agencies while the minority indicated political, community and church organizations.)

From 50 to 90 percent of the symposium members had had experience in the following activities: attending committee meetings, fund raising, making speeches, chairing committees, arranging social gatherings, leading clubs of boys and girls, and helping in the kitchen. Asked to show likes and dislikes of common volunteer activities, the members listed their "likes" in this order: serving on committee, leading clubs of boys and girls, making announcements, chairing committees, discussing policy issues, leading adult discussions, and helping in the kitchen.

"Dislikes" appeared as follows: asking for money, keeping financial records, keeping minutes of meetings, presiding at large public meetings, telephoning lists of people, and organizing large meetings. Liking to make speeches had a very slight edge over not liking to.

As to the reasons why people volunteer, 89 percent of all the members thought volunteers (other than themselves!) felt the need to have an outside interest, 84 percent thought they were also motivated by the desire to do something useful, 78 percent thought part of it was because of enjoying prestige and importance. "Because you meet interesting people," "because you are prodded by a need felt

for self or family," and "because friends are working at volunteer jobs" were also high on the list. Half thought the fact that "it's the thing to do" also entered, and a little over a quarter attributed other people's volunteer motivations to "can't say no."

As for their own motivations, 79 percent of the participants said they undertook their jobs because of their desire to do something useful, about 57 percent said too that they felt the need of an outside interest, and almost half said they did it because they meet such interesting people and because they were prodded by a need felt for themselves or their families. Thirty-two percent admitted to enjoying prestige, and 22 percent said it was because they couldn't say "no." Seventeen percent thought they did such work because their friends were doing it, and less than 8 percent said it was because they thought it was the thing to do.

By means of a check list, the symposium members characterized the volunteers they knew as being above average in energy and drive, hard working and willing to give time generously, good workers, able to work well with professional people, above average in intelligence, warm hearted and sympathetic. A little less than half thought volunteers were apt to have a good sense of humor; and to enjoy dominating, running things and getting results. Only seven people thought that these folks were apt to be bores and very dull to talk to.

Looking Inward

From questions relating to their personal lives, the members revealed themselves as happy persons and, for the most part, contented alike with their work and marital status. Eighty-seven percent rated themselves as "above average," "well above average," or "in the top 10 percent of all the people I know" in happiness. Only two people checked "well below the average" for this question. The sources of satisfaction in their lives seemed to center in intimate personal relations—with children, spouses, or friends. Reading was also a primary source of satisfaction to more than three quarters; and art, music, travel, and work were rated high in satisfaction by 50 percent or more. A quarter of the group rated their work in political or social action as a source of satisfaction. Eighteen percent put movies into this category and 16 percent checked religion.

Only 16 percent would change their

marital status (if they could do this "by pressing a magic button"); and only 26 percent would choose to do very different work. If they could live their lives over again, knowing what they do now, 49 percent said their lives would be "a little different"; 29 percent, "very different"; and 20 percent "much the same."

Forty-nine percent thought they made friends fairly easily and half to two thirds could count among their real friends persons of different political or economic views, and persons having economic status above or below their own. Seventy-three percent "sometimes" enjoy being with a group (rather than "never" or "always,") but 40 percent felt they did their best intellectual work alone. Sixty-two percent "sometimes" feel "seriously inadequate or inferior to others"; 18 percent "rarely"; 15 percent "often." Only two persons checked "never."

Recurrent Theme

It would seem that volunteers, no less than trainers of volunteers, are interested in the question of motivation. For this was a subject that was examined, reexamined, abandoned, and returned to during the two evening discussion meetings of the total membership, as well as the smaller roundtables, each led by a symposium "expert."

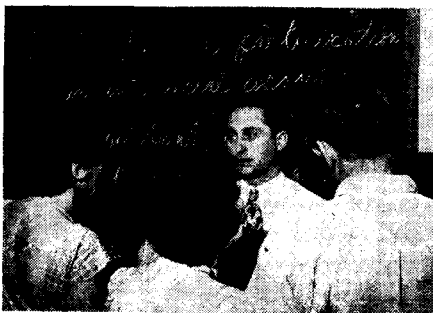
Personal testimony, in the early part of the symposium, was more specific than the questionnaire had allowed for.

"I have so much energy," said one young matron, "I just have to do something." "I am scared by the wave of reaction in this country," offered a woman of more mature years, "so I feel it important to try to do something about it." Said a housewife, "I'm an educated woman, and I felt I wasn't making enough of a contribution by keeping house and bringing up children." "It's more than that," said another young mother, "I became active in PTA because I felt my interest in my child should extend beyond our life in the home."

As the discussion moved on, one began to sense an uncomfortable feeling that "getting something out of" volunteer work wasn't quite desirable. The word "selfish" was used thoughtfully a number of times, but none knew quite where to apply it. It was agreed that when a need comes close to you, such as firsthand knowledge of the need for education on tuberculosis or cancer, then you are more apt to have conviction about it and work enthusiastically

for the cause. Yet there seemed to be a fear that one might have a rewarding experience at the expense of the people being served. It was important, said one discussant, to be sympathetic, but important also to guard against being superior or intrusive. "That's the reason I think you've almost got to choose work that's bound up in something you yourself are primarily concerned with," said a young woman, "because then you have something in common with the people you're working with. And I think you ought to let them know it." Another discussant was less trusting of human nature. In order to protect people who were being served, she wondered if there ought to be volunteers at all. Why not have all paid people do the job? The members rose in protest. There's not nearly enough money, said one. Services would have to be curtailed, said another. There's no agency that can get its work done without volunteers, said a third.

In one roundtable, a pragmatic test was applied, by general consensus, to the case, offered by a participant, of the person who found an outlet in volunteer work because of dissatisfaction with her marriage. The fact that this anonymous volunteer was an unusually productive worker seemed to settle the question. After all, they seemed to be saying, it's the quality of the product that counts. In another section, this question of "giving and receiving" was discussed in somewhat philosophical terms, with the ultimate conclusion that a mutual exchange between



Members of Dr. Albert Nordhoff Mayers' roundtable in post session continuity

people was the objective to be striven for, rather than much emphasis on either giving or getting.

The other side of the coin, undertaking volunteer work out of a grim sense of duty with little or no thought for personal satisfaction, met with strong objections in another roundtable. Though they acknowledged that there was, in the result of the questionnaires,

a marked discrepancy between the amount of volunteer work done by those answering, and the ratings of this work as a primary source of satisfaction, this roundtable was challenged by, rather than content with the implication. "You can't put volunteer work into a pigeonhole," said one, "because it's not apart from living." "You do volunteer work because you are what you are," said another, "it comes naturally, like breathing." "Why don't we say something here about the fun of working with others?" said an experienced volunteer. "Especially when it's for something you really believe in," added another. "Sure, there are tough spots," offered a young matron, "but it's like family life—your ultimate goal carries you over the bumps. And the net effect is fun."

What are some of the factors which make volunteer work take on a grim aspect? The problem of "power and control" was offered in one meeting as a frequent frustration in entering or continuing volunteer work. "People who are interested in political action are stymied to start with by local politicians," said one young man. "How can you come to grips with a thing like that?" "It's not only in political action that you come up against that," said another spirited young person. "How about the 'vested interest volunteer,' the kind that runs everything?" In the ensuing discussion, it seemed clear that most people who got into a controlling position got there, not always by their own ambitious efforts but often also because of the apathy of other volunteers. "Such people are usually capable" said a discussant, "equal to most kinds of jobs, and the others just let them do everything." It was in this meeting that one person concluded aloud that both the volunteers who are duty-bound and pretty grim about the whole thing, and those who hang onto power are really reflecting personal insecurity. How can we get at that, was the immediate reaction. "Learn to accept ourselves where we are, and others too, where they are," diagnosed an experienced volunteer. The reason this is so hard, the roundtable decided, is because of our ego needs, our hostilities, our fear of everyone and everything that's different from what we are or think or believe.

Part of the reason for interest of this roundtable in motivations proved to be a need to know how to invoke and sustain enthusiasm in others. Again, personal experience yielded sev-

eral valuable clues. "I got interested in the Palestine situation, because of the suffering of the DP's," said one woman. "It seemed to me the situation was so serious, I guess I responded to the need to do something about it. Now I feel the program of my organization is so interesting, I just have to get to meeting." "I chose the PTA," said a business man, "because I felt that was something I could do something about." "I responded to a need for my particular training," said a doctor. "When any discussion touches my profession, I enter in because I have a contribution to make." Another described how he had been recruited by members of an organization who showed that they knew of his special skills. "I was impressed," he said, "that they had taken the trouble to find out something about me."

All God's Chillen

Quoting the questionnaire as revealing that 62 percent of the participants had indicated that they "sometimes felt seriously inadequate and inferior to others," Mr. Watson suggested in the first evening's panel discussion that a factor in this phenomenon was our competitive culture. "We are always having to compete with others," he said, "the next baby, the other kids in the neighborhood or in school. We compete over marks, rank, social lists and income." Someone offered that, in relation to volunteer work, there was a difference in feeling inadequate to a specific job and feeling generally inadequate as a person. What were the specific jobs that people felt inadequate about? Fund raising topped the list, with learning to build program and learning skills for political action coming next.

Why do we hate to ask for money, was the next question. There was rapid fire response from every corner of the room. "There are too many causes. Your friends begin to avoid you." "You hate to alienate your friends." "You know people are short these days, and you hate to embarrass them." "You're afraid your friends will begin to put the bite on you for *their* causes." "That's just it. The basis of fund raising seems to be that friends approach friends to embarrass them into giving." "In a small city where everyone knows everyone, if you don't give, you're on the blacklist." "In my village, you feel so sorry for the poor people who come around asking for money for things,

that you give, if only 25 cents to make it easier for them."

When the chairman asked for a show of hands as to whether people would rather approach strangers than friends to ask for money, the strangers were favored by a great majority.

The symposium experts had several comments to make: perhaps asking a person to invest in a cause made one more aware of the imperfections of it; it might be helpful if one could consider oneself a kind of guidepost in soliciting money, letting friends know of a satisfactory way to give to some-

About The Vassar Symposium

Men	16%
Women	84%
Single, not engaged	15%
Married, no children	8%
Married and parents	68%
Between 21-29 years of age	15%
" 30-39 " " " 	43%
" 40-49 " " " 	32%
Some college work	24%
B.A. degree	20%
Some graduate work	36%
M.A. degree	15%
Doctorate degree	5%
Teacher	43%
Home maker or Housewife	42%
Business man or woman	9%
Social worker	4%
Income of \$6000 or over	46%
\$3000 to \$5999	34%
\$1500 to \$2990	11%
Less than \$1500	2%
Usually Democrat	32%
Usually Republican	20%
Support 3rd Party now	24%
Uncertain	20%

thing productive; success in money raising depends on the kinds of persons involved, the amount of conviction a person has and the popularity of the cause, since some causes appeal only to selected groups.

A dissenter arose to say that, after all, it was the cause, not the fund raising, that mattered. "It may not be perfect," she said, "but it's almost always better than nothing." She was joined by another young woman. "I have the courage of my convictions," she said, "that is, if I have a conviction. And I am not afraid of being turned down."

Working in Groups

"What is it," asked one young woman, in a small discussion meeting,

"that makes us uncomfortable about working in a group? My palms get wet when I have to get up and talk like this. But when I'm once on my feet I don't mind." Her sentiments were echoed in several sessions, though early in the symposium, members had agreed that we do need to work together. However, they had added, most people "have to figure themselves out first," or as another person put it, "get inward integration first." Pointing to the questionnaire result which showed that 40 percent of the members thought they did their best intellectual work alone, rather than with others, both Dr. Schreiber and Dr. Watson brought out the fact that we tend to use the system that works for us in early life. This they connected with our tendency in this country to emphasize the individual approach. An Australian visitor testified however that in the conservative schools of her homeland there is much less pupil participation than is enjoyed here, and that at first she had found the group discussion in this country "completely confusing." Rev. McCormick added that our system emphasizes answers rather than process or people. For example, he pointed out that a low percent of the questionnaires returned had indicated satisfaction from social and political action where answers must evolve, whereas it's really the process and people that count.

Clues for Training

The first rule of the good training course for volunteers, said one member, ought to be to help people "develop at-homeness with themselves." Others questioned whether this could be given by training. "Doesn't that have to come from within?" asked one. At least training could help people understand their own needs and motivations, as well as something about human behavior, was the answer. Then, too, there is the confidence-giving effect of learning one's best skills and capabilities. Another discussant thought training should take place "in an atmosphere of friendliness, encouragement and support." "It seems to me," she said, "that this, more than anything else would draw and hold people." There was general agreement with Dr. Schreiber as to the importance of training in the dynamics of human behavior through group discussion.

Two of the small discussion meetings returned proposals that guidance laboratories for volunteers be experienced. (Continued on page 288)

Whither Federation?

LYMAN S. FORD

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In 1925 there were 240 community chests in the United States. By 1935 there were over 400. During the next decade the number doubled, and today we find some 1,100 chests registered with the national association, Community Chests and Councils of America. How many hundred additional small communities have some type of annual federated campaign, no one knows.

The almost phenomenal spread of this basically simple idea has exerted tremendous influence on the entire health and welfare field. Chests occupy a strategic position in every important community in the United States, with the single exception of New York City. The future of chests and federated financing, therefore, is one of the vital community and social welfare issues of the day.

To understand the future, one must understand the past. The fact above all others which constantly must be kept in mind is—community chests *grew* in this country—they were not “organized.” Each one was established upon the initiative of the community in which it is located. They were not set up as units in a national movement but as the result of the local community’s effort to solve for itself the troublesome problems of wasteful competition, inadequate financing, and disorderly development in the voluntary social welfare field.

In other words, federation is an idea and a method—not a movement. It is the future of this idea and this method which is important. Chests as organizations are involved only as they represent the media through which communities are attempting to realize the benefits of federation.

That communities prefer the federated approach to the support of health and welfare services is indicated by the negligible number of instances where a community has given up the federated plan after once having had experience with it. The increased amount of money raised; the increased number of contributors; the

development of new groups of contributors such as corporations and employe groups; the stimulation and support of total community social planning, and the saving of time and energy in the raising of funds all constitute striking evidence of the sound benefits to be secured from federation. At the present time there is every evidence that the citizens in local communities are even more convinced than before of the values of federation and desire an extension of the principles to cover a larger part of the local appeals problem.

Of course there are problems and even some real dangers involved in the operation of federated money raising systems. Not all experience has been good and not all results constructive. Also, now that a generation of campaign workers, agency board members and professional workers has passed, many of the problems and difficulties of non-federation days have been forgotten or have never been experienced by current leadership. At the same time, inflationary trends have focused attention on the problems and difficulties of community chest operations.

But even among those most bitterly opposed to federated principles being applied to the causes with which they are connected, seldom is heard the suggestion that we return to the chaotic non-federation days. The question is, can we have our federated cake and eat it too? That does not mean that every last appeal of any kind must be federated. There will always be a few exceptions among the established causes, and there will always be special interest projects and limited appeal movements which have no place in federations. But there is serious question whether the current situation in which so many communitywide appeals are conducted on a non-federated basis in the average community can long endure without serious consequences to all social welfare.

Shall we move forward toward more inclusive or new local federations or shall we go backward to the catch-

as-catch-can, free-for-all of pre-World War I days? If the opinions of the average citizens leaders are to be taken as a guide, the answer is overwhelmingly in favor of moving forward.

Thus the question arises, how shall community chests — the rallying points for those interested in extending the benefits of federation—meet the challenge of the current situation? A four-point program is suggested:

1. Reiterate the basic reasons for federating appeals.
2. See that federation is always a positive force.
3. Keep the machinery of federation flexible and ready to meet changing needs.
4. Join in a local, state and national program to extend the principles of federation to the so-called “non-local” appeals.

Go Back to the Fundamentals

There is much in the current situation that can be used to recall the chaos, waste, and universally unsatisfactory conditions which prevailed before chests were organized.

In regard to the non-federated appeals made locally today, are some agencies starving while others get more than they can use currently and efficiently? What about the cost of raising this non-federated money? What about community budgeting? Are there signs of drying up the well of responsible community leadership?

Possibly it is inevitable that cycles shall occur. In one way federation, which is always voluntary in character, does clear the field for those agencies which are not willing to federate. Also, over - restrictive chest policies can force some willing agencies to campaign independently. The cycle can be speeded up, however, by throwing the spotlight on conditions for which federation has at least a partial answer.

One of the strong underlying reasons for the tremendous current increase in interest in federation and all other types of local joint planning and coordination is the fact that in