

The number of Republicans who have changed their mind about AmeriCorps continues to grow.

In the last years, Sens. John McCain (R-Ariz.) and Mike DeWine (R-Ohio) and Rep. John Kasich (R-Ohio) have spoken out about the positive role AmeriCorps plays in strengthening the civic sector. Together, we join a growing bipartisan list of present and former federal and state legislators, governors and civic leaders in support of AmeriCorps.

Their support is part of a quiet, yet remarkable, transformation in American politics that has occurred since the white-hot debate that took place a few years ago between those who believed that government should take the lead in solving community problems and those who thought government could accomplish little or nothing, and was even likely to be a negative force.

Now, as evidenced by both major party presidential candidates and by growing bipartisan support in Congress, a new middle ground has emerged, leading to a unique partnership between AmeriCorps, the nonprofit organizations and private and religious institutions that are critical to strengthening our communities. It is these institutions that transmit values between generations that encourage cooperation between citizens, and make our communities stronger.

In a recent speech to the nation's governors, retired Gen. Colin Powell declared himself "a strong supporter of AmeriCorps." After spending two years working with the organization Powell concluded, "[W]hat they do in terms of leveraging other individuals to volunteer is really incredible. So it is a tremendous investment in young people, a tremendous investment in the future. . . ."

Later this month, a bipartisan coalition in the Senate will introduce legislation to reauthorize AmeriCorps and its parent agency, the Corporation for National Service. I hope that Congress will move quickly to enact this legislation so that AmeriCorps can continue to work with the nonprofit and faith-based sectors to strengthen our communities and build a better future for us all.

[From The NonProfitTimes, March 2000]

TWO PRESIDENTS: A SHARED LEGACY

(By Harris Wofford, CEO, Corporation for National Service and Bob Goodwin, President, Points of Light Foundation)

Most people would not think that Presidents George Bush and Bill Clinton have that much in common. But, Presidents Bush and Clinton share an important legacy. By making citizen service a central idea of their presidencies, these two presidents have fundamentally changed the landscape of the civic sector by moving citizen service from the margins to the center of the public agenda.

It wasn't always this way. In 1988, President Bush called for a "thousand points of light" in his inaugural address and thereafter created the Points of Light Foundation. President Bush recently told us that he never imagined the Points of Light would be viewed as a Republican venture. Nonetheless, Democrats were dubious and sometimes belittled it as an inadequate substitute for government action.

Today, much of that skepticism has passed. With bipartisan support, the Points of Light Foundation was included as part of the National Service Act of 1993 and receives regular funding through the Corporation for National Service. The foundation's network of hundreds of volunteer centers, often part of the United Way, is thriving—helping to connect local residents with opportunities to serve. And two years, President Clinton

joined with President Bush to resume the Daily Points of Light Award.

Similarly, President Clinton's special contribution to citizen service—AmeriCorps—faced still opposition from some Republican skeptics. After the Republican takeover of Congress in 1994, there were recurring threats to eliminate AmeriCorps.

But President Clinton was steadfast, governors and mayors, Republicans and Democrats, and local and national nonprofits and faith-based organizations rallied in support, and the critics have been quieted.

By a large majority, including many Republicans, the Senate has voted for two years in a row to continued support for AmeriCorps. Republican Sen. Kit Bond stated, "The battle over whether we ought to have an AmeriCorps program or not is over. It has been decided." And Colin Powell has said, "It is a tremendous investment in young people, a tremendous investment in the future, and I am a strong supporter of AmeriCorps."

Today, the partisan bickering around service and volunteering has almost disappeared. The call for citizen service is a major theme of presidential candidates of both parties. Al Gore, George W. Bush, John McCain and Bill Bradley all have spoken powerfully on the need for citizen service and the role that nonprofits and faith-based organizations can play in solving community problems and uniting us as a nation.

While the political winds have been shifting, two great streams of civilian service—community volunteering and intensive national service—have become partners in communities across the country.

These collaborations work because the Points of Light and AmeriCorps are founded on the same fundamental belief: through service we can bring people together to solve the problems that still plague our country. Their operating principle is to provide resources—usually people power—to thousands of nonprofits, with government playing the role of junior partner, supporting the work of these organizations, not guiding it.

Three years ago the Points of Light Foundation and the Corporation for National Service cemented and elevated their partnership when Presidents Bush and Clinton came together to convene the Presidents' Summit for America's Future in Philadelphia. They enlisted Colin Powell to chair the Summit and to lead the continuing campaign for America's Promise.

Powell's mandate is to rally the forces of all the great institutions in this country, businesses, the nonprofit sector, governments at all levels, and committed individuals, traditional volunteers and those in full-time service, to make a concerted effort to assure the conditions for success for all young Americans.

In coming weeks this partnership between the Corporation for National Service and the Points of Light Foundation will be demonstrated again as a bipartisan coalition in the United States House of Representatives and United States Senate introduces legislation reauthorization the Corporation and its three main programs—AmeriCorps, the Senior Corps, and student service learning. This legislation will extend the life of the Corporation and support for the Points of Light Foundation into the next Administration.

Presidents Bush and Clinton pressed—and are still pressing—an idea and an ideal. Together they have raised a standard to which, as George Washington said at the Constitutional Convention, "the wise and the honest may repair."

This is a legacy of which they can jointly and justly be proud.

By passing this legislation, Congress will honor and share in this important bipartisan and nonpartisan legacy.

HONORING MARY MIYASHITA

HON. ROBERT T. MATSUI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 27, 2000

Mr. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, today I honor a woman with a remarkable career in public service, Mary Miyashita. To say that Mary has a flair for politics would only begin to skim the surface of the extraordinary contributions that she has made to numerous candidates and causes over the years.

Mary first got involved in politics during the 1948 gubernatorial campaign of Adlai Stevenson and has been a dedicated social and political activist ever since. The best way to describe Mary's political interests and involvement is exhaustive. I consider her presence to be a staple in the Democratic Party. She carries with her enough charisma to charm a crowd as well as the political savvy and assertiveness needed to fight the good fight. She has been selected as a Delegate to the Democratic National Convention five times in the past 30 years, served as Co-Chair of the California Affirmative Action Committee in 1976 as well as Co-Chair of the California Democratic Party Budget and Finance Committee in 1976.

She has done everything from Chairing the 1980 Kennedy Caucus to hosting political leaders at her home. In fact, the only thing that stretches farther than Mary's dedication is her knowledge of the political scene. By just glancing at her impressive list of political involvement, it is easy to attest that Mary is a true champion of public service.

Over the years, Mary has been recognized by a host of organizations for her Herculean efforts. In 1975 she was named Democratic Woman of the Year and Key Woman of the Democratic Women's Forum in 1960. This year she is being recognized once more, this time by the esteemed publication Asia Week for her many years of public service. As a founding member of the first Asian Pacific Caucus in 1976, Mary helped to pave the way for equal and just treatment of Asian Pacific Americans. Time and time again she has succeeded in ensuring that the interests of the Asian Pacific Community are heard and protected. She has been the shining light that has inspired scores of youth to get involved in politics. I can think of no one else more deserving of this honor than Mary.

Her involvement is not exclusive to strictly politics. She is an active member of the PTA, ACLU, Women for Peace and the League of Women Voters to name a few. Programs such as Meals on Wheels, and the Woman and Children Crisis Shelter would not have found the success that they have enjoyed without Mary to support them.

Her continuous leadership is a true testament to public service. If a template for leadership could be made, it would bear the resemblance of my good friend Mary Miyashita. Her career thus far as a social and political activist is commendable, and happily far from being over.

TO COMMEMORATE THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE HUNTSVILLE ITEM

HON. JIM TURNER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 27, 2000

Mr. TURNER. Mr. Speaker, I have a special opportunity today to honor the Huntsville Item, a fine newspaper in East Texas, which will be celebrating its 150th birthday on August 18.

The Huntsville Item is the second oldest continually published newspaper in the state of Texas. Over the last century and a half, it has reported the everyday challenges facing East Texans, as well as the triumphs and tragedies of our great nation.

The Huntsville Item began publication in Huntsville, Texas on August 20 1850, under the editorship of George Robinson, who was born in Liverpool, England. From 1863–1864, during Robinson's enlistment in the Civil War, the Item was irregularly published due to Robinson's war duties and scarce supplies.

A fire destroyed the printing house of the Item on May 4, 1878, and the paper had to be printed several blocks away. But again, six years later, fire struck down the printing house, interrupting the Item's distribution for several weeks while printing was relocated to nearby Willis. Later that year, George's youngest son, Fred, took over management of the paper, moving all its operations back into Huntsville.

For several years early in the twentieth century, the Huntsville Item operated as the Huntsville Post-Item under publisher J.A. Palmer. In 1915, the paper was sold to Ross Woodall, who, along with his wife, published the paper until 1967.

The Item is currently owned by Community Holdings Newspapers, Inc.

The faded headlines of this newspaper tell the story of our nation's history.

Through the Civil War, two World Wars, Korea, Vietnam, the Persian Gulf, and Kosovo, the Item relayed news of brave American soldiers to their parents, siblings, and loved ones. Its newsprint has captured the Great Depression, the Baby Boom, the Oil Rush, the S&L crash, and the digital revolution. Its columns have examined Nolan Ryan, Willie Nelson, LBJ and Sam Rayburn.

I congratulate all the editors, photographers, and reporters who have made this newspaper last through the test of time. Even after four fires and other challenges, the paper has survived and flourished.

I hope that the stories it reports in the next hundred and fifty years will mirror the same growth, progress, and success that our nation has experienced since its first copy, published in 1850.

TRIBUTE TO POSTMASTER ROY C. BUNCH

HON. WALTER B. JONES

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 27, 2000

Mr. JONES of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, today I pay a special tribute to Postmaster Roy C. Bunch who resides in North Carolina's

Third Congressional District, which I have the privilege to represent.

Next week friends, family, and officials will gather at the Albemarle Plantation in Hertford to recognize Mr. Bunch for 50 years of dedicated service to the federal government.

Mr. Bunch began his career in the United States Navy on August 24, 1944 and served our Nation until March 6, 1946.

His career as Postmaster of the Belvidere facility began on January 24, 1952 where he has tirelessly served for over 48 years.

After fifty years of service to the Federal Government and to the men, women and children of our great Nation, Mr. Bunch is not slowing down.

He is in wonderful health and has mentioned no plans of retirement.

He currently resides in Belvidere, North Carolina with his wife of 51 years, Clemma Bunch. Together Roy and Clemma have one son and a daughter.

He continues to be an exemplary example of an outstanding public servant and for that I would like to take this opportunity to thank Mr. Bunch.

All of our federal employees deserve great thanks from this Nation. It is not an overstatement to say that without federal employees our country would not be able to function. They touch every aspect of our lives and provide immeasurable benefits to us all. Without the dedication to service that federal workers such as Mr. Bunch provide, our Nation would not be the great country it is today.

Mr. Roy Bunch, "thank you," I salute you.

INTRODUCTION OF THE MINGE-HOOLEY COMPREHENSIVE RURAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS ACT

HON. DAVID MINGE

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 27, 2000

Mr. MINGE. Mr. Speaker, today I announce the introduction of landmark legislation to help maintain the viability of America's rural economy. I join with my colleague Representative DARLENE HOOLEY and members of the Democratic Rural Task Force in introducing the Comprehensive Rural Telecommunications Act.

Several months ago, I was given the opportunity to chair the Democratic Rural Task Force. This task force was developed with the aim of pursuing initiatives which ensure our rural communities are not left behind in the new millennium. Many factors comprise a robust economy. That is true in an urban, suburban or rural community. It was my job to decide which economic sectors of rural America we could most realistically pursue.

With the advice and input of the telecommunications innovators in my Congressional district, I saw the important need for a strong investment in telecommunications infrastructure to provide for the maintenance and future growth of rural America. The Internet creates great commercial opportunities; therefore, telecommunications infrastructures are more than ever a crucial tool of our economic development. However, rural communities are at a real disadvantage when it comes to building these new advanced networks, given their

distance from urban centers and low population densities. Telecommunication providers often prefer to deploy advanced telecommunication systems in urban areas, where fixed costs are spread over more customers and volume is greater.

The gentlewoman from Oregon and I set to work on an ambitious proposal that would take a comprehensive approach rather than several fragmented efforts. This collaborative effort led to the three part Comprehensive Rural Telecommunications Act. Our legislation combines incentives for infrastructure creation along with the educational opportunities needed to ensure a population who can utilize the new infrastructure.

The legislation establishes National Centers for Distance Working which would provide training, referral, and employment-related services and assistance to individuals in rural communities and Indian Tribes to support the use of teleworking in information and high technology fields. These centers would help people in rural areas link up with employers so they could take advantage of new career opportunities even if they do not live in areas with numerous employers.

To encourage infrastructure creation, the legislation provides a 10% to 15% tax credit on expenditures by companies deploying broadband (1.5 MBPS) or enhanced broadband (10 MBPS) in rural areas. The legislation also authorizes the USDA's Rural Utility Service to provide up to \$3 billion in loans or credit extensions to eligible telecommunications carrier providers to finance the deployment of broadband service in rural communities.

A special thanks goes to the esteemed Senators DORGAN, ROCKEFELLER, and WELLSTONE. Much of this legislation is based on individual bills they have previously introduced. I would also like to thank the Chairman of the Democratic Caucus, Representative MARTIN FROST.

Mr. Speaker, I request that my House colleagues join with me in supporting and passing the Minge-Hooley Comprehensive Rural Telecommunications Act, which is critical to rural America's future.

FREE SPEECH AND MEDIA IN THE OSCE REGION AFTER 25 YEARS

HON. JOSEPH R. PITTS

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 27, 2000

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, today freedom of the press and media in the OSCE participating States is deteriorating and regressing, largely unnoticed by the peoples of the region. This is happening in Western and Central Europe in much the same way one cooks a frog. Place the frog in cold water and start the fire. As the water heats up, the frog is gradually cooked—having never known he was in danger. This type of political gradualism is a true threat to the peoples and States of Europe.

Recent hearings held by the Helsinki Commission, on which I serve, have noted a number of high profile cases in Eastern Europe showcasing the situation. We have heard of the rise of influence and pressure from heavy-handed government authorities who feel the need to control the views and reports of independent journalists. Such actions have been