

CHAPTER III - WHAT THE CCC DID FOR YOUTH

As a Nation, the United States is handy with tools, proud of the millions of tangible articles it builds so skillfully and reasonably able to appraise these things and build better ones with the passage of time. For many years, as a pioneer country, we have inclined toward and specialized in miracles of production, and, as a Nation, for the greater part of our national existence, we have been relatively untroubled by many of the great social problems which existed more critically in other and older nations. Our vast geographical expanse, with its free land, its rich resources and many other factors have been natural shields against many of the social problems and social ills which beset numerous other nations, great and small.

There have been many indications in the past that this Nation would not enjoy perpetual freedom from the major economic and social ills found elsewhere unless positive action was taken to avoid or correct such ills. Yet it was not until 1929 that the multiplicity of social and economic maladjustments grew so severe as to become nationally recognized, nationally felt, and to drop the country into the severest and most prolonged depression it had known.

During the earlier years of this depression the sense of shock was so great and the lack of knowledge and awareness of its import was so widespread that relatively little of a positive nature was done to retard or correct the situation. Indeed, the principal earlier remedies employed constituted a "hoping for the best" and doing very little.

PROGRAM OF POSITIVE ACTION

With the inauguration of Franklin D. Roosevelt as President on March 4, 1933, the era of wishful thinking as a depression remedy came to an end -- to be replaced by a program of positive action. An objective evaluation of this entire program from the national standpoint will not and cannot be made until after the passage of more years than have as yet elapsed. Whatever a final long range verdict may be, some facts are already clear. Men, women, and children who were hungry got something to eat, and through work, regained their self-respect and their ability to try again. The social fabric of the Nation was kept intact. The Federal Government manifested a concern and an interest in the immediate problems of the people to a greater degree than it had ever before exhibited. New social and economic programs were created and put into operation with a speed which was often bewildering. Among these social innovations were the Civil Works Program, the Securities and Exchange Commission, the Public Works Agency, the Works Progress Administration, the Tennessee Valley Authority, the Agriculture Adjustment Administration, and a host of others,

including the Civilian Conservation Corps, which was initially designated "Emergency Conservation Work."

Chronologically, the CCC was the first agency created and the first agency to operate as part of the new program of acting designated to combat both the causes and effects of the depression. The execution of the CCC program has marked a definite milestone in American human engineering. Elsewhere in this report, facts, opinions, and evaluations of various phases of the CCC are given. Here we are concerned with the human values and social changes which the Corps has brought about and which affected the national life of this country very favorably.

NUMBER OF PEOPLE AFFECTED

As a first step in this process, an idea of the magnitude of the program must be given from a populational standpoint. During the nine and a quarter years it operated, the CCC afforded direct employment to approximately three million men -- most of them aged between seventeen and twenty-three. Roughly, five percent of the total male population has at some time worked with the CCC. In the lower age bracket -- as high as ten to fifteen percent have had this employment. Conservatively, each of the men employed directly affected (largely by supporting) about three other people -- meaning that through its operations, nearly ten percent of the total population of the country has, for some period of time, been affected by the Civilian Conservation Corps economically or socially.

That a program as large as the one carried on by the CCC should have some impact upon the social structure of the Nation is reasonably evident due to its magnitude. What those effects have been -- and in large measure, will continue to be -- become more evident upon examining the program.

ORIGINS OF ENROLLEES

In the main, the men who served as enrollees in the Corps came from economically insecure homes. They were drawn almost entirely from that third of the population which President Roosevelt has described as "ill fed, ill housed and ill clothed." Other than the war veteran group (about ten percent of the total) the enrollees in the CCC were young men -- most of them between seventeen and twenty -- with a few up to twenty-eight or with no upward age limit.

Roughly, their points of origin from a rural-urban standpoint were almost exactly opposite the rural-urban populational distribution of

the Nation. Something over fifty-five percent were of rural origin (farms and communities of less than 2500 population) and forty-five percent were of urban origin. While a great variety of individual reasons were given as prompting men to enroll in the CCC, two major motives impelled the vast majority of enrollments. These two major motives were social pressure and economic pressure. In many cases the two motives were so closely intertwined as to be inseparable.

MOTIVES FOR ENROLLMENT

Both the social pressure and the economic pressure motives may be epitomized by quoting numerous enrollees who stated, "I just wasn't gettin' along around home. Me and my father (or mother) was always scrappin'. There wasn't any money and there wasn't any jobs, so I joined the C's." Many of these young men knew little or nothing about the CCC -- and probably cared less -- but they saw in it a possible escape from conditions which were to them intolerable, and they saw a chance to do something better and more satisfying than was embraced in the lives they were then leading.

As a factor in the social and economic maladjustment of these young men, as a group, it may be noted that their median educational level was about eight grades of school completed. Often it took these youngsters nine to twelve years to complete these eight grades instead of the usual eight years (disregarding kindergarten). This eighth grade median meant that there were many thousands of boys who had never passed beyond the fourth grade in school. In fact, well over one hundred thousand of them were taught to read and write in the Civilian Conservation Corps.

While there were numerous exceptions, the great bulk of CCC enrollees came from homes and from environments which, as a result of the depression, furnished an effective bar to development, social stability, or economic opportunity. A tight vicious circle surrounded these homes and the boys living in them. To produce improvements seemed impossible because there were no jobs to bring in the money which would have insured a transformation. Too often, jobs were impossible of attainment because home conditions had created an air of frustration and personal maladjustment which did not and could not produce desirable employees. The moral dry rot of enforced idleness had produced a stagnant deadlock.

RADICAL CHANGE IN LIVING

It was from environments and conditions such as these that the CCC enrolled young men and assigned them to CCC camps all over the

Nation. An immediate and radical change in living patterns, habits and environment was effected. The change was so great that an appreciable percentage of the men selected for service in the Corps could not adapt themselves and deserted -- but most were able to accept and profit by the change.

In the move from home to camp, the enrollees were given what amounted to an entirely new method of living for a majority of them. Regularity replaced irregularity. Food three times a day which was generally well prepared, of good quality, and ample in quantity, appeared instead of irregular meals of dubious quality and insufficient quantity. Clothing which was adequate for work needs was provided and, in addition, neat "dress" uniforms for after work were provided. Neatness and personal cleanliness were stressed and many thousands were made acquainted with the use of the shower bath and the toothbrush for the first time in the CCC.

IMMEDIATE TRAINING PROVIDED FOR ENROLLEES

Instead of the idleness from which the enrollee had come, he found busy, action-packed days -- including eight hours of labor on vital conservation projects. To perform this labor effectively and to run the camp effectively required a multitude of special skills. Up to eighty percent of the enrollees had never had any type of regular job prior to entering the CCC. Thus there was no pool of already established skills to draw upon in order to carry on either camp or work project operations. This condition necessitated immediate, effective training of large numbers of men in a very wide assortment of skills in order to carry on the CCC program.

Through sheer necessity this training had to be swift, effective and practical because the entire operation would have bogged down speedily if the training had not, in the main, produced immediate results. Merely as an illustration, the matter of cooks may be cited. It takes a high degree of skill to turn out acceptable food to a heterogeneous group of 200 to 250 young men and their supervisors. Thus cooks and bakers schools for enrollees were established, likewise, a virtual apprenticeship system was maintained in the camp kitchens to further this training.

FORMAL PROGRAM OF EDUCATION

Another specific angle of the CCC program which had definite social significance was the formal educational program -- as contrasted with the educational processes involved in teaching men how to do their

various jobs on a somewhat more informal basis. This formal educational program was conducted after working hours and was, for the most part, voluntary. The program in each camp was under the general supervision of an educational adviser. One of these was assigned to every camp.

The program ranged in scope all the way from the elimination of illiteracy to academic subjects of college level. Many vocational skills were also taught as well as theoretical and technical aspects of the projects which engaged the enrollees during their work day. The educational programs varied both in scope and in quality between camps because the interest and abilities of the boys in the various camps were so widely divergent.

In 1941 the Corps adopted a training program which stated flatly that "The general purpose of the Civilian Conservation Corps is to promote the welfare and further the training of enrollees through the performance of useful work in connection with the conservation of the natural resources of the Nation, through engagement in constructive work activities, and through such supplementary aids as may be necessary and available."

In subsequent regulations issued in connection with the administration of the CCC training program, it was stated, "The education and training program of the Corps shall consist of two parts, as follows: Part A. Basic training, Part B. Special training." Basic training included occupational, health, academic, social and recreational and administrative training. Special training included full-time special courses such as cooking, baking, clerical and radio established for the purpose of training enrollees in the CCC. The maintenance and repair of trucks, tractors and other automotive equipment was stressed in all camps.

SOCIAL ADJUSTMENT
FACILITATED EDUCATION

The CCC enrolled many thousands of boys who were ill adjusted to the conventional schools which they had attended. Hundreds of thousands of young men who, under other circumstances, would never again have seen the inside of a school room, did make up numerous educational deficiencies in the CCC. Many thousands completed grammar school; a smaller number advanced into or completed high school, and a yet smaller number even received college degrees as a result of study they completed while serving in the CCC and in addition to putting in a full day's work. Of vital importance was the fact that a great many such boys continued their educational efforts after leaving the CCC.

Important, too, from any social viewpoint, was the matter of medical care in the camps. Before being permitted to enroll in the CCC, a boy had to pass a physical examination. The main purpose of these physical examinations was to weed out men with contagious diseases which would make them a menace to others and to exclude boys whose physical disabilities were so severe as to prevent them from doing hard work without injuring themselves or others. As compared with the Army, the Navy, or most insurance companies, the CCC standards for physical acceptance were very low. Even the relatively low physical standards for acceptance were often "overlooked," by wise physicians in the cases of thousands of men whose superficial defects were multitudinous which were largely traceable to malnutrition and poor living in general. These were defects which could be and were quickly remedied in the CCC.

INOCULATIONS REQUIRED OF ENROLLEES

All of the men who served in the CCC were inoculated against typhoid fever and smallpox. Many others in various sections of the country were inoculated against other diseases including pneumonia and spotted fever. At every camp there was a small "hospital" or infirmary of four to eight beds to take care of minor sickness or injury which might occur. In case of critical sickness or injury, enrollees were taken to the nearest available Government or private hospital to receive the most skilled medical attention which could be obtained. There was a standard ratio of two doctors for every three camps. Many of these doctors were full-time CCC employees while others were local physicians employed on a contract basis for daily attendance at nearby camps.

Preventive medicine was regularly stressed by camp medicos and industrial safe practices were constantly drilled into enrollees. This was done on the proven theory that the best possible medical attention is to keep men in such condition that they don't need "doctoring."

Dental care was also provided by traveling dentists who would visit the camps periodically and who would take care of routine dental needs. Emergency dental cases were sent to the dentists nearest the camp where the emergency occurred.

In line with the standards of preventive medicine which were employed was the policy of immediate and thorough treatment of even minor sickness or illness. This early and competent treatment of apparently minor ills resulted in a relatively large number of patients treated -- and it greatly reduced the severity of illness and injury. It also kept

down the death rate in the CCC. This overall death rate was quite low amounting to about 2.25 deaths per thousand men per year.

WEIGHT GAINS

In most cases the impact of CCC life on enrollees was profound. These effects are most clearly and easily noted with regard to the physical changes in enrollees. Repeated tests of hundreds of thousands of men showed that a very few months of service in the CCC increased the average weight per man between eleven and fifteen pounds -- often as high as fifty pounds. The men even grew taller and in all instances the average gains recorded were vastly greater than could have been expected under normal conditions during a similar period of time.

The War Department which through the Office of The Surgeon General was responsible for the medical care of enrollees repeatedly reported to the Director of the Civilian Conservation Corps that life in the CCC camps was of great value in improving the weight and general health of enrollees. In a report covering a survey of more than 100,000 enrollees, the Department said:

From data compiled by the Office of The Surgeon General, it would appear that two deductions are justified.

a. Many of the enrollees in the Civilian Conservation Corps do not meet the standards for military service.

b. A great opportunity is presented to improve and conserve one of the greatest natural resources in the United States, i.e., its young men, and the need for such constructive man-building is apparent.

The benefits of life in the Corps and the hygienic regimen by which the young men live are graphically and interestingly demonstrated by a large body of statistical data recently compiled and tabulated in the Office of The Surgeon General of the Army on the gain in weight experienced by enrollees. It is to be understood that for the benefit of the individual, liberal interpretations of the regulations are made and variations from the standards permitted. As a result of this policy it has been found by this study that about twenty-five percent of enrollees have been below the minimum acceptable weight upon entry into the service and another forty-five percent, although meeting requirements, are nevertheless below the standard weight. As a consequence, a total

of seventy percent of Civilian Conservation Corps enrollees have been below standard weight at the time of acceptance.

An entirely different condition prevails among enrollees at the time of discharge. The data compiled by The Surgeon General disclosed that upon completion of service in the CCC, the percent of youths that were sub-standard in weight has been cut from seventy percent to forty percent. But the most dramatic feature lays in the discovery that the greatest improvement was made in that group in most need thereof, i.e., those below the minimum acceptable weight. Statistics demonstrate that whereas at enrollment these represent twenty-five percent of the strength of the organization, at discharge, all but four percent had advanced beyond the unacceptable weight class. It is interesting to note that the chief gain was made in the first two months of service.

In a statement presented to the Committee on Education and Labor, United States Senate, March 31, 1942, Lieutenant Colonel Joseph H. McNich, Medical Corps, representing The Surgeon General of the United States Army, said:

In the past nine years the Medical Department of the Army has been charged with the responsibility for the medical service of the Civilian Conservation Corps. ...Former members of the Corps are better prepared to serve this country in the present emergency as a result of their service in the Corps.

The general physical fitness of those young men who served in the Corps was improved during that service. Another criterion of improvement in physical fitness is the gain in weight which occurred in enrollees...Actually the net weight gain was much more than eleven pounds (per man). This gain is about twice that normally expected in young men in a similar period of time.

...Enrollees in the Corps have as a group become largely immune to those common diseases which ordinarily occur in epidemics during the mobilization of large numbers of men. Such diseases are measles, mumps, scarlet fever, and cerebrospinal meningitis. These diseases are prone to occur whenever men are grouped together as in Army camps. They are important because they are responsible for the loss of a great deal of time and thus interfere extensively with training. This loss usually comes in a period of mobilization, when time is of the essence. This loss of time not only occurs in the case of those men contracting these diseases, but also as a result of the establishment of quarantine in others that have been exposed, as these diseases

are highly contagious. That is, in mobilization we have always had a large number of these diseases. The several million men who have had Civilian Conservation Corps experience represent a large reservoir of men who have been exposed to these diseases, and who are now largely immune to them.

...The existence of a large number of young men with Civilian Conservation Corps experience has provided the Army with a source of men who have been exposed to and are now immune to the usual contagious diseases which constitute a serious problem during mobilization. To this may be added the fact that many of these men have been freed from chronic, disabling conditions such as malaria, hookworm diseases and from the effects of improper diet and malnutrition, and have learned the rudiments at least of personal hygiene and sanitation. They have, in addition, as part of the medical program, been immunized against typhoid fever and smallpox.

That a man should weigh 130 pounds or 150 pounds, so far as sheer poundage is concerned, is not particularly important. But the all-around physical, mental and psychical differences which occur and which are tangibly exemplified by those twenty pounds of weight gained are important to the individual, to the community, and to the Nation. Far too often the 130-pound youngster (or the 100-pounder) who came into the CCC was already suffering from or was an easy prey to an amazing variety of physical ills, ranging all the way from tuberculosis to nervous exhaustion. Thousands of these "light-weights" did possess well developed or incipient ailments which -- within a few months to a few years -- would have produced total permanent disability or death for many.

The potential economic productivity, the potential capacity for citizenship, and the potential usefulness as parents of these underweights was swiftly degenerating prior to their entrance into the CCC. Accompanying this physical degeneration was the more subtle and more dangerous character -- degeneration of these same men. The physical rehabilitation of such men was a primary step in their total rehabilitation.

PRACTICAL DEMONSTRATIONS MAKE IMPRESSION

Brilliant speakers might lecture a group of men on the desirability of regular living habits and the essentials of good health, and fail to make an impression -- particularly if the economic and educational status of the listeners precluded understanding and precluded the purchase

of goods and services essential to reasonable health and physical condition. However, when these same principles of good health are demonstrated and the men who are the subject of this demonstration see and feel the differences in their own persons, the lessons make an impression. At any rate, they did with the CCC boys because it was notable that after leaving the Corps, they not only took care of themselves but, in a great number of instances, they impressed their lessons upon the folks back home and appreciably raised standards of health, sanitation, and living in areas which are often referred to as "backward communities."

BALANCED DEVELOPMENT
PRODUCED BY CCC

Simply as a result of the very much lower death rate of the CCC as compared with the general male population of similar age groups -- there are between 3,500 and 4,000 men now alive and healthy who would have been dead under the usual expected mortality.

Yes, it was fairly obvious that a great physical change took place in boys who entered the CCC. Flat chests assumed more normal contours. Droopy shoulders acquired a manlike square set. Dull eyes and pasty complexions took on a new brightness and sparkle. Flabby arms, legs, and torsos built up an armor of tough muscles -- usually overlaid with deeply tanned young human hides.

But a mighty physique was never considered to be an end in itself in the CCC. It was rightly considered to be a very firm foundation for a great deal of other human development. During physical development of CCC enrollees, there was an accompanying development of character, of social attitudes, of skills and of self-reliance.

RELIGIOUS GUIDANCE

Complementing the physical, the mental and the occupational activities found in every CCC camp were the spiritual ministrations available to all enrollees in all camps. Full-time chaplains of various religious denominations were employed. Supplementing their work was a larger group of contract clergymen who conducted religious services in the camps and gave spiritual guidance to the enrollees. Over and above these provided services, there was a welcome in countless thousands of churches adjacent to CCC camps for the enrollees who desired to worship there and who were transported to these churches in CCC trucks.

NEW SOCIAL
HORIZONS CREATED

Boys whose social horizons had been bounded by the corner pool hall or the small town juke joint were given new horizons. The narrow,

often anti-social attitudes of youngsters who simply hadn't had a chance, quickly changed under the stimulus of group living conducted on an orderly, healthy, wholesome basis. The young men who had been "mama's boys" swiftly found out that the 199 other boys in a camp would not defer to them or coddle them as mother used to do. Similarly, the boys who, before entering the CCC, had been local "big shots" (and often bullies) discovered that bullying 199 other chaps of a similar age could not be very successfully accomplished.

Though organized hazing was officially discouraged in camps, the enrollees found methods which were effective to control bullies and to ridicule the sissiness out of youngsters who were afflicted with these and other social maladjustments. Quite apart from any analytical processes, the enrollees recognized that group living called for quick development and self-reliance, and demanded that each member of a camp should do his share.

Quite apart from any official punishments, the malingers or "gold bricks" who attempted to shirk duties were pointedly and sometimes rudely made to assume their fair share of duties and responsibilities by fellow enrollees. The self-discipline among enrollees went far toward supplementing the official discipline and produced excellent results. Men in the camps were officially instructed that orders had to be given and had to be obeyed. The necessity and reasonableness of this was apparent to nearly all, resulting in good discipline, quick and intelligent obedience. Having learned to take orders -- most enrollees were likewise given the chance to give orders and enforce them as their experience and service in the CCC increased.

REGULARITY AND VARIETY BOTH STRESSED

Life in the camps with its regularity and its general wholesomeness made a profound change in the habits and attitudes of nearly all enrollees. They came to recognize the value of order, regularity, neatness and independence as effective aids in the business of living. The task to be done in the camps were so varied that nearly every boy could (and did) find some activity in which he could excel. In this individual excellence, the boys built up a proper sense of personal pride and confidence in their own ability to accomplish all sorts of tasks.

Association with 199 other boys in camps also broadened individual view points in a socially desirable way. The youngsters who came from New York's teeming East Side learned for the first time that the world was not bounded by the Hudson River on the west and Times

Square on the North, and that boys from other sections of the country were not necessarily "dopes", "rubes" and "meat balls", simply because they have not been born and raised in a large city. The country boy, too, learned that there were worlds beyond the South Pasture and learned that city-bred youngsters were not necessarily "slickers", "sissies" and incompetents.

PRIMARY RULES OF CONDUCT TAUGHT

Service in the CCC planted deeply in the consciousness of these enrollees many fundamental rules of conduct and a refreshed knowledge of right and wrong. Old tricks of petty pilfering which had seemed very smart at home became not at all smart when unmasked and labeled by the boys themselves as theft. Individual anti-social quirks, engendered by bad environments, shriveled and died when men were removed from such environments and came face to face with the pomp and majesty of nature. Something of the forests, the waters, the deserts, and the farms crept inside of millions of dispirited kids and changed them deeply -- from within. As one youngster expressed it, "It used to be fun to heckle Cassidy, the cop on the beat, and get him to chase us, but say, did you ever hear of anybody heckling a redwood tree -- couple hundred feet tall and maybe three thousand years old? Those things take the heckling and a lot of other cussedness out of you when you are around 'em for a little while."

Numerous studies made of CCC enrollees showed that thousands of them came from broken homes where the father or the mother or both were dead; where there had been desertion by one or both parents, accompanied by economic insecurity and social stigma. To boys from many such homes service in the CCC was their first stable, productive experience in life. Their responses to this period of stability and order were almost uniformly excellent -- and they acquired for themselves a goodly share of stability and managed to carry much of it into the broken homes from which so many came. In short, not only did the CCC produce desirable social changes but it appears to have produced them on a reasonably permanent basis.

NON-ENROLLED PERSONNEL

Often overlooked in a social consideration of the CCC program is the non-enrolled personnel. This group of men, including company officers, superintendents, technicians, professional men, administrators, and clerical personnel embrace a total of about 250,000 persons employed for varying periods of time during the nine and one-quarter years the Corps operated.

Approximately one-half of these persons could be classified as very highly skilled and highly trained. Most of the balance could at least be classified as skilled in one or more lines of work.

Among this group of men, more than a quarter of a million, were employed some 60,000 Reserve Officers of the Army, Navy and Marine Corps. These officers received practical field training and field experience with the Corps, which is of great value in the present war. Thousands upon thousands of other skillful men were enabled to practice and improve their skills in constructive work instead of having them deteriorate through enforced idleness. Not only were these trained men enabled to use their skills and personally profit thereby, but they were also obliged to transmit a substantial portion of their training and experience to the enrollees who sadly needed such practical and skilled guidance.

NEW HEALTH AND OPPORTUNITY CREATED

The various phases of CCC life, training and experience which have been outlined produced desirable, social and economic changes which have been of great value to this Nation and which would be of great value to any nation. The numerous work programs which were completed (discussed in detail elsewhere) materially increased economic resources -- a condition which is socially desirable. Additional wealth and opportunities have been created as a result of these work programs which will favorably affect our National economy for many years to come in a variety of fields including agriculture, forestry, mining, power development, wildlife resources, recreation and others.

The accomplishment of this work has not simply "kept men busy" but has taught them numerous new skills. Allied to the new skills, these men have also learned the dignity and the importance of labor; they have acquired a job maturity and work attitudes which have made them at first, preferred, and later, star employees in many lines of endeavor.

CCC ENROLLEES GOOD WORKERS

The childish immaturity which employers so often find (and dislike) in high school and college graduates was taken out of the CCC enrollees during their service in the Corps. Most of them developed a sense of responsibility as well as a sharp sense of discipline. They became imbued with the knowledge that few jobs were too difficult for them to undertake if they worked hard enough and obtained a little cooperation from the other fellow. Self-reliance was not only created

but it thrived. Personal adequacy and self-confidence was generated to an amazing degree. Then, too, safe practices were drilled into enrollees to an extent which made them "prizes" in competitive industry which places a deservedly high premium on safe workers.

As all of the enrollees with dependents allotted a major portion of their cash earnings to those dependents, the enrollees commanded new respect from their immediate family circles. Instead of being economic liabilities in the family circle, they had changed into assets. With most of the enrollees the CCC was able to convert them from recipients of public funds to self-supporting citizens who would contribute to the public treasuries.

The Corps, from its beginning, sent a stream of fresh, young, eager and desirable trained manpower into the social and industrial life of the Nation. At first the stream was scarcely more than a trickle but it grew larger and larger until former CCC enrollees were employed in responsible positions (as well as less responsible positions) in practically every form of economic endeavor throughout the Nation.

From a normal or peace-time standpoint, such accomplishments mean much to a Nation. The country finds its man power - particularly its young and fighting man power -- in far better mental and physical condition than would have been possible except for the CCC. Facts disclosed by medical rejections of the Selective Service indicate how serious and how tragic the physical condition of the majority of the young male population has become, but it would have been far worse without the good physical effects of the CCC.

TRUE COST COMPARISONS

Superficial critics of the CCC have at times pointed out that the cost of this program per man per year was relatively high in dollars (about one thousand dollars per man per year, loading every expenditure against the average number of men present) when compared with certain other forms of public expenditures termed "relief expenditures." These critics particularly pointed out that a dole would cost perhaps not more than \$250 per year per person -- possibly less.

Such a comparison is very much like saying that automobiles cost more than kiddie cars. True, there is a greater cost, but there is also a far greater value. A dole, though relatively cheap, in dollars, drains off self-respect, barely keeps away the pangs of hunger and cold and does not rehabilitate the recipient. In fact it is usually true that the recipient of an out-and-out dole is, as a person, worse off at the

end of a dole receiving period than at the beginning. This is in sharp contrast to the CCC program where men did not receive a dole but did receive wages and "found" for the excellent work which they performed. It has been variously estimated that the actual dollar value of the work performed by the CCC enrollees would be from 82 to 90 percent of the cost of doing it under the best industrial competitive conditions -- and this labor was performed with men who had never had previous work experience and who, in too many cases, were "down and out" prior to enrolling in the Corps. The period of service in the CCC likewise rehabilitated the men who participated in the CCC program physically, mentally and psychologically. It is also often overlooked that between 25 and 30 percent of the entire cost of the program was never received directly by the enrollees but was sent to their dependent relatives in the form of allotments from the pay of these enrollees.

SPECIALISTS NEEDED
FOR ARMED SERVICE

Many skills and much training required by an army were already instilled into three million men by their service in the Corps. Among these men the Army found a vast pool of trained specialists which it was not slow to use in the expansion of military establishment. Likewise, the 60,000 officers who had been schooled in the CCC to handle the difficult problem of human leadership, command morale and a thousand other details incident to handling a group of men in the time of war were, to put it mildly, very handy in expanding the Army.

Americanism, democracy and a real love of country are not simply phrases or catch words to men who have served in the CCC. These men saw democracy in action -- saw it extend a powerful helping hand to them when they needed help. Those men have helped to build America, reforest its barren spots, keep its soil from washing away in senseless erosion; they have helped build a stronger United States. In times of emergency, the Corps was prompt and efficient. Enrollees fought floods and fires, engaged in rescue and clean-up after tornadoes and hurricanes, saved hundreds of lives. It was always on call -- a sort of Junior Red Cross. Those men knew within themselves that this is a great Nation, a good Nation, worth working for, worth living for, and if need be, worth dying for.

Former CCC enrollees have been doing and are doing all of these things. In the war industries, you find them by the thousands. Yet here their numbers are substantially decreasing because so many have already gone and so many more are constantly going into the Armed Forces of the United States.

HIGH STANDARDS
MAINTAINED

Another important factor in the CCC program was that the work done was not "made work" but consisted of jobs that really needed doing. What is more, the jobs were done in accordance with good engineering and good commercial practice with proper supervision, tools, machinery, materials and supplies complimenting the human labor required. Men were not permitted to stand around in numerous groups to do a job with pick and shovel when the proper way of doing the job required relatively few men plus the right machines. One evidence of this which may be cited is the fact that prior to the beginning of the war the CCC owned and operated the largest fleet of motorized equipment in the world. After war began, this fleet of trucks, tractors, graders and other motorized material was transferred to the Armed Forces. More than 27,000 cargo trucks, passenger cars, pick-up, stake and dump trucks, transports, trailers, tractors, graders, snow-plows, jack-hammers and other machinery, were transferred to the Bureau of Public Roads and utilized by the War Department in the building of the Alaska Highway. Some 40,000 pieces of CCC automotive equipment have now been converted to war use.

Another collateral socio-economic advantage which came from the CCC program -- particularly in its early days -- was found in the impetus it produced in many industries due to its necessarily large expenditures. Merely as several examples of a wide-spread condition it may be noted that the lumber industry was among those floundering deepest in the depths of the depression and was one that received great assistance from the hundreds of millions of board feet of lumber required by the CCC to build its camps and carry on its work projects. Our great automotive industry was also hard-hit and it received very substantial assistance at the right time from the large purchases of trucks and other automotive vehicles needed in the CCC program. Primary food and clothing suppliers throughout the Nation were aided substantially by CCC purchases and many an individual and many a corporation was enabled to continue its existence through a difficult period as a result of CCC purchases in many fields.

"WE CAN
TAKE IT"

Letters by the thousands from parents, observers, employers, and ministers -- coupled with thousands of newspaper stories and editorials have told of the vast social reconstruction which the CCC has effected among the men who served in it. Terse communications from very high ranking officers in the Armed Forces leave no doubt, as to the military advantages which the CCC has given to the Nation. The records of former

enrollees and other employees of the Corps on a dozen fronts of war show that these nephews of Uncle Sam made no idle boast when they chose for their Corps motto the phrase, "We Can Take It!"

From nearly every social standpoint the operations of the CCC have paid very practical tangible (as well as intangible) dividends to the United States. That further improvements in the operation of a Corps could be made, no informed observer would deny, but under test, past operations have shown this activity to be socially desirable.

Preventing the decadence of young manhood is a problem that transcends all others. In 1933 the waste of human resources as represented by millions of idle young men staggered the imagination. Trapped in a topsy-turvy world that shut the door of employment and security in their faces, condemned to idleness, discovering in themselves a sense of inadequacy -- none the less real though unfounded -- and establishing attitudes of chronic bitterness, millions of young men were in grave danger of becoming permanently unemployable. The Civilian Conservation Corps program was the right answer to the youth employment problem in 1933. If similar conditions develop in post-war years, the social formula developed by the Corps should be utilized again. It worked and worked splendidly under trying conditions. It will work as effectively again.