

Man Power for U.S. G205/35/44

SECRET

Eliot B-11
Cambridge, Mass.
October 14, 1941

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Draft reply:

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16 OCT 1941
BRITISH EMBASSY, WASHINGTON

-129

Dear Mr. Hayter,

After reading your letter of Oct. 2nd addressed to John Ordway and concerned with the possibility of discovering opportunities for young men to serve in England, the group of boys particularly interested in the idea would like to ask a few questions.

First, we would like to know where we would be most useful; in reconstruction work, in the army, on the sea, anywhere, or if the case is such, whether we would be more bother than we are worth.

You mention the need of technical qualifications; could you elaborate a little further? Most of us are college students and we would be able perhaps to find an opportunity to actively train ourselves.

The most interested among us so far have been boys; however, in the last few weeks a growing number of young women have become interested and we wondered what services they could perform in England. One of them, for example, is training to become a nurse and we would like to know whether these skills would be most in demand, or perhaps those of a different nature.

Our group as it stands now is rather amorphous as might be expected due to the unavoidable uncertainty of our program. However, in the thoughts of each of us

perhaps the foremost is the idea of service. We have discovered that in this country in peace time ~~that~~ there is the need of a "moral equivalent of war"; that the challenge of facing and resolving a social tension in an area satisfies the need which young people feel for giving of themselves to their full extent in a constructive cause; we have realized that there are potentialities in men which a crisis situation will develop, as in the case of war, and that these should be given a chance to develop in society at peace; we realize that if we are ever ^{to} have a successful international community we must first be disposed to live together with cooperation and selflessness, for otherwise internationalism is superimposed on a people who are not ready to accept the new orientation toward their fellows and the inevitable result is failure. We have found these things to be true by sharing in the life, work, suffering, and triumphs of rural and urban communities in this country and Mexico. Most of us have spent some time in the development of a work service for the entire country, both under the American Friends Service Committee, in the Civilian Conservation Corps, and in perhaps the latest development, Camp William James, named for the American philosopher who first enunciated the principle of the "moral equivalent. These work camps are run on a cooperative basis

and are composed of young people of different nationalities and from all levels of society; they offer one a chance to try living on a truly democratic basis, to meet problems of human interrelationship both within and without the camps on an empirical level.

Since war is in progress we must temporarily put aside the conception of a "moral equivalent" in our international approach and deal with ^{the real} ~~#####~~ thing. Thus the defeat of Germany is for us a necessary means to an end. We want to participate in the destructive aspect of the operation in order that we may be justified in sharing in the task of reconstruction; our relationships will be on a man to man level rather than government to government.

It may seem foolish to you that we are idealistic at a time such as this; however we feel that this is the precise time to be of that frame of mind; and furthermore we believe that our idealism is practically founded in the empirical ~~is~~ world and may be termed idealism merely because it is a different approach; certainly it is an essential consideration in the development of a true and lasting peace. We must plan for the future now in broad outline, filling in essential detail later according to a general principle. It is essential that we maintain a certain objectivity in the matter in order that prejudice against Nazi actions and ideology cause us to be prejudiced in our dealings with post-war Germany. This war must be fought in order to clean the slate, com-

pletely and finally. Then we shall be ready for a "moral equivalent" on an international scale.

This beautiful objectivity which we try to maintain may seem to you a rather difficult position to take when your family and friends are constantly under fire; perhaps we would falter under a like situation. Emotions are tricky things; what we must try to do is to use our emotions as an incentive toward the maintenance of our working ideal---the brotherhood of man.

This discussion is necessarily subjective to a certain degree; however we felt it wise to shift the responsibility of correspondance in order that you would get a fuller understanding of the group through the letters which we send. In this case your correspondent is

sincerely yours,

Norris Tibbetts

Norris Tibbetts