



Calling Americans to Service in a Time of Need: General Clark's Plan for a Civilian Reserve

General Clark has called for Americans to rally around a New American Patriotism grounded in the belief that citizenship entails responsibilities as well as rights. General Clark challenges all Americans to be willing to sacrifice for their country by joining his proposed Civilian Reserves. The Civilian Reserves would use the latest technology to ensure that Americans with needed skills could be mobilized rapidly to address pressing needs. In addition, as a complement to the Civilian Reserves, General Clark's plan would reverse the cuts made by President Bush and instead expand opportunities for national service to address day-to-day challenges like crumbling schools and securing the homeland.

General Clark's Strategy for Mobilizing the Citizenry in a Time of Need

For all the talk of service and sacrifice by the President over the past two years, we are no more prepared today to mobilize the citizenry in the event of another attack than we were on September 10th, 2001. General Clark's job stimulus plan provides additional funds to train first responders like firefighters and police. But in times of crisis or urgent need, professional first responders are not enough. General Clark's Civilian Reserves proposal would make it possible to draw on the vast array of skills and the ingenuity of ordinary Americans in times of need without creating a new bureaucracy.

- ***Creating a 21st Century Civilian Reserve for 21st Century Challenges.*** General Clark challenges all Americans, men and women, to sign up for the Civilian Reserves. By signing up for the Civilian Reserves Americans, volunteers would promise to make a sacrifice for their country, when and where needed. In exchange, members of the Civilian Reserve would know that their unique talents and abilities were being effectively mobilized.
 - *Mobilizing the skills and talents of the American people.* If an individual chooses to register with the Civilian Reserves, he or she would record his or her occupation, skills (including language skills on an optional basis), preferences about service, along with his or her name, address, phone number, and e-mail address. Enrollees of the Civilian Reserves would record their preference for local, national, or international service. The Civilian Reserves would adhere to the highest standards of privacy protection.

Paid for by Clark for President, Inc.

Contributions and gifts to Clark for President are not deductible for federal income tax purposes.

- *Renewable commitment every five years.* Individuals who volunteered for the Civilian Reserves would make a five-year commitment. At the end of that period, they could choose whether or not to renew and in the process update the listings of their skills and preferences.
- *Challenging all Americans over age 18 to make themselves available for service.* The Civilian Reserves would be open to all Americans, men and women, over age 18.
- *Using modern technology, not old-fashioned bureaucracy.* The Civilian Reserves program would use the latest technology and would not require a large government program or numerous civil servants.
- ***Calling Americans to Service in Times of Need.*** The changing threats and issues that face our country require a new and innovative approach to mobilizing the citizenry in times of need. The Civilian Reserves program would offer a more flexible approach that can appeal first to volunteers in order to match their skills with the needs of specific crises, such as local communities in times of natural disaster, cities which are the victims of a terrorist biological attack, or Nations impacted by famine.
 - *Matching skills with needs.* In a time of urgent need, individuals who signed up for the Civilian Reserves would be asked to volunteer, as necessary, to help address a crisis in their communities, nation, or abroad. The President would have the authority to issue a “voluntary call to action” to encourage particular segments of the Civilian Reserves to mobilize to meet the pressing needs of the nation. The President would only ask people to volunteer if they had the relevant skills to address the pressing need.
 - *Calling up the Civilian Reserves if necessary.* During a crisis, if sufficient volunteers were not available, the President would have the authority to call-up as many as 5,000 Civilian Reserves, through a lottery of the Reservists with the required skills. The circumstances that would precipitate a mandatory call-up would be exceedingly rare. These Reservists could be called up for up to six months. An appeals process would consider hardship exemptions for family and other circumstances. An Act of Congress would be required to call up additional Civilian Reservists beyond the first 5,000 members. Members of the Civilian Reserves would be limited to one six-month call up in their five-year term of service.
 - *Getting Civilian Reserves where they are needed and when they are needed.* The complex crises that can affect the nation demand a much faster system to mobilize Americans who have the critical skills required

to respond to a crisis in a matter of hours if needed. Members of the Civilian Reserves would be contacted and mobilized via mail, phone, and e-mail during the voluntary call-up process. The Civilian Reserves program would strongly emphasize the use of the Internet to communicate and mobilize volunteers.

- *Working domestically and internationally to address pressing needs.* The Civilian Reserves could be deployed domestically or internationally to help with pressing needs. Some examples:
 - *Helping to fight forest fires.* Members of the Civilian Reserves could help fight forest fires, including helping with back-line tasks to relieve more highly trained fire-fighters to work at the front line. In the process, they would reduce some of the demands currently placed on the military to mobilize to fight forest fires.
 - *Contributing to Nation building.* Today America is paying billions of dollars to certain American companies for reconstruction in Afghanistan and Iraq. But numerous Americans have the language skills in Pashto and Arabic, the technical skills, and the desire to help. The Civilian Reserves would provide a basis for marshalling and coordinating their efforts.
- *Working side-by-side with governments, non-profits, and non-governmental organizations.* Members of the Civilian Reserves would work together with first responders and existing non-profit and non-governmental organizations, like the Red Cross, supplementing but not supplanting existing systems for responding to crises and other pressing needs.
- *Providing compensation, health benefits, and job protections.* In the event that members of the Civilian Reserves are mobilized to actively serve their country, they would be paid a stipend, receive health benefits, and be guaranteed re-employment at their old jobs, just like members of the military Reserves. In addition, they would receive useful training and experience that would be valuable in returning to civilian life.

General Clark's Strategy for Expanding the Opportunities for Service and Strengthening Homeland Security

The Civilian Reserves would be activated in times of pressing need. But just like America has a regular army and reserves, so too does America need day-to-day service programs to address challenges ranging from crumbling schools to securing the homeland. President Bush has had strong rhetoric on national service, but when it comes time to deliver he has broken his promises and cut key programs.

- ***President Bush's Record on Citizenship and Service: Missed Opportunities, Misdirection, and Broken Promises.*** When our country was attacked by a terrifying new barbarism on Sept. 11, 2001, the American people stood ready and willing to be mobilized to serve a cause greater than self. In the two years since that time, the Bush record on involving ordinary Americans in this common struggle has been one of missed opportunities, misdirection, and broken promises:
 - ***USA Freedom Corps: An exercise in re-branding.*** In his 2002 State of the Union Address, the President called on all Americans to serve 4,000 hours over their lifetime and pledged to create the USA Freedom Corps to help Americans reach this goal. However, it turned out that the USA Freedom Corps was essentially a new umbrella for old programs, including AmeriCorps, the Peace Corps, and the Senior Corps.
 - ***Citizen Corps: Less is not more.*** The President asked for \$200 million to fund his Citizen Corps initiative, but secured only \$25 million (which amounts to about \$500,000 per state).
 - ***AmeriCorps: Promising expansion, delivering a cut.*** The President promised to expand AmeriCorps by 50 percent, from 50,000 volunteers to 75,000 volunteers. But in 2003, he signed legislation that cut AmeriCorps' operating budget by 30 percent. This year, the national service program has half as many members as it did in 2001.
- ***General Clark's Strategy to Expand Opportunities For Service.*** General Clark believes in expanding existing opportunities for service to the country along the lines proposed by Congressmen Tom Osborne and Harold Ford and Senators John McCain, Evan Bayh, and Edward M. Kennedy. Specifically, he endorses the bipartisan Call to Service Act of 2003 introduced by U.S. Senators McCain, Bayh, and Kennedy. This proposal more than triples AmeriCorps from 50,000 volunteers today to 175,000 volunteers by 2008. Furthermore, it directs AmeriCorps to work closely with the Department of Homeland Security to make America safer. General Clark also Senators McCain, Bayh and others to broaden the Senior Corps, expand the Peace Corps, enhance the service component of college work-study programs, and bring a new generation of citizen soldiers into the military through a short-term enlistment option.