

## Big Issue 2020

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“National service will hopefully become one of the themes of the 2020 campaign,” said Pete Buttigieg, mayor of South Bend, Indiana, and Democratic Party presidential candidate.

Why?

Talking to MSNBC’s Rachel Maddow, Mayor Buttigieg explained: “we really want to talk about the threat to social cohesion that helps characterize this presidency, but also just this era.”

Oh, goodie, another threat from which the wannabe wizards of Washington can save us.

*Host Maddow, for her part, supports a draft, but expresses doubts about its feasibility, noting “we seem wired as a country to reject that at every level.”*

“One thing we could do that would help change that,” announced Buttigieg, “would be to make it, if not legally obligatory, then certainly a social norm that anybody after they’re 18 spends a year in national service.”

What does he mean by “if not legally obligatory”? Perhaps it is nothing more than this: he is considering a program of forced

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service, but wants plausible deniability, a way to back off in the heat of an election campaign . . . when moms and dads are voting.

Buttigieg wants “the first question on your college application” or “the first question when you’re being interviewed for a job” to be whether a young person did national service.

Hey, I want a lot of things. Does a President Buttigieg plan to force all colleges and employers to ask his question first?

What seems obvious to citizens seems lost on politicians, the rather clear difference between offering jobs to the nation’s 4 million 18-year-olds and dragging them away from their lives to make them work for Washington.

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She is correct: *Land of the free, home of the brave* and all.

This is Common Sense. I’m Paul Jacob.