

PEACE CORPS

# volunteer

APRIL 1968

Volunteers and rules

In-country training

A photo essay on Turkey



# Making rules work in the Peace

For some time the most talked about issue affecting Volunteers in Tunisia has been the Peace Corps Washington policy on European travel. This policy is that Volunteers in Tunisia can travel in Europe to only Greece and Italy. The restriction on travel to other European countries has been constantly questioned and largely ignored by Volunteers on leave.

When Director Jack Vaughn visited Tunisia recently he was questioned about the rationale behind the rule. Many Volunteers said he did not sufficiently explain Washington's current position, but there was no doubt to anyone present that he was adamant in his reaffirmation of the travel ban and that he wished the policy to be more rigidly enforced. However, he did welcome critical comments on the issue and this prompted the Volunteer Council in Tunisia to form a committee to draft a statement on vacations.

The committee drew up a statement which might not change Washington's mind but which verbalized again one of the overriding preoccupations of Volunteers. The statement did not specify reasons why this particular ban should be discontinued but rather affirmed each Volunteer's right, as a mature individual, to decide personally the rules which shall govern him. To some this might seem to be a revolutionary tack, but in fact it is only another round in the endless battle of the Volunteer vs. The Rules.

To a large number of Volunteers, the rules, usually projected in the form of specific restrictions, are anathema. If he can be left alone in most situations with only his common sense and resources to guide him, why, the Volunteer asks, must this common sense be challenged in regard to vacations or vehicle use or personal behavior?

There are staff members who constantly answer Volunteer criticism of the rules with the rejoinder that the Peace Corps and the Volunteer do not have an employer-employee relationship but rather the Peace Corps is the sum total of its Volunteers. The dissenting Volunteer is satisfied with this answer for it implies that rules are not necessary, that each person must regulate himself and this in turn will provide the regulations of the corporate body.

If one takes into account how often a Volunteer is told of his importance and how admirable is his self-sufficiency, then it is difficult to persuade him that he is being regulated for his own good or for the good of the Peace Corps. Yet, there are two considerations that *ruleless propounding* Volunteers gloss over which are central to their positions. The first is the glaring eye of a Congress that has become convinced of the Volunteer's effectiveness yet seemingly is waiting—not hopefully but nevertheless waiting—to see detrimental effects of the Peace Corps. To many legislators, the Peace Corps must be administered with elaborated and enforced rules, for does not the American system call for that?

## Subsidized anarchy

The second consideration is that no Volunteer as yet has been idealistic enough to offer to pay for his own training, or forfeit his entire living allowance, or return his vacation check uncashed. What, in essence, the ruleless Volunteers are proposing is that the Peace Corps and the American government be the philanthropic agencies behind the *subsidized anarchy*.

*Subsidized anarchy* is a philosophy which states that a natural man, financed by the state and working as

he sees fit, can benefit the world good. This system stresses that these natural men do not enter into compacts with other men to form governments and establish laws. But that these natural men, nourished by governments, can break their compacts and are free to enter into loose unions promoting progress and friendship.

One tenet of this philosophy, to those Volunteers that advocate it, is that if Peace Corps Volunteers were asked to stress the meaningfulness of their title their emphasis would be almost universally on the Volunteer rather than on the Peace Corps. So the *subsidized anarchists* face in reality only one barrier which will be eliminated with the withering away of the Peace Corps hierarchy: the Rules.

Some Volunteers and staff would be shocked by these ideas but they do not fully realize the connections that have been fused in the Volunteer by his American philosophic heritage and the movements that have come to the fore in the United States recently.

To many people, the Peace Corps is possibly the last frontier. The frontier in America was tamed more than a half-century ago and, to recapture the spirit of adventure and challenge that disappeared with this frontier, many see two recourses. The first is war; the second is the Peace Corps. With each of these substitutions comes the accompanying vice (or is it a virtue?) of lawlessness. In war this lawlessness is evident and in the Peace Corps the separation from the government takes the form of rulelessness.

A second factor that plays on the Volunteer's aversion to rules is the manifest exuberance in dissent as part of American history. The Volunteer does not necessarily accept as heroes

Jefferson, Thoreau, the Populists, the anti-McCarthyites or those critical of the Vietnam war. He does not even have to agree with them. Yet his level of education has properly made him aware of them. Also, though the Volunteers have taken a different course from the followers of the New Left, they are still idealistically related to them. They were educated together and are intellectually bound together. As the New Left is espousing radicalism in the United States so the Volunteer is acting with radical initiative in the world. The problem, however, is the that New Left is promulgating printed ideas which the Volunteer can absorb, but the Volunteer is acting in a way which basically cannot be verbalized but must be seen.

#### Rationale for rules

These ideas have nourished *subsidized anarchy*. However, what many Volunteers do not realize is that there is a danger in attempting to attain this condition. The danger is that with a greater degree of anarchy, the subsidization will eventually be lost.

There are very few Volunteers who have Schweitzer complexes and who would be willing to do what they are now doing without the material support of some agency. If the Peace Corps hierarchy loosened up, there would probably be a general tightening up in congressional watching. The situation then would be that, if one or several Volunteers exercised liberty in such a way as to adversely interest a congressman, the damage would set the Peace Corps back a few years.

This is logic but it is not a reason to discard as irrelevant an anarchistic attitude among Volunteers. Certainly a proper rationale for rules must be

mandatory. But what is further needed is for the Volunteer actually to believe that he is governing himself. The Peace Corps has tried to encourage this belief by filling many of its staff positions with former Volunteers, thus giving the appearance that to a great extent it is a Volunteer-run organization.

This is still not satisfactory. For most Volunteers feel that Washington does not know the problems that many of them face in their individual countries; yet Washington makes uniform rules for Volunteers in all countries. An initial step could be to give more autonomy to country directors and their staffs. Then it would be upon the shoulders of a director to explain policy in light of his country and his Volunteers without passing the issue back to Washington.

The country director could then take it upon himself to bring the rules to the Volunteers. Using his judg-

ment combined with their arguments, the rules could be reshaped not to form restrictions but to demonstrate that rules actually can be employed to form a more effective organization.

The basic requirement of a rule or a staff member is to aid a Volunteer in performing at his maximum capability without endangering the position of those serving with him or those who will follow him. This is not difficult to understand and most Volunteers supposedly have the intelligence to realize this. Therefore it seems essential that Volunteers be permitted to help regulate themselves and to help mold the organization which will continue after they have gone.

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**ON THE COVER:** An ancient castle in Anamur, Turkey, on the Mediterranean sea. For photographer Frank Clabaugh's essay on Turkey, see page 17.

# Training: almost the real thing

By ALEXANDER SHAKOW

*In-country training is a growing movement in the Peace Corps. This year almost half of all Peace Corps trainees will have part of their training in their country of assignment; last year the percentage was one-third. The 1968 in-country segments vary greatly in form and content, and they range in length from three weeks to three months; perhaps ten groups will train entirely in their host country. In a few cases, a "third" country—a location used in addition to the U.S. and the host country—may serve as a part-time training site. Here the former head of Peace Corps training examines the possibilities—and the limitations—of in-country training and suggests ways to solve the problems which the Peace Corps has encountered in this area.*

In-country training may well be the answer to many of the most vexing problems of preparing people from this culture to work effectively overseas. But it will not succeed if we leap from program to program without consideration of past experience and the mistakes others have made. It will also fail to accomplish its great potential if we remain locked into any particular training format and neglect other designs and approaches carefully conceived and implemented.

There have been several dozen programs with significant periods of in-country training. The absence of reliable evaluative data makes unequivocal conclusions as impossible as they are undesirable, but there is an increasing collection of reports prepared by staff and Volunteers on the

programs of 1967. This report attempts to provide a critical review of what we have learned from experience and a beginning guide to those about to pursue the path of in-country training.

Training was once thought of as being of terminal length, commonly about 12 weeks. But our own rising standards and host country demands for Volunteers with greater skill in difficult disciplines plus language fluency and cultural sensitivity has forced a harder look at training and how learning takes place most effectively. In three months we cannot produce a Compleat Volunteer; the best we can do is stimulate an interest and provide tools for continued learning on the job. Successful in-country training takes us a giant step toward





Chile photos by Henry and Julie Stone



"The first question a staff should ask itself is—what do we expect the trainees to learn in country?" On opposite page, urban community development trainees Kay Maxwell and Peggy McCormick practice sewing skills under the guidance of Chilean teacher Mabel Blackburn (background). Above, Mrs. Blackburn instructs trainee Beth Spearman in local knitting methods. At left, a language class at the Chilean-North American Institute in Santiago.

the point where the Peace Corps seizes the opportunity to provide consciously opportunities for continuing education; learning need not be confined to an arbitrarily determined time span designated "training" but should be expanded to include the entire period of a Volunteer's tour.

The most important element in any training program is its *staff*. When attempting in-country training for the first time local Peace Corps staff have almost always underestimated the amount of time and effort required. Experience has shown that efforts to create, design, develop and run such programs require a full-time director with assistance for several months before training begins as well as during the training period itself. This is true of United States programs as well; the best programs are full-time jobs for their personnel. Among the weakest programs are those where an associate representative has taken on training responsibilities while continuing to be



"The major thrust of in-country training should be practical rather than theoretical." At left, Chilean students of the National Technical Training Institute in Santiago check the work of trainees preparing for a self-help housing project. The group had half of its



responsible for an on-going Volunteer program. An experienced staff is highly useful, for the difficulties that arise are myriad as are the tricks to make a good program great; a novice in training is at a severe disadvantage at any time but especially overseas. A major goal in the next year should be to develop a cadre of experienced overseas staff skilled in training development and practice. More than anything else this will permit excellent in-country training.

The staff need not all come from the country itself. Many approaches have been used combining faculty from a United States training institution and local resources, Peace Corps and otherwise. Although the reports indicate no consensus on specifics, there is general agreement that a combination of resources is valuable for the continuity essential to efficient training and the insights that a sensitive outsider can bring to a training situation in country.

Regardless of the formal role of Peace Corps staff in training, all reports argue persuasively for their active participation as an important advantage of in-country training that should not be neglected—but often has been. Local staff need to know their future Volunteers; training provides a rare opportunity to develop close relationships, make appropriate site selections and prepare for continuing in-service training. In many cases staff have appeared only briefly at the training site leaving the program entirely to a few United States training personnel.

#### Form and structure

In any training program serious consideration must be given to a philosophy of *form and structure*. No good program is truly unstructured, for those that rely most heavily upon the discovery method and trainee involvement in decision making also

require the most responsible design and well-trained staff. This is all the more true in a program that involves a complete change of environment, for decisions must be made for each part about relative intensity, degree of support to trainees, pace and drive, and so on. There is no agreement on the correct philosophy nor should we expect to find a single answer to these problems which are fundamental to all training designs.

Even the question of length is unresolved and will continue to be so. The choice of a 12-week standard length for a United States program was arbitrary; in-country programs have been as short as two weeks, as long as twelve following directly after four to eight weeks in the United States. Important advice for any program is to avoid excessive length, for trainees cease to learn well if training time is too long, especially if they are already in country and anxious to be working on their real jobs.

training in Chile, half in the U.S. Below, trainees work on a housing unit, one of 11 structures built during the first three days of training in Seattle. At right, trainee Bruce Gordon cuts a block at the Chilean Technical Training Institute.



A sensibly organized in-country section with much opportunity for trainee exploration is a goal all programs should aim for. If the program has a U.S. portion, its intensity must be determined by the requirements of each project. To move trainees from rigidity to flexibility is much easier than the other way around, but each training staff will have to consider the pace of its program, how much they wish to vary it throughout, and how they will respond to trainee recommendations for change in it.

A similar problem is presented by the issue of staff support for trainees: a great advantage of training in country is that the mistakes of a raw new Volunteer can be made with the close support and guidance of experienced hands; this permits him to learn from his actions before being cast out alone into the intricacy and fascination of a Peace Corps job. Regular Peace Corps staff, notoriously overworked,

seldom are able to provide this close and active support, so that a Volunteer trained in country may be several months ahead of his peer trained in the United States. Too protective a staff can overdo this, however, and may inhibit learning and stimulate a dependence in the trainee that he will carry over as a Volunteer, perhaps increasing Peace Corps Volunteer resentment at the apparent disinterest of staff. There is another important decision which must be made about training style.

#### A whole program

Thus, in preparing for in-country training the staff will need to see the program as a cohesive whole and consider with care the major preconditions—time, staff, training philosophy and experience.

The most prevalent shortcoming of in-country programs has been the failure to distinguish and use the host country environment with clarity and

precision. This probably resulted from an assumption that presence in the host country was itself sufficient to assure success, especially in comparison with the history of poor United States programs. Yet, a common characteristic in these early programs has been the transfer overseas of many problems that plague training at home, perhaps the most egregious of which is a tight, inflexible training schedule on a site where trainees seldom see the local people or have an opportunity to learn directly from them. The first question a staff should ask itself is—what do we expect the trainees to learn in country? Each staff must decide that priority—then proceed to consider its implementation. The following paragraphs seek to describe certain areas of experience which require special attention, and to attempt to destroy, as well, any underlying assumption that merely being in country provides a training panacea.

After staffing, the most important single factor is the *site*; geographical location in the country is the first issue. There has been a natural hesitation to train in the area of future assignment lest candidate Volunteers look foolish and impair their Volunteer effectiveness. Recent experience in India, Brazil and the Caribbean suggests that this is outweighed by the benefits of working in actual local conditions with host country officials who will later be with Peace Corps Volunteers in all phases of their program. Trainees have occasionally had a tendency to over-identify with their training hosts and make invidious comparisons with their actual assignments while others have over-glamorized their future assignment while training in a third country setting; either is an unfortunate reaction. Some countries may find it politically impossible to place Volunteers in training in their own districts but the possibility should be considered; after training in their own region Volunteers are familiar with the language, officials, communities and problems—these are significant pluses for in-country training.

#### Away from academia

But the actual site is very important even within the region. A return to the stilted academic environment of a formal training center, especially a school divorced from the mainstream of community life, is a great mistake—but to avoid it is a major problem in planning. Most programs should break away from the traditional classroom setting so familiar to A.B. generalists. Even our best Peace Corps centers have had to retain something of this institutionalization when they gather together a group of 50-75 trainees for language and other regular classes. But trainees invariably find that their most exciting and productive moments in training are the radical departures from this established routine—long stays on the Caribbean islands for community visits and work are the high point of Virgin Islands training programs, for example. This is all the more obvious and necessary when training takes place in the real setting of the host country.

Thus, the most successful in-country programs have managed to find a setting that permits efficient learning for groups and still many opportunities for independent exploration

and development. In Ghana, for example, the 1967 totally in-country program was centered at a Teacher Training College on the edge of a town; trainees had time to wander off into Winneba on their own and from the start began to appreciate the flavor of Ghana. After a couple of weeks there, they spent three weeks in villages where they taught in schools and stayed with Ghanaian families before coming back to Winneba for further sessions. In several India programs the trainees have been located at Gram Sevaks centers near a cluster of villages and within easy access to Indian community life. At the other extreme are programs held entirely in an institution such as Robert College in Istanbul where trainees had no time to even explore the city; many other programs have been too isolated from the local population even when in the community.

An often neglected or poorly used advantage of in-country programs, but one requiring considerable care, is the involvement of host country institutions and personnel. For example, host country politics might, at its simplest level, dictate choice of instructors for training programs; a common complaint about in-country programs is lecturing—often in the local language—by local officials. Almost invariably lectures turn out to be boring, irrelevant, unintelligible, repetitious and embarrassing—usually the very lectures we have long since dropped from U.S. training. All training staffs may have to incorporate some of these at the beginning of their programs—in *brief* orientation periods—but should strive to keep them at a minimum; the better they understand the country the more able they will be to select the right speakers carefully.

An inexperienced trainer with limited knowledge of the host country can fall into many time consuming and distracting traps; a sensitive and experienced person can promote warm and positive cooperation with local institutions. In Nepal, Chile, India and elsewhere, staffs have worked closely and successfully with their host country colleagues, often with the latter taking over major responsibility for considerable portions of the training. This kind of close cooperation, useful training for the government official, pays off quickly in dividends for trainees; they see how cross-cultural cooperation takes place

in practice, learn to respect host country expertise, meet key officials who will later be of considerable use to them in their jobs, and often have the chance to work and learn with counterparts.

#### Field visits important

In its ideal form, the in-country experience should provide a constant opportunity for trainees to confront and explore their new world; due to the requirements of language and other formal class time this goal must often be partially revised. Field visits to the community then become especially important for they combine in grand measure—when done well—all major aspects of a training curriculum: technical studies (practice teaching, agricultural work, community development, and so forth), language (daily use in the market, the home, on the job, etc.) and cross-cultural studies. In no other way is the totality of a Volunteer's experience so easily conveyed as during such periods of training, but every care must be taken not to waste this time.

This involvement with the local culture is not intended to divorce the trainee from his colleagues or teachers; on the contrary, it is essential that during this period the training staff be present at appropriate moments for continuation of language and technical skill development—to supervise practice teaching, for example—and that they play a subtle role in helping the trainee to understand the environment in which he finds himself. While spending most of their time learning language, practice teaching or visiting their host families, Ghana trainees met daily at lunch time with a staff member and the other four or five trainees in town at the home of a Peace Corps Volunteer coordinator; there they could explore with one another their experiences and gain insights as to what was actually going on around them—and why. Complete isolation or immersion inhibits learning from peers and congenial staff; in-country training would do well to provide occasions—not necessarily daily—for trainees to pour out their frustrations and excitement to each other on their field visits.

In this way a strong base for effective cross-cultural learning can be established. Interestingly enough, this area has been the most neglected in overseas programs despite its obvious importance. The reasons are not hard



to find: area studies training in the United States has tended to be the least successful component and the least susceptible to adequate generalizations about technique and design; the assumption has been that once overseas, area studies will take care of itself because the reality is there to be seen, smelled, touched and heard.

In taking advantage of the host country environment the fullest possible thought should be given to language learning, a component which has in the past been rather weak. This has been due primarily to the difficulty of establishing class situations that permit undistracted teaching and learning; language study requires close concentration for long periods of time during the initial stages and, if trainees have not reached a useful plateau before entering the country, they will find it exceedingly difficult to do so without hampering other parts of the program. A solid concentration on language in the U.S. portion will help prepare them.

There is almost universal agreement that in programs partially con-

ducted in country the language coordinator should carry over across both parts of the program, for styles of language teaching seem to vary so sharply. There is great need to train host country nationals for in-country language programs; a major cause of weak programs has been the untrained instructor who was unable to excite and stimulate the trainees.

The major thrust of in-country training should be practical rather than theoretical, and one resource of great potential for practical instruction is the experienced Volunteer serving in the country. In general, Volunteers—or extended Volunteers—have proved effective in training roles. Most of them have avoided the returned Volunteer hang-ups connected with having just returned to the United States; if well selected they tend to have great enthusiasm for their jobs and enjoy the teaching role. There are problems, however. If poor Volunteers are chosen they can kill motivation and interest or may spend more time talking of going home than doing their job; this has occurred in some programs. Even more troublesome, however, has been the staff effort to overload the Peace Corps Volunteer with too much responsibility for planning and implementing a program. Only infrequently are Volunteers sufficiently skilled in the design of training and its problems to be able to plan and construct on their own a solid training program; to throw the whole burden upon them, as has been done, is unfair. There are also ethical and legal problems that should be evaluated before using current Volunteers for this job, especially if it is really an effort to unload the job on some available and willing, cheap labor.

### Overseas selection

The alarming attrition patterns of a few early in-country programs caused a healthy questioning of assessment and selection overseas.

There is general agreement on the desirability of groups arriving in country as trainees rather than Volunteers, but on the understanding that selection pressures should be minimized, selection boards deemphasized and self-assessment stressed. Trainees must come to the country believing that they are "almost Volunteers," which "requires a true commitment" to the Peace Corps; before departure over-

seas this attitude should be stressed rather than the "see if you like India" approach tried in early programs. This means that trainees must know quite explicitly for what jobs they are training, and that, once in country, they must be given continuous reports on their progress.

Overseas staffs initially resented the idea of a selection or assessment officer—a professional psychologist—being present, but after some experience of their own have had a change of mind. There is an extensive counseling function to be played during training in addition to the time consuming and difficult assessment role; often these problems are beyond the capacity of the average Peace Corps staff member.

In-country training staffs should experiment. They must be encouraged, for example, to try modification of the selection process, to vary the length of training for different types of programs, to shift entirely the order of events in training, to attempt more of the internship programs and so on. Several countries have, for example, tentatively tried to send trainees straight to their posts and then, after they know what they need and want, bring them back for intensive training; this could be the beginning of two years of continuing Volunteer education and training at a substantial financial savings.

There may be a time when all training will take place in country. To prepare for this we need to control the development of this new approach to training so that we learn from what we are doing. Hopefully these remarks will contribute to an agency desire for self-analysis and criticism in the context of planning for better training and education of Volunteers.

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... to go to language lab,  
language lab. . . ."

By Norman Skougstad

*Psychological needs in training emphasize conflict:*

# Assessment or assistance

By HENRY GILGOFF

*Truk, Eastern Caroline Islands*

**A**t the time I boarded the champagne dinner flight from San Francisco to Peace Corps training in Micronesia, the term "culture shock" appeared to be the peculiar hang-up of several representatives of the Peace Corps I had met in California. But several weeks later, after I had experienced one of the first entirely in-country training programs in Peace Corps history, I realized that culture shock, Micronesian style, described the very real impact of moving from a supersonic jet age into a society where the sight of a propeller-driven DC-4 is sometimes enough to cause a small riot.

Adjusting to a more simple way of living while at the same time meeting the demands of a rigorous training program, I soon found that the flies and mosquitoes were constantly with

me; the benjo or the broken water seal were there; the lack of privacy was omnipresent. But in the midst of all these new facts of life, sufficient psychological assistance to cushion the blow was absent.

Assessment rather than assistance seemed to me the key word in the few hectic days of orientation and screening at San Francisco State College. I moved from conference to conference, all conducted with the purpose of weeding out trainees thought to be unsuitable for Peace Corps service and trying to present a clear picture of the work and *not* the vacation involved in the program. At one mass meeting, the person who was to be the trainees' ultimate judge on the assessment board created a "Big Brother Is Watching You" atmosphere by firmly stating that he and his staff

were to be *spies*. A fellow psychologist stood up at the end of this memorable speech and reminded the trainees that the staff was there primarily to assist, but his few sentences could only seem a footnote. And I, along with other trainees, was convinced that such procedures as following the maze that eventually led to the Public Health Service from the college was just another test. This attitude was carried to the training site in Udot where sleeping on a mat on the floor and walking in the mud from one end of the island to the other were interpreted as parts of a program designed to see if a person could make the grade.

## Process clarified

Once in Udot, the author of the footnote, Dr. Justin Weiss, was in charge of the field operations, and he attempted to clarify the assessment process. He held meetings with the persons operating the training program—staff members, Volunteers and persons contracted by the Peace Corps—to wipe away any reluctance to cooperate caused by bad memories of their own previous assessment experiences. He toured the island emphasizing to all trainees that his staff was there to help. By the end of the program, Dr. Weiss had won the respect of the staff and trainees for his low-key operations.



Excellent as Dr. Weiss was, the psychological assistance was still insufficient. Two problems were beyond the scope of the field assessment crew: the unique psychological needs of in-country trainees were not given the necessary emphasis and the assessment officers faced (as they always have) the problems inherent in their dual functions of judging and helping.

The inadequate emphasis given the psychological needs of trainees became most clear to me during a meeting about the lack of free time. As I listened to noble rationalizations delivered by trainees to win a free hour, I realized that we were not willing to say bluntly and openly that time to take stock of oneself was a psychological necessity in an in-country program. A Volunteer, not a trainee, approached this valid justification when he asserted that at least some persons were still thinking in terms of a training program based in the United States where electricity and stateside entertainment are present and culture shock is absent.

Deficiency in psychological assistance was noticeable again in the brief period between mid-boards and final boards. With only about three weeks between these days of reckoning (two weeks being spent off-island) trainees did not have much time to work with their psychologists. It seemed as if I had just put down the pencil from

one set of peer ratings when I had to pick it up again and evaluate how my fellow trainees and myself had progressed.

#### Staffing problems

Other faults in the program that could be cited derived from "understaffing," Dr. Weiss said. Some of the problems probably resulted from Dr. Weiss' staff's not being as experienced or competent as he. The director of the Udot training program, Bob Gould (who was also deputy director of the Micronesia Peace Corps program), had said, "Three active persons can do the job. If you don't get that, maybe you need four or five." With four psychologists serving more than 100 trainees scattered around an island, the number of voluntary group meetings was extremely limited. Dr. Weiss explained, "People who are married haven't consulted us as much as single persons. It's easier for a single person to come and say 'I have a conflict within myself' than for a couple to come and say that 'we have

a conflict between ourselves.'" Despite this fact, group meetings for couples training for Truk district, including my wife and I, were not continued beyond one session, even though all involved expressed interest in meeting again. Whether the cause was a lack of initiative or an overload of work on our district psychologist, the situation remained with the trainees to live with. Dr. Weiss told me of his hiking across the island from his office to Muanitiu, the village where the Truk trainees were stationed. He had come to take a picture of the sunset, but as he walked along the beach, three trainees approached him to talk about their problems. This incident showed how great a role chance had to play in an assessment program marred either by understaffing or insufficient drive.

Solutions to these problems are easily found. In-country training is new to the Peace Corps, and each program in these initial stages will contain mistakes that with close analysis can be spotted and corrected.

**"Third" country training** in the Philippines for a Ceylon-bound group which received most of its training in the U.S. At Baybay Agricultural School in Simlaon, Laguna, trainees learn the ins and outs of rice in a two-week training course in rice production. At left, a trainee takes her turn at plowing a ricefield. Center, class time. Trainees learn to identify plant, insect and mineral specimens. At right, threshing the rice plants.



Philippines photos by James Archambeault

The first program, Micronesia V, received analysis from Peace Corps Washington and the training staff, and this benefitted Micronesia VI. Participants in the second program conducted in Udot had an "involvement time" which gave trainees an opportunity to become a part of their community or to sit back and ask, "Why Peace Corps, or Micronesia?" Another important subsequent innovation in the psychological aspects of in-country training was the elimination of mid-boards, which freed in-country trainees from a nerve-racking and time-consuming procedure.

These and other steps were taken immediately after a program that was something of a guinea pig. But a means of ending the problems inherent in the fusion of roles of psychological adviser and assessor has long been a bugaboo of the Peace Corps, and a final solution is not likely to come quickly just because the need is greater in an in-country program. The ideal situation would be to leave the decision of whether to become a Volunteer completely up to the trainee since, in an in-country program, he can experience life as it is in his assigned country. Forty-four trainees of the original 187 who came to Udot voluntarily left the program, and only three persons were selected out at final boards. If the psychologists were stripped of their assessment powers, what would have happened when these trainees refused to accept the advice of professionals? This is the question Dr. Weiss and several trainees pose: Can the Peace Corps look the other way as a trainee insists on thrusting himself into a situation potentially harmful to his mental health?

### Self-assessment

Kim Joslin, a trainee writing his opinion of assessment, at my request said:

"I do not think assessment is best left up to the individual. In many instances individual personality traits may serve to obscure self-assessment. An individual may think he is fully capable of adjusting to a new environment and yet be unaware of detrimental personality traits coming to the surface in the process.

"Being American, there are cultural factors which further obscure self-perception. As you know, failure is a dreaded thing in the States. An individual with an overriding fear of failure may rationalize away his short-

comings and convince himself to stay."

But, he added:

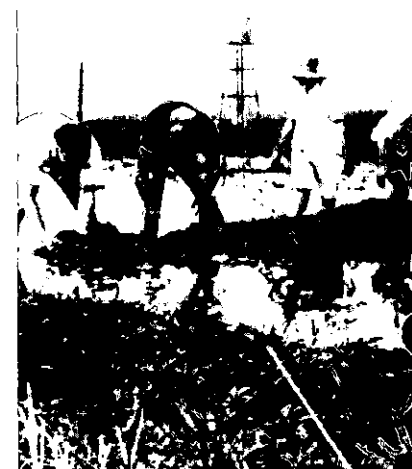
"At the present time, the psychologists on the assessment staff play dual roles. They not only evaluate the merits of individual trainees but also serve as trainee counselors. Unfortunately their tasks are contradictory in nature. Consequently a very important service to trainee 'well being' is sacrificed in favor of the need to evaluate trainee behavior.

"Instead of serving dual roles, psychologists should be divided into two staffs. One staff would function as assessors, evaluating trainee merits. The other staff would function as counselors, advising individual trainees."

The dual staff approach may be the basis for some change although Dr. Weiss has pointed to the administrative problems such a program might cause. Two separate staffs, he said, could hinder the assessment officers from representing trainees fairly. Another suggestion, one that can and should be implemented immediately, comes from Mr. Gould, who advocates low-key, non-directive operations as the pattern for all assessment programs. If Peace Corps followed this system faithfully, there would be no Big Brother speeches for Volunteers to recall to trainees. Instead, there would be a history of concern with counseling rather than spying or even judging. Psychologists, under this system, would have the best possible chance of winning the confidence of the people they propose to help.

If this atmosphere of trust does not become a regular part of all programs, trainees in country, where mental pressures can reach a high intensity, will always be working with insufficient psychological assistance. A trainee-just-turned-Volunteer may go off to some remote area hiding a "minor" problem that could explode into a nervous breakdown. If the suggestion does not become policy, Peace Corps must have on its conscience the mental anguish of any Volunteer who had once considered seeking help until he saw the sign "Field Assessment Officer."

*Henry Gilgoff and his wife, Alice, are media specialists in Truk. He has written for The New York Post and The Trenton Times and has helped start a semi-independent newspaper in Truk called Met Poraus (Trukese for "What's the Story?").*



*Programs totally in country have called for*

# Pre-training selection

By JOHN E. EXNER JR.

**"S**taging" before training has been a relatively long-time practice in the Peace Corps. It is mostly an administrative procedure, conducted for groups of trainees who are headed for training areas where adequate facilities for medical processing will not be readily available. The basic goals of staging are quite simple: to clear up any problems of a medical, dental, technical or legal nature before training begins.

Last spring a decision was made to train Micronesia V completely in country. Many planning questions were raised concerning this program and the problems posed by the training site, the relatively isolated island of Udot in the Truk District of Micronesia. It seemed natural that a pre-training staging in the United States would be required.

At this point, several questions and problems were placed before the Office of Selection. These centered upon the desire to have trainees who would not present a negative image of the Peace Corps to the Trukese, that is, trainees who might be overtly destructive or seriously maladjusted; the problems of assessment in the field; the necessity of avoiding "mis-assigning" a trainee; and the possibility that Udot, by its very geography, could become a logistic nightmare for trainees that might resign or who might be separated. This latter concern later became a reality, as some trainees who resigned were delayed as much as three weeks in returning to the United States.

Another factor entering into the planning dialogue was the desire of the field to maximize the counseling skills of the assessment staff. Field staff had realistically appraised the environmental stresses of Udot, plus those which would evolve from the pace of training as planned. It was agreed that a selection format which would emphasize counseling and self-selection was desirable, but to accomplish this an early identification of the "obviously" unqualified or misprogrammed trainee would be required. It was on this point that considerations of selection at staging materialized.

It seems appropriate to define that word "obviously" as it is used here. Peace Corps training history has been clearly marked by a very small percentage of trainees who present themselves at a training site and shortly thereafter can be identified by the majority of people around them, both trainees and staff, as "being in the wrong ball park." In some instances they are simply misprogrammed, such as the Spanish major, business minor, with living experience in Latin America, who had applied specifically for a Latin America program and found himself at a Micronesia staging assigned to Teaching English as a Second Language. In other more obvious instances they are people with personality and/or psychiatric problems who simply cannot function effectively in their world and look to the Peace Corps as a "therapeutic out." I call them "walking wounded," and no matter how skillfully the data in selection is gleaned, some do receive invitations to train, for the data is simply not sufficient to identify all of them.

The selection task was easily stated—to identify and separate or transfer the obviously unqualified at staging—but difficult to implement. These problems were not entirely new to Selection. Numerous programs have required as little as four weeks

**Returned Volunteers** and local Filipino farmers helped instruct trainees in rice production. At top, trainees plant rice with wireline as working guide. Center, trainees count out rice seeds for a germination test. At bottom, a group builds and cleans levees in rice paddies.

for final selection, an eternity when compared to the four days allowed for assessment and selection during the staging of Micronesia V.

### **New format adopted**

It was decided to adopt an experimental format which called for the reading before staging of as many Civil Service Commission Full Field Investigations as were available on trainees who had accepted the program invitation, plus a thorough re-screening of all other data available such as the application folder, correspondence file, medical records, etc. It was agreed that any trainee whose folder contained any data raising questions concerning his qualifications would be interviewed as time permitted by at least one of the five members of the assessment staff. Such questions ranged from the more serious suitability questions to simple technicalities such as degree completion dates, draft problems and the like. If the question raised by the data in the folder was resolved by the interview, no further assessment would occur during staging. If, however, the trainee's qualifications were still questioned at the end of the interview, a second interview—with a different assessment officer—would be scheduled.

It was also agreed that the professional commitment of the selection officer to the individual as an individual must be maintained at all costs. Consequently, the criteria for separation demanded clear and unequivocal documentation of failure to qualify. Where the data did not meet those requirements, a philosophy prevailed which, in effect, permitted the "tie to go to the runner."

Two hundred seven trainees reported to the staging for Micronesia V in San Francisco. As of the reporting deadline, 164 folders had been reviewed. The assessment schedule, which had to be coordinated with the basic goal of medical processing, permitted 102 interviews to be completed on 80 trainees. A review board was conducted each evening to discuss those trainees interviewed during the day. The board constituency, in addition to the selection officer and assessment staff, included the director for the East Asia Pacific Region, the chief for the Pacific Division, the Micronesia operations officer, the Peace Corps director for Micronesia, and two district directors from Peace Corps Micronesia. Thirteen trainees were

separated at the Micronesia V staging. Five others resigned. Three more were medically disqualified. One hundred eighty-seven trainees went to Udot. Ultimately, 44 resigned during training and only three were separated although routine mid-board and final board were conducted. Counseling and self-selection were emphasized in the program, but in addition to, rather than in place of, the routine assessment task.

The apparent success of the selection at staging process used for Micronesia V led to more elaborate planning for the staging for Micronesia VI. Micronesia VI was also to train at Udot under conditions relatively similar to its earlier sister program. Two weeks were available for additional experimentation with the staging process, and especially the selection segment of it. A modified format was designed for Micronesia VI. The same reading of all available Civil Service Commission Full Field Investigations would occur as would the same pre-staging screening of all additional data available. The changes in the format were twofold, although the selection criteria remained the same.

First, all trainees would be interviewed. A larger assessment staff of highly qualified professionals was contracted specifically to work the staging. Second, all trainees would be interviewed twice, each time by a different member of the assessment staff. Where either of the interviewers recommended separation, a third interview would be conducted, and if necessary, even a fourth or fifth interview, each with a different person so as to maximize involvement of a professional nature in the decision making regarding any single human being. As with Micronesia V, review boards were conducted everyday and evening over an eleven day period. Thus some evaluation, at least of a psychological nature, was accomplished for every trainee. Supplementing the medical processing and assessment procedures, the Regional personnel conducted numerous small group discussions as they had during the staging for Micronesia V. These discussions were designed to orient the trainee to the Peace Corps, to Peace Corps Micronesia, and to the training at Udot.

Of the 164 trainees who reported to San Francisco for the Micronesia VI staging, twelve were separated

there and five resigned. Three were medically disqualified. Of the 144 trainees who went to Udot, 12 resigned during training and 11 were separated.

A routine mid-board was not conducted during the training of Micronesia VI. In retrospect this was probably an error in judgment, as a mid-board ordinarily provides feedback to trainees and can contribute to the self-assessment process. It is interesting to note that no resignations occurred in Micronesia VI after the time when a mid-board would have ordinarily occurred and a significantly larger number of separations occurred in that program than did in Micronesia V. The fact remains, however, that the separation attrition in both programs was significantly lower at the end of training than is predicted for usual training programs.

There are many questions which remain unanswered concerning selection at staging. Most of these relate to the best utilization of professional talent rather than to the underlying philosophy of the process. Some have raised the ethical question concerning separation so early "in the game." Technically and legally a trainee can be separated at any time for just cause. But ethically, is there an obligation to every person invited to provide him with a full training cycle to "demonstrate his wares?"

### **Early separation best**

I must respond to such a question in the negative, giving due consideration to both the individual and to the Peace Corps. First to the individual. He probably wants to be in the Peace Corps or he would not have applied, and it would indeed be wonderful if everyone who applied could be of some effective service overseas. But this is not the case. Overseas service is demanding. It takes patience and effort and maturity and a good tolerance for stress and ambiguity. Where these characteristics are obviously lacking it becomes cruelly deceptive to encourage the person to "get involved" and identify with the group and the program only to separate him six or twelve weeks later. The longer such deception exists, the greater the emotional impact of separation and the more difficult the subsequent adjustment. These are personality variables, and personality does not change drastically in the brief period encompassed by training. In my experience,

most of those separated at staging are not really surprised by their separation. If anything, they were surprised by the invitation, and for some this is the first opportunity that they have had to discuss their limitations frankly with a professional and undertake some realistic planning. The impact of the "walking wounded" or the "mis-programmed" person on training can also be detrimental. He is time consuming and can even be the "pace setter" for parts of the program which adhere to the "we proceed as fast as the slowest" approach. He generates concern and sympathy in others, and in this regard, when his separation finally occurs, it is painful for all involved.

Selection at staging is still considered experimental and is still undergoing much scrutiny. It is perceived as an adjunct rather than a replacement for any portion of the routine assessment-selection process. Neither of the Micronesia staging formats can, in retrospect, be considered as the optimum approach. Time was too short and staff members too few to get the job done well for Micronesia V. The process was too elaborate and too long for Micronesia VI. The multiple interviews frequently provided a sense of "overkill" and the eleven-day period without closure was too frustrating and anxiety provoking for all involved. One week, with adequate staff, seems to be a reasonable period during which all of the tasks of staging, including selection, can be accomplished.

It seems reasonable to predict that more selection at staging will occur as more programs are designed to train in country, and it is not unreasonable to believe that some form of staging, including selection, ultimately might exist for all Peace Corps training programs. If selection at staging can, in some way, alter the complex demands of the traditional assessment role during training, it seems possible that a much greater emphasis can be given to the counseling and self-selection process thereby providing the individual and the program with more positive gains.

*John E. Exner Jr. is a professor of psychology at Bowling Green State University. He holds a Ph.D. in clinical psychology from Cornell University. He has been a field selection officer for the Peace Corps since 1965 and has participated in the selection process of about 20 training programs.*



Vice President Hubert H. Humphrey made an unscheduled stop in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on January 6 to cut the wedding cake for a pair of Peace Corps newlyweds. The same afternoon in California, Director Jack Vaughn was giving away another Peace Corps bride. The Vice President and Mrs. Humphrey attended the wedding reception of Mr. and Mrs. David Moonitz, Volunteers who are both teaching in Debre Berhan. Moonitz and his bride, the former Terese Condon, met in training last summer in Boston. When the former Miss Condon learned that the Vice President's visit to Ethiopia would coincide with her wedding, she wrote inviting him to attend, but was not certain that his schedule would permit it. A hundred Volunteers and about 25 Ethiopian students attended the reception held at the home of the deputy director of the Peace Corps in Ethiopia, Harry G. Wilkinson, and his wife.

In San Francisco, where he was attending a recruiters' conference, Vaughn gave the former Jennifer Grattan in marriage to Alan Corner, when the bride's parents were unable to attend the wedding. Both the bride and groom were Volunteers in Sierra Leone; Corner is now a Peace Corps recruiter for the Western region.



# A special membership

*Here are excerpts from a speech made by Director Jack Vaughn at Columbia University February 14:*

**"T**he Washington establishment of the Peace Corps is one of 58 establishments to which we claim membership, and the least important among these. The other 57 are the host governments of the nations where Volunteers serve.

"Altogether, we have on occasion been lumped in that vague and most elusive of conspiracies, The Establishment—the one with the capital T and capital E."

"Anybody who talks about The Establishment with a capital T and a capital E makes a proper noun out of some very improper people. The Peace Corps establishment ranks in the lower case, and we think of ourselves in terms of verbs, not nouns. We are engaged in the act of establishing, not settled arrangements."

"It is no secret that the Peace Corps is considered within the organization charts of the United States Government. But most students of government recognize the unique niche occupied in that structure by the Peace Corps. Our annual appropriations bill is voted on by the Congress along with other appropriations for foreign assistance. Under the legislation passed by the Congress in 1961, authority for the administration of the Peace Corps was delegated to the President. He subsequently delegated that authority to the Secretary of State, who in turn delegated the authority to the Director of the Peace Corps."

"Peace Corps country directors have firmly resisted the increasingly rare attempts to consider Peace Corps Volunteers as members of the official American community. One of our country directors said to his Volunteers: 'I am a member of the country team. You are not. If I want to see a Minister or the President, I'm required to check with the Ambassador or the Deputy Chief of Mission. You are not. Let me know what you're

up to because I may have to catch you on the way out. But it won't take an Act of Congress before you can move.'"

"Rather than consider the Peace Corps as an instrument of foreign policy, I think it is more correct to say that it is an instrument of domestic policy in 57 nations.

"In many cases the establishments in these countries are new, the result of independence movements since World War II. In other instances, the agencies are new governmental responses to problems; in some cases Volunteers find no local structure whatsoever. Wherever they are, though, the Volunteers are communicating, by words and by action, that the old ways are not the only ways, that the old systems can perform new tasks or that new structures can be devised where others have failed. These Volunteers represent no 'unseen' establishment or bureaucracy. By training, they are sensitive to the conditions of the country in which they serve; by experience, they learn the requirements of the last agencies to which they are assigned. Thus, the Peace Corps is both the carrier and the repository of their sincere ideals. In this sense the Peace Corps is very much a conduit instead of a logical system for administration and control."

"This point is that we don't want a Peace Corps program for Kenya." We have no Kenya program, no Malaysia program, no Colombia program.

"There will be, we hope, a Kenya program for the Peace Corps, a Malaysia Peace Corps, a Colombia Peace Corps. If we perform well, there will be 57 Peace Corps. But such programs come because in each instance where they may happen, leaders are satisfied that the organization, like the best of our Volunteers, learned to lead by staying a step behind; by stimulating leadership in others—and then living with the consequences of the leadership of others."

"In . . . countless . . . ways, we are learning to ease our hands off the

decision-making power, perhaps as foreign nationals have never done before. In time, perhaps, we shall not know . . . surrenders of power because we will never become attuned to sharing power in the first place."

## Apply early for staff jobs

Volunteers who are interested in future staff jobs with the Peace Corps should file applications at least three months prior to their termination, Peace Corps Talent Search has announced.

According to new application procedures recently initiated by the office, Volunteers obtain application forms from their country directors, complete the forms, and then submit them to members of the Peace Corps staff whom the applicants wish to use as references. Staff members, in turn, attach their recommendations to the application before it is forwarded to Talent Search. Margurette Norton of Talent Search's Division of Returned Volunteers has indicated that no application form will be considered without the attached references.

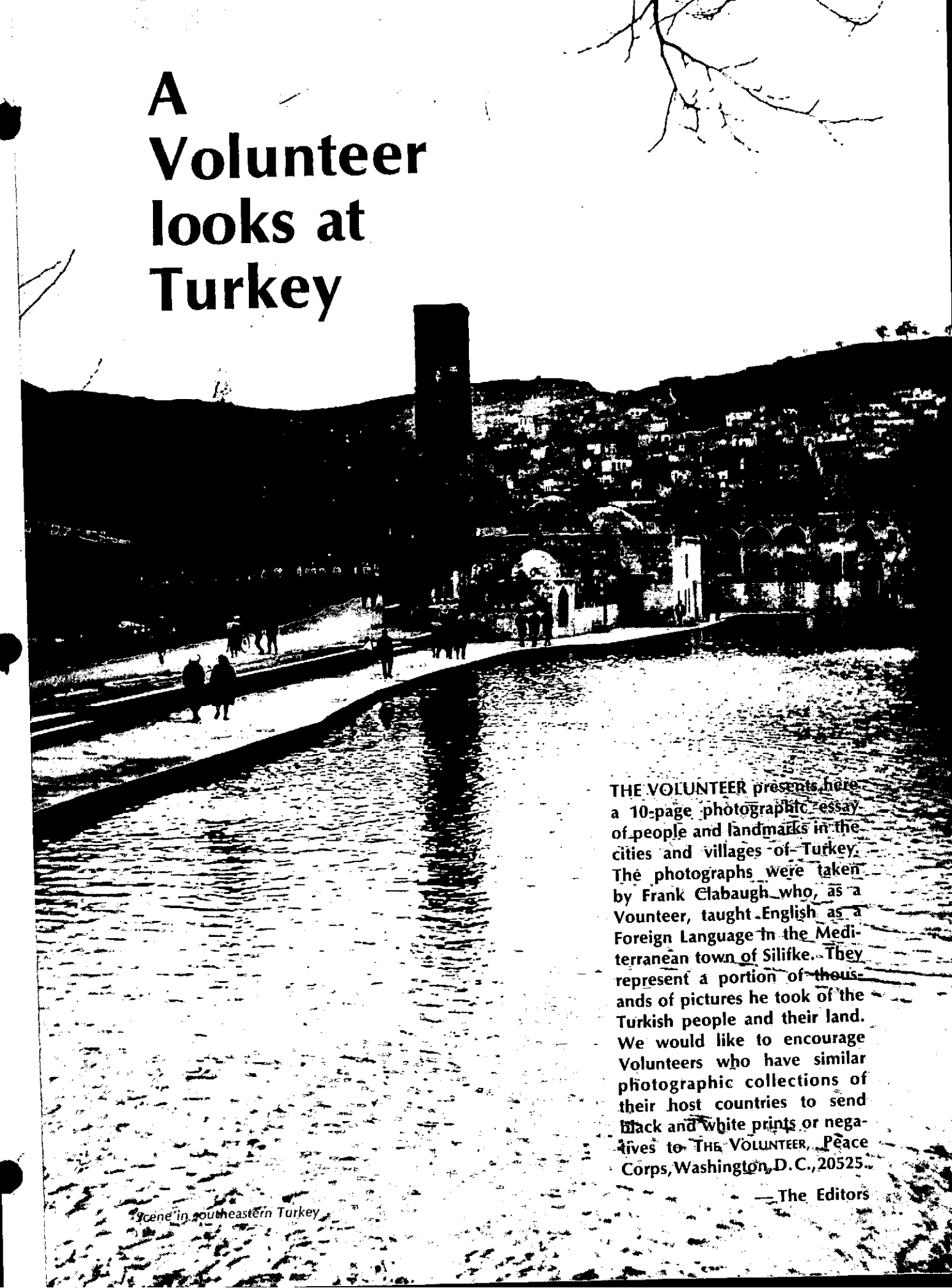
Following receipt and review of their applications, Talent Search will write directly to applicants. Interviews for positions in Peace Corps headquarters and in the field take place in Washington; recruiting candidates are interviewed at regional recruiting offices. Training institutions hire directly, on the basis of the candidate's skills and recommendations; this information is forwarded to the training sites by Talent Search.

## Education seminar

Returned Volunteers who worked in education projects overseas are invited to represent the Peace Corps at a panel discussion May 31 sponsored by the Comparative and International Education Society of Canada at the University of Calgary, Calgary, Alberta, Canada. Other panel members will include representatives from CUSO, VSO, External Aid and other groups. Interested Volunteers should write to C. Henderson Smith, Editor, *Newsletter*, the Comparative and International Education Society of Canada, 1901 Glenaire Drive, North Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, and to Miss Carol Santry, Speakers' Bureau, Peace Corps, Washington, D.C. 20525.



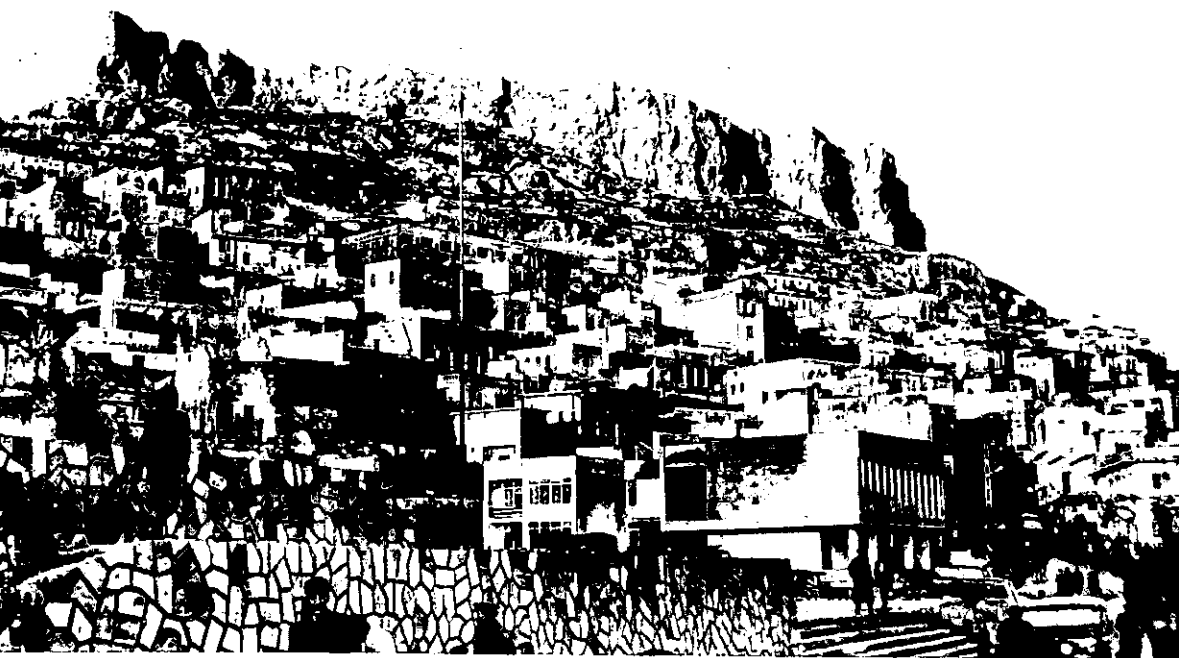
# A Volunteer looks at Turkey



THE VOLUNTEER presents here a 10-page photographic essay of people and landmarks in the cities and villages of Turkey. The photographs were taken by Frank Clabaugh who, as a Volunteer, taught English as a Foreign Language in the Mediterranean town of Silifke. They represent a portion of thousands of pictures he took of the Turkish people and their land. We would like to encourage Volunteers who have similar photographic collections of their host countries to send black and white prints or negatives to THE VOLUNTEER, Peace Corps, Washington, D. C., 20525.

— The Editors

Scene in southeastern Turkey



*The city of Bitlis  
in eastern Turkey,  
built around the  
ancient citadel walls*



*Turkish student*



*A stork tends her  
newborn on village rooftop*



*Discussion  
over a cup of tea  
in coffee house*

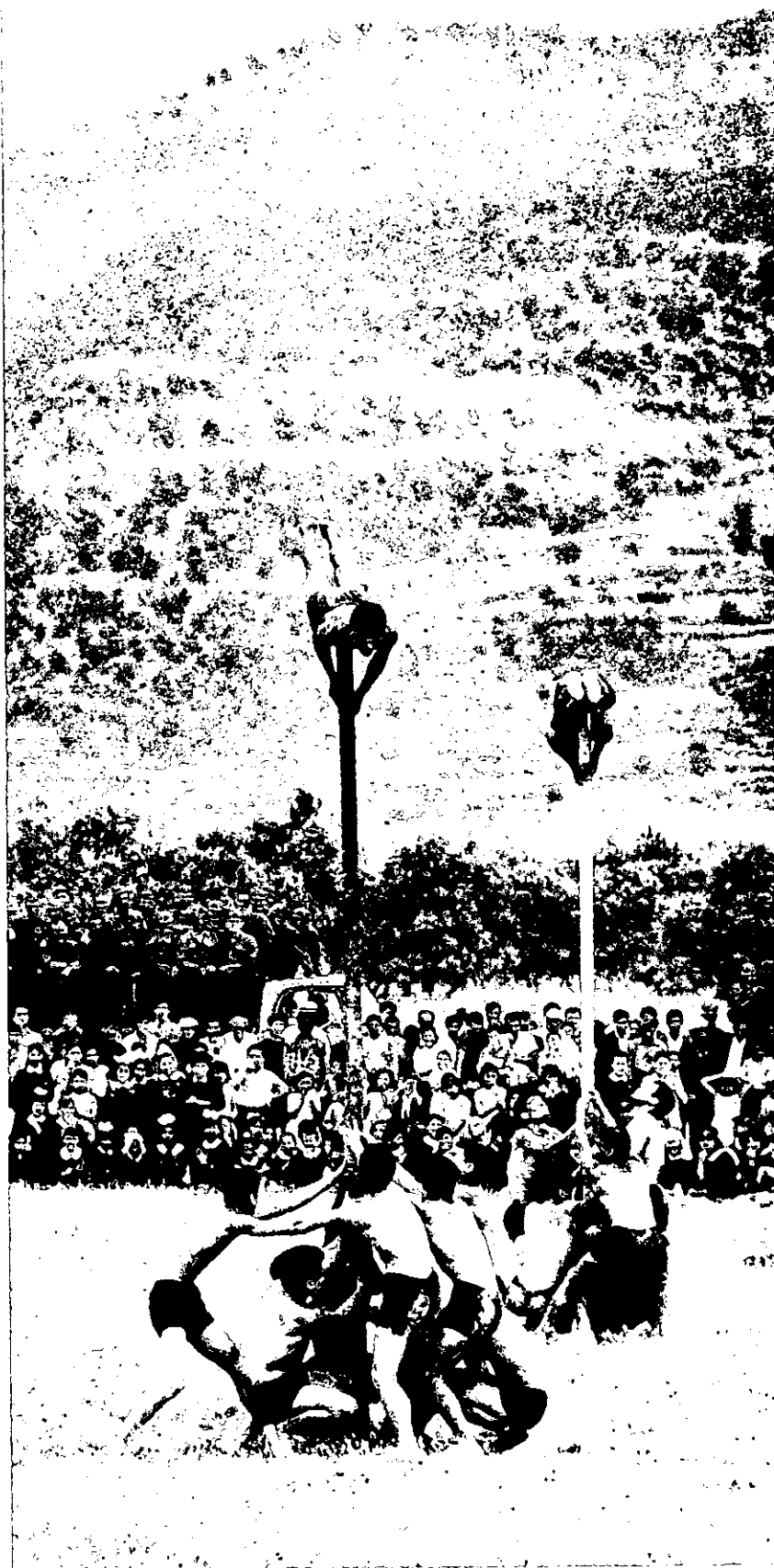




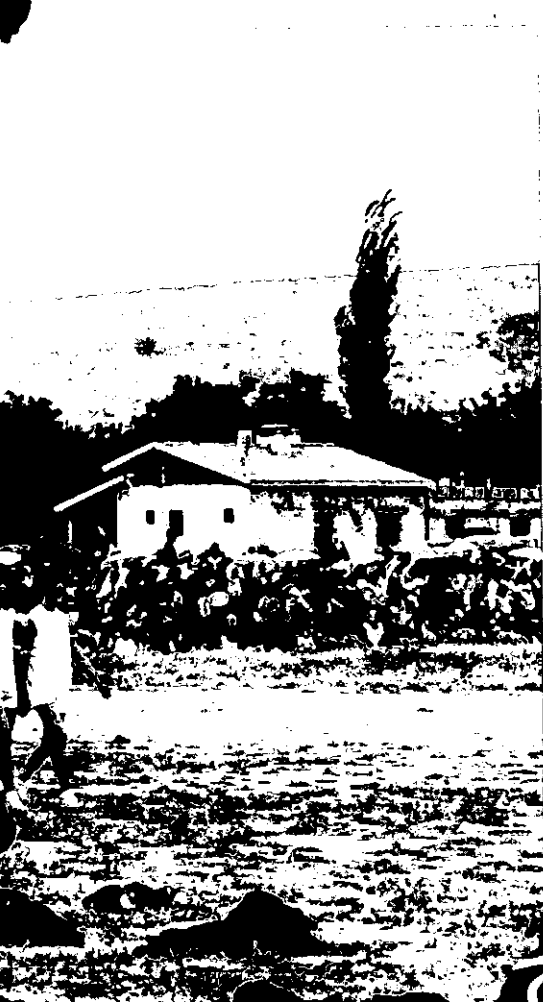
*High school class picture*



*Gymnastic students balance on poles*



*Students marching on "Youth Day"*



*Turkish boy in festive folk costume*



*Market day in Silifke*





*Men provide music at a  
village wedding ceremony*



*A horse in harness,  
pulling a wagon*

*Turkish child*

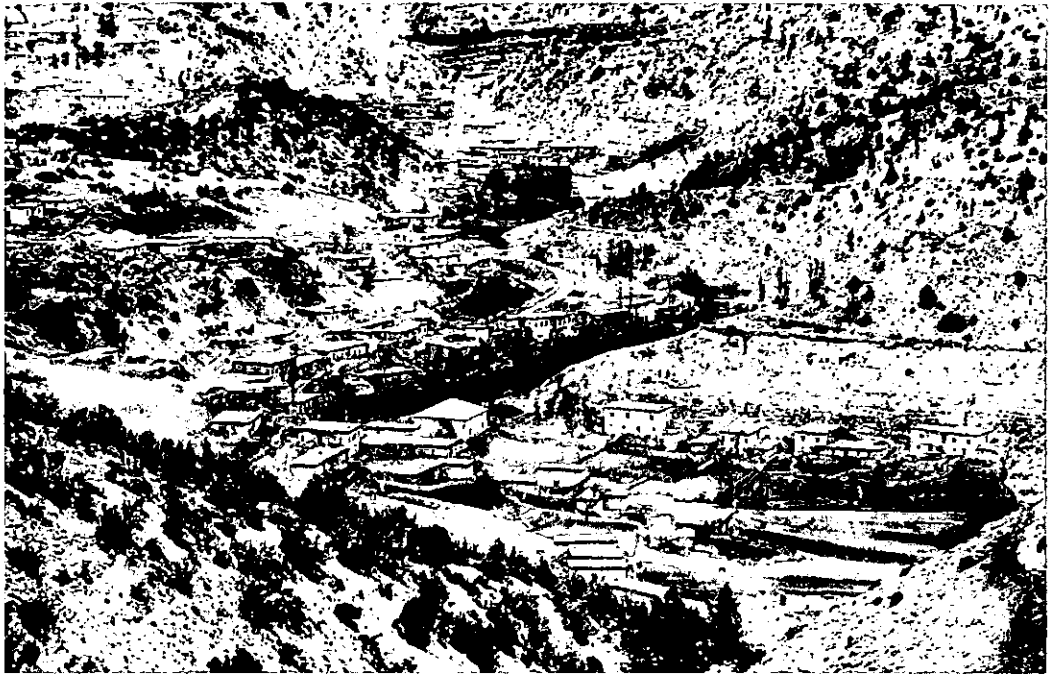


*Villager fingering beads*





View of Sililke,  
overlooking the Göksu river  
where Frederick Barbarossa  
was drowned while leading  
the German contingent  
of the Third Crusade



A horse carriage,  
a major taxi service  
in Turkish provinces





*Volunteer Mike Cox washes before eating, using ancient copper pitcher and bowl in the home of a student*

# New draft changes

Selective Service Director Lewis B. Hershey, upon the advice of the National Security Council, has ended most graduate school deferments and suspended the lists of essential activities and critical occupations previously used to guide local boards in the granting of occupational deferments. These actions have some implications for past, present and future Volunteers.

With regard to graduate school deferments, the National Security Council determined that it was not essential "for the maintenance of the national health, safety or interest to extend student deferments for graduate study to fields other than medicine, dentistry and the allied medical specialties." Thus, terminating Volunteers who had planned to enter graduate school in a non-medical field this September should not anticipate receiving educational deferments. However, graduate students who entered their second or subsequent year of study (in all fields) in the fall of 1967 are still eligible for deferments.

With respect to occupational deferments, the National Security Council decided that the needs of the Armed Forces and of the civilian economy did not require deferments based upon the former lists of essential activities and critical occupations. That such a deferment might turn into a "permanent exemption" was also a consideration in the Council's decision.

These lists were never binding on local draft boards, and General Hershey has made clear that local boards remain free to grant occupational deferments in the "national interest." In the past, most male Peace Corps Volunteers have received occupational deferments (II-A) based on the decisions of local boards that Peace Corps service is in the national interest. These deferments have been granted although the Peace Corps has never been listed as an essential activity or critical occupation; hence, the abolition of those lists does not mean that "national interest" deferments for Peace Corps service will necessarily be curtailed. But suspension of the

lists may lead local boards to believe that they should be more stringent in the granting of occupational deferments.

Since March 1, 1961, through January 31, 1968, 24,680 draft eligible men (18 through 25 years old) have entered Peace Corps training. Of these only 441 (1.8 per cent) have reached a critical appeal stage. All others have been deferred. Of the 441, approximately 48 per cent or 211, have won appeals or otherwise resolved their draft status satisfactorily. As of February 15, there were 72 decisions pending. An additional 73 men have left Peace Corps service or training prior to the resolution of their appeals. Therefore, only 85 (.3 of 1 per cent) trainees and Volunteers

have lost appeals at the last level of appeal—the National (Presidential) Appeal Board.

Of these 85 who lost appeals, 40 were allowed to complete their Volunteer service. The remaining 45 (.2 of 1 per cent) have been ordered for induction from training or overseas.

Although there has been a significant increase in unfavorable decisions on appeals in the past two years, Peace Corps officials point out that, for the most part, local boards have continued to recognize Peace Corps service as an activity in the national interest. And Director Jack Vaughn indicated several months ago his determination to actively assist all Volunteers seeking draft deferments during the course of their initial tour of service. If necessary, this assistance will include Vaughn's personal appeal to the Presidential Appeal Board.

Marthanne Parker of the Peace Corps Legal Liaison Office in Washington continues to advise all trainees and Volunteers to keep her office informed of their draft status and particularly of any changes in their draft classification.

## LETTERS TO THE VOLUNTEER

### Conflict of roles

#### TO THE VOLUNTEER:

Can a Volunteer secretary effectively be a staff member and a Volunteer? The answer is a very emphatic *no*.

Volunteers are very inquisitive people. They like to know what is going on about them. This includes the activities and medical problems (in some cases) of staff members and their fellow Volunteers. Volunteers think it will be easier to get information from a Volunteer secretary than from a Colombian secretary or a staff member, believing the Volunteer secretary will be more sympathetic. After all, she is a Volunteer, too.

Volunteers are also very demanding people. They know what they want and will try to get it done, as soon as possible. This is fine in their rural *pueblo* or *barrio*. But too often, Volunteers forget that, just as the *barrio* is their place of work, the office is our place of work. Volunteers also forget that, though we *are* here to help them, the regional director or doctor is our direct superior. Volun-

teers truly believe that the office was originated and a secretary placed there for the wishes of the Volunteers alone.

Volunteer opinions of the Peace Corps Volunteer secretary change during office hours. Outside the office, the secretary is neither staff nor Volunteer. In the office, if a Peace Corps Volunteer wants information, the situation is different.

When the need arises, the director or doctor inverts our position to staff member. Handling confidential information, as a secretary, at times is part of our job. But as a Volunteer, this is forbidden. We are placed in a very awkward position.

Because our job is so structured in relation to hours, we would like to know just what our hours should be. Should a secretary be able to cut her hours or be able to do more versatile work, such as CD or literacy? Should we secretaries have an extra clothing allowance, due to the fact that we must be well dressed every day?

As a final thought, would it be possible to have a conference with other secretaries in Latin America? This

would be an excellent opportunity for the exchange of problems and ideas. We would also like to hear from Peace Corps Volunteer secretaries in the rest of the Peace Corps world.

GAIL LITTLER, Cali  
GINNY BERARDI, Bucaramanga  
OLIVIA SMITH, Medellin  
KATHLEEN BEECHER, Barranquilla  
Colombia

*Editor's note: The idea of a completion of service conference for all Volunteer secretaries in Latin America was considered last summer and rejected due to costs.*

## Skill and aid needed

### TO THE VOLUNTEER:

I am completely in accord with Henry Norman regarding the "artificial dichotomy" that exists between points two and three of the Peace Corps Act and the generally forgotten point one, but I do not agree that "to weight any one of them defeats the purpose of all three." I believe that if our organization concentrated entirely on contributing to the development of the countries we are in, the nature of Volunteers would assure automatically, and perhaps more easily, the fulfillment of points two and three. It would definitely reduce host government "indifference" or "suspicion" toward the Peace Corps and it might even produce "indispensable" Volunteers. After all, most governments do "invite the Peace Corps to get what point one promises."

Another of Mr. Norman's statements, "no organization in the world is so ideally suited to answer the need for skill training in the third world while avoiding the political and cultural antagonisms frequently encountered in aid efforts," I can only partially agree with. We can provide skilled personnel, full of enthusiasm and idealism, to work with the people, and that does make us a bit unique. With the present orientation of Peace Corps, however, we cannot provide the basic support elements those Volunteer "bodies" need to apply their skills and specialization effectively in the development process. We pretend to obtain such elements (travel allowances, tools, projectors, movies, vehicles, etc.) from host country institutions, AID, or wherever Peace Corps Volunteer ingenuity can discover them, but I tend to think this approach is not satisfactory. It seems

necessary to call for both Mr. Norman's technical Volunteers and re-orientation of the Peace Corps that will allow *itself* to provide the financial and material support Volunteers need. Without filling those requests the Peace Corps may continue to exist as an important cultural interchange operation of tremendous value to the United States, but with those changes we may also find ourselves classed as valuable contributors to the many host governments which realize their need for development.

NORMAN MOE  
Program Technical Representative  
Santiago, Chile

## Honesty emphasized

### TO THE VOLUNTEER:

After reading more than 20 undistinguished issues of THE VOLUNTEER, it was refreshing to read Henry Norman's article "The blue-collar Volunteer" (December). In an article distinguished by its honesty, clarity and insight, Mr. Norman not only presents a convincing argument for a specific type of program but also pinpoints some very basic and chronic problems in the Peace Corps.

The Peace Corps' two most vital problems are slipshod recruiting and selection and unrealistic programming. Because of the great pool of manpower to be found among recent college graduates, the Peace Corps does not go overboard in its efforts to recruit from other sources. Even if prospective Volunteers are found from other sources they are somehow weeded out in the name of "image" either during recruiting or training, or by the many "enlightened" staff members overseas.

Among the "A.B. generalists" remaining to the Peace Corps, many are not skilled enough or mature enough to make a valuable contribution to a developing nation. This is carried one disastrous step further when the "programmers" in Washington plan programs to suit these unskilled Volunteers and not the true needs of the host country. Thus, the Peace Corps "encourages the continuing distortion of priorities by the host country."

Sending a Volunteer to work in a contrived or non-existent job or a job he isn't qualified for only nur-

tures the cynicism of the host country nationals and creates disappointment, disillusionment and bitterness for the Volunteer. Many Volunteers are beginning to wonder whether the only reason they are overseas is to rationalize a bloated and in many cases inept Peace Corps staff.

The Peace Corps must make an *honest* effort to improve its recruitment, training and selection procedures for both Volunteers and staff.

The Peace Corps in its programming must always keep in mind the true and realistic priorities of the host country.

The Peace Corps should initiate or agree to participate in only those programs for which it can recruit well-qualified and able Volunteers and staff.

A Volunteer should be trained and sent overseas only if there is an "honest" job waiting for him.

The Peace Corps should once and for all bury the philosophy of "image" and "role" and think in terms of people and situations. If this means sending only 500 Volunteers overseas each year and drastically cutting staff—so be it!

HERBERT S. ADELMAN  
Cali, Colombia

## Fighting frowned on

### TO THE VOLUNTEER:

I am a senior in a Kansas high school. For the past three years I have been reading the copies of THE VOLUNTEER from our school library. I do this because I am interested in the Peace Corps.

But some of the things I read about disturb me. It is not so much the rugged life of some of the Volunteers, or the loneliness; it is the constant bickering among the Volunteers themselves.

Almost every copy has an article defending, explaining or tearing down one faction of work or another. Those which appear most frequently are the battles of city vs. country and community development vs. teaching.

I have read so much about the brave, pioneering, helpful nature of the Volunteers. This fighting among themselves does not fit the molds they seem to cast. Of course, there should be a questioning. These people are Volunteers because they question the world as it stands. But I

fail to see the purpose they hope to accomplish by questioning each others' jobs and judgment. Perhaps I am being unrealistic, but I can't help but wonder if they might not each be better at their own jobs once they start understanding each others'. I can't say for sure because I've not yet had my chance in the Peace Corps. I just thought you might like to know how you look to those coming up in the ranks.

JEAN PALLANICH

Kansas City, Kan.

## From the distaff side

TO THE VOLUNTEER:

In the article "Big Sis or plain Jane?" (December VOLUNTEER), Peace Corps girls were gently chided for being "unladylike, too bold, too competing, too demanding, too-everything." After much soul searching I have decided that my only course is to offer a solemn apology to the gentle boys of the Peace Corps: Oh Boys! You whom we all adore! The masters of our fate! Oh why hast thou forsaken us, Your dearest pals of late? What heinous crime did we commit (We swear we'll do no more) That makes you balk and fumble In approaching closed doors? Oh, yes, our crimes are far too great. (We scarce deserve the whip!) You disappear from bar stools And leave us with the tip. But we repent on bended knee We'll do the best we can. But making gentle women Must be done by gentlemen. So gentle speaking Peace Corps Boys, You Boys we love so well, We have one solemn wish for you— We wish you all to hell.

JANE

Madhya Pradesh, India

## Off-compound living

TO THE VOLUNTEER:

I say hurrah to George Chuzi's article, "The passive idealists" (December VOLUNTEER), especially when he says, "The blowup over compound living in Nigeria missed the real point: if you want to know, to love, to have an emotional experience with people, you have to get off the compound."

In the early years of the Peace Corps Philippines program we didn't

know what a really good program it was, but of one thing we were certain: most Volunteers were having a rich emotional experience, which, while often painful, led to deeply significant personal growth. Later, it became clear that such growth—far from being incompatible with effective teaching and community development work—went along with it. By the time I left the Philippines the more than 630 Volunteers serving there were located in over 400 different spots. One doesn't have to go native to live deeply in the culture—usually a foolish thing to do—but it is extremely difficult to see how the Peace Corps can achieve its potential for human development through compound or even cluster living.

Your December issue also had a good article by John Hatch, "Communicating in verbal images." It's wonderful to read somebody arguing that, far from being inappropriate or gauche to talk with one's hands or body, it is another way of reaching out for genuine and effective human experience.

LAWRENCE H. FUCHS  
Peace Corps director,  
the Philippines,  
1961-1963

Cambridge, Mass.

## Love taken to task

TO THE VOLUNTEER:

"Flower power" and "love" strike me as erroneous and revolting words to use to describe both the idea of the Peace Corps and the people in it. I've never really met a Volunteer who came into the Peace Corps because he wanted to "love" and I hope I never do. Such a term reeks of secular "missionaryism" and condescension. If there are "passive idealists" in the Peace Corps, the Peace Corps should get rid of them.

The Peace Corps is nothing as an organization if it is going to get hung up on concepts of "love" and "caring" and "doing good." Such pompous, self-deluded piety does more harm than good; it inhibits rather than frees, it makes rigid rather than flexible, it makes plain what should be dynamic, it makes cloud-high what should be down-to-earth, it makes institutional what should be individual. What good does it do to say that the Peace Corps should be a personal thing for each Volunteer if in the next

breath you are going to tell him that his purpose is to "love"?

Some of the most successful things I have done as a Volunteer have been motivated out of self-interest and little else. The idea of "giving" and "service" is quite all right, but things are more likely to get done if the doer wants to do them because he wants to do them, finish. How many bungling people over the past decades have come to Africa, for example, out of "love" and "caring" and have given their gifts in exchange for a corruption of the society they found? People who go out to help humanity out of "love" adopt the manner and the rigid simplicity of someone stepping down into a foreign culture, as an old maid might tell a child not to play with matches or eat too much candy, and in such a self-conscious and basically square stepping down, a block to real communication—and paradoxically to real help—is immediately formed.

The Peace Corps needs defining and redefining and constant re-evaluation, but I should think that the misuse and overuse of vague, contemporary terms is not the way to do it. Let us, rather, acknowledge the Peace Corps' goals just as simply and openly as they were originally stated. And let us concede that a good Volunteer can be any type of person going overseas for any reason. His success and effectiveness is measured, practically, in what he gets done and where he's at.

ROBERT J. ATTAWAY

Yirgalem, Ethiopia

## Ideal failed

TO THE VOLUNTEER:

Periodically I see letters to THE VOLUNTEER proposing internationalization of Volunteer efforts to remove the onus of national politics from the Volunteer. The latest of these, submitted by nine Ecuador Volunteers, appeared in January.

This proposal was the basis of a movement started in 1964 in Tanzania. There volunteer representatives of seven different volunteer groups met with a government cabinet minister and the regional director of the United Nations Technical Assistance Board with the aim of instituting a single international volunteer effort, possibly under the aegis of the U.N. office. Needless to say, we came out with much less—a loose cooperation agreement consisting of a

Committee of Volunteers, a Committee of Volunteer, Government and U.N. Representatives; and a part-time coordinator in the UNTAB office. Concrete results over the next two years included the first complete summary of volunteer activities in the country, the basis laid for multilateral cooperation in the provision of volunteers to meet specific government requirements, and some joint in-country training programs and service conferences.

Reasons for the failure of the ideal are not hard to find. Reluctance of individual nations and groups to bury their identity and thus lose the propaganda value of their volunteers was a key factor, as well as the differing disciplines of the groups—the stricter refusing to lessen what they saw as their responsibilities for their volunteers and the freer refusing to submit to more discipline. Ironically, British volunteers sought amalgamation to gain more support, U.S. Peace Corps Volunteers to get more freedom. Also, the U.N. was not capable of establishing as much coordination or responsibility as desired, as the General Assembly had several times voted down international volunteer agencies in the past.

Our major success was the coordinator in the U.N. office—someone to keep the idea alive after the dispersal of the conference participants and to maintain coordination and cooperation between the various volunteer groups and the government. The basic opposition of volunteer group staffs to the idea, combined with the lack of any real volunteer policy-making potential or permanent organization, however, signaled the slow demise of the idea.

THOMAS T. SPEAR  
Former Volunteer

Madison, Wis.

## Politics and pupils

### TO THE VOLUNTEER:

I am interested in dispelling the fairly widespread notion that a Volunteer cannot be effective if he voices his political opinions on U.S. policies and on the international scene. To follow Lee Leardini's advice (January) that "one should not meddle in political affairs" would be to completely emasculate my concept of my Peace Corps service. By joining the Peace Corps, one has automatically meddled in the political affairs both of the U.S. and the host country.

And *The Handbook* which says "answer detractors through hard work and accomplishments, not in political debate" makes a mockery of the Volunteer. Do Mr. Leardini and that collection of cliché-riddled platitudes, *The Peace Corps Handbook*, suggest that "hard work and accomplishment" and "political debate" are mutually exclusive concepts? The writer certainly gives this impression when he poses the either-or alternative of being "loud-mouthed soapbox orators, or . . . (Volunteers) to assist in providing the basic necessities." I certainly reject the alternatives.

As a teacher I have an obligation to my students for which I think honesty is the most basic ingredient. If a student of mine were to ask me what I thought about the American presence in Vietnam or other aspects of that war (very common questions in this Southeast Asian country) I would and do answer truthfully according to my convictions. If I were to answer otherwise, for example by implying that I knew nothing about the situation or that I had no interest in that area and suggested that they too confine their interests, I would lose the trust it has taken me this long to establish. And I would deserve to lose it.

For a teacher, trust is an important idea to establish between himself and his students. It carries over into every aspect of my life and even enhances the quality of teaching and learning which hopefully takes place in the classroom. I will not threaten this relationship by ignoring the earnest questions of my students and other Malaysian friends or by suggesting to them that I'm here "only to do my job." My concept of my job includes much more than getting across a certain amount of English grammar each week. The very fact that I do voice my opinions on political matters outside the realm of host country politics gives my students a graphic example of free speech.

President Kennedy was right when he said that our country will be judged by the impression of the people here toward us. But that judgment must be based on an honest give-and-take of ideas on a wide spectrum of subjects. My aim here is not to give the locals a "good" impression of America but, in my being here these last two years, I have given them a truer picture of America as a natural by-product of honest discussions on

all subjects. And it may come as a shock to Mr. Leardini, but my students now have a much better impression of America than they had two years ago.

MICHAEL A. KROLL

Tawau, Sabah  
Malaysia

## Economic strategy needed

### TO THE VOLUNTEER:

Frederic Thomas' well-conceived program for a wider Peace Corps role in the rural development of Africa is the latest and best challenge to the kind of programming which has kept the Peace Corps from becoming much more than an elaborate and expensive 4-H club. Eric Sevareid and other responsible observers have criticized the Peace Corps in the past for the lack of a comprehensive economic program strategy. The agency's answer to these criticisms and proposals has been to cite the intangible benefits which accrue to Volunteers, host nationals and the United States through the Peace Corps' *modus operandi*. Surely it is the second and third purposes of the Peace Corps Act which in practice give the Peace Corps its special appeal and much of its value. Yet, it is possible for the Peace Corps to commit itself to fulfilling the first purpose of the act with, as Thomas says, "the knowledge that in any event the other purposes will be served." If the agency hopes to have any significant role in curing the basic economic ills afflicting the countries it serves, I believe it must address itself to formulating the kind of broad-based economic strategy which Mr. Thomas has proposed.

H. H. HOWZE

Moch, Eastern Carolines  
Micronesia

## Applauds McClure

### TO THE VOLUNTEER:

Entering the last few months of my Peace Corps experience and feeling much like the old man who finds his young wife cheating on him—disappointed but none too surprised—I found Donovan McClure's recent article (January) a spark of hope amidst a lot of black humor.

Avoiding both extremes—neither sounding a call to arms nor writing the typical *in loco parentis* staff memo—McClure sets down the guidelines for

the most important debate the Peace Corps *ought* to be pursuing at the moment.

Unfortunately, those of us in India will be unable to take part. Here, the problem is more serious than hardening of the arteries; it is much closer to *rigor mortis*. Complaints at conferences are openly written off as "adolescent rebellion against the surrogate father figure." Subject to diligent censorship, our regional publications are admonished to print "only the success stories, the positive aspects of the Corps." And, though our Student Councils meet religiously, they have no power; they just meet "and talk things over."

Thus, I sincerely hope that Turkey Volunteers will take seriously McClure's challenge and really try to change the Peace Corps back into something like the maverick we all fell in love with not so long ago. Meanwhile, here in India, we'll simply continue writing the white sneaker version of *Catch 22*.

BOB SYLVESTER

Alwar, Rajasthan, India

## Second guessing the Bard

TO THE VOLUNTEER:

I am sure that if Shakespeare were alive he would have remarked about the author of the article, "A wider role in rural Africa," (January): "Yon is Frederic C. Thomas. He thinks too much."

JAMES FROST

Nabeul, Tunisia

## 'Reminders' necessary

TO THE VOLUNTEER:

Howard Tolley's letter in the January VOLUNTEER struck me as being misleading in two respects. He stated that shortly before leaving Eastern Nigeria in July, Volunteers received copies of a State Department telegram clearly warning that those making political statements could not continue their service. However, he did not consider it necessary to put the quote into context and explain that the "political statements" concerned the political crisis between Nigeria and Biafra. The telegram copies reached us shortly before the crisis erupted into a civil war, and emotions in the country among Biafrans and Nigerians were very high and very explosive. Tactless and ignorant re-

# Memorandum

TO : The field  
FROM : The editors  
SUBJECT: First-class on the fifth floor.

DATE: April, 1968



**Stateside R and R:** Although Washington staff members had been secretly relaxing there for weeks, the Volunteer lounge in Peace Corps headquarters was officially opened last month when Director Jack Vaughn snipped the lavender ribbon stretched across the door. Located on the executive floor, the room has turquoise and gold furniture, a television set, a typewriter, telephone and small library. Said Vaughn at the inaugural: "For a long time I have wanted a place where future, present and ex-Volunteers could lounge when they are in Washington. It took seven years to get it. Here they can go first-class. They can watch Vietnam things on TV. I insisted that it be on the fifth floor because I wanted to stop in from time to time to see what kind of sensitivity training is going on." Above, from left, Vaughn talks with Volunteer Support liaison officer Penny White and the first Volunteer visitors, Sabin and Diane Phelps from Colombia, at the opening. An additional feature of the lounge is a rotating art exhibit of original works by Volunteers, staff and friends. Presently on loan are a series of collages of Colombia by returned Volunteer Phyllis Lester and a set of oil paintings by Kathy Bobo of Peace Corps Special Services. Those interested in loaning art for display should contact Kay Williams in the Office of Volunteer Support.

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**Underground ad:** THE VOLUNTEER doesn't usually run ads—of any kind—but this one sounded like it was right out of a *Free Press*, and we can't resist passing it along: Ex Nepal-5 PCV desires aesthetically pleasing, intelligent, athletic, lo pressure, hi adventure female as passenger in Volkswagen . . . Bangkok to Europe . . . ETD not later than July '68 . . . with Scott Walker, Box 639, Bangkok. Any takers? Speaking of ads, a clothing co-op started by Volunteers in St. Lucia sells one notable product—bermuda shorts made from sacks. The famous brand name that makes the sales? Flour power.

□ □ □

**Recently read:** News that the Beatles sent a cable from India to friends in London asking them to send food. The meditating Beatles specifically asked for cans of fruit and meat. Comment of a Peace Corps staff member: "Nice guys but they'd never make it as Volunteers."

marks by Americans could have created—indeed, probably did create—unnecessary ill feelings, resentment and hostility.

My second objection is to Mr. Tollev's assumption that Volunteers are *ipso facto* discreet, rational and diplomatic in word and deed. My experience included contact with more than one Volunteer who was definitely in the Ugly American category. One such person considered himself, after a year and a half in the country, an authority who had come to the conclusion that a large group of tribes, ancient before the Europeans ever visited Africa, had no culture and no history. Such a person strikes me as being in great need of being told, "Be careful what you say and do."

Freedom of speech is a concept which ought to carry with it a perpetual awareness of responsibility to oneself and to others for what is said, but so long as people, including some Volunteers, regard it as a green light to give vent to every emotional, ill-considered, thoughtless and inconsiderate idea that comes to mind—so long as this is the case, I fear that "reminders" to be careful in delicate situations will be necessary.

VALERIA GOLD  
Former Volunteer

Fairfax, Calif.

### 'Wish you were here'

TO THE VOLUNTEER:

I was very happy to see parents speaking out on "Communication from home" in the January issue. Apparently the Lamptons have given much thought to how to make each of their letters more meaningful. However, there is one point I don't agree with: "... the underplaying rather than the overplaying of what

they are missing at home also helps."

It is very frustrating to receive a Christmas letter that completely avoids telling about the fun decorating and the dinner you know must have been delicious. You expect this from other relatives, who aren't really sure what to write to a Peace Corps Volunteer. But from parents, hearing all the details of what makes them happy makes us feel as though we shared in the fun after all. It is difficult to explain to parents that, despite any "hardships" we are incurring, our new experiences are great. In fact, we "wish you were here."

ILENE GELBAUM

Moneragala District,  
Ceylon

### Majority vs. fringe

TO THE VOLUNTEER:

I would like to voice my opinion concerning the "Sloppy Joe" picture in the January issue of THE VOLUNTEER.

Our college hosted four Peace Corps Volunteers the week of December 11-15. I was the direct representative for the college in working with them. They had a full schedule of addressing classes, organizations and groups that were interested in hearing about their field experiences. Needless to say, they were well groomed and properly dressed.

Since my field is in college administration, I am aware that this "other" element exists. It would seem that you should project the majority element rather than this fringe type.

Until societal mores change in the area of dress, you are inviting criticism by projecting such an image, which is interpreted by all foreign people as being exemplary of all U.S. citizens.

You have my wholehearted support in correcting the "untruths" about the Peace Corps that might come about because of this picture.

MICHAEL T. FLEMING  
Coordinator of Student Activities  
State University of New York  
Farmingdale, N. Y.

### The inside counts more

TO THE VOLUNTEER:

In the January issue there is a picture of a Volunteer and an article accompanying it stating how many people and congressional officials had criticized the dress of the then Peace Corps trainee. The biggest complaint seemed to be directed towards his clothes and beard. To me, the beard is neatly kept and his hair is really not too long, and also well kept. In reference to his clothing, everything is pressed neatly, his shoes are shined, and if there is a complaint about no tie, then just go to any airport and watch how many government officials and important businessmen are seen with loosened ties or none at all. You would be surprised at how sloppy some of them are.

Especially important to remember before one complains are the rigid ways in which applicants are chosen. It is no simple task to become a Volunteer and if a choice is made, it usually is the right one. The Peace Corps takes only those they know will work. It is what is on the inside instead of the outside that counts. This is a major rule, but people often fail to remember it.

So this Volunteer should not be devaluated until he has had time to prove his worthiness, which the article did point out had been proven.

RAYMOND T. IRMINGER  
Peace Corps applicant  
Hampden-Sydney, Va.

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