Young Moyers story

mentality of Congress. And he landed in Shriver's lap at just the right time. Even before the Executive Order of March 1, 1961, had been signed, James Rowe, an influential Washington lawyer and beloved local personality, who was also an intimate of Lyndon Johnson's and a former aide to President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, called Shriver: "Sarge," he said, "I think I have good news for you. I don't really understand how this has come about, but did you ever hear of a fellow named Bill Moyers?"

Shriver replied, "No, I haven't."

Rowe went on: "Well, Bill Moyers is about twenty-five years old. He works for Lyndon; he is one of the top people in the vice president's office. But he wants to work for the Peace Corps. I can tell you, I've been in Washington for thirty-five years and I think Bill Moyers is the smartest person that Lyndon Johnson has ever had work for him. Secondly, I think he's one of the most gifted young legislative persons I've ever seen. I have no idea why in the world he wants to work in the Peace Corps. Frankly, I think it's sort of crazy for him to want to do that. But he definitely does. He wants to meet you. I would recommend that you talk to him."

Moyers became the Peace Corps' first associate director for Public Affairs at twenty-six, its second deputy director (after fellow Texan Paul Geren) at twenty-eight.* In the late summer and first three weeks of fall 1961, Shriver and Moyers stalked the halls of the House of Representatives and the Senate from sunup to sundown selling the peace corps idea.

Peter Grothe, foreign relations advisor and speech writer for Senator Hubert Humphrey in 1960 (and now a professor at the Monterey Institute of International Studies), says that Humphrey who had introduced similar legislation in May of 1960 on the eve of the U-2

**To become deputy director of the Peace Corps at the age of twenty-eight meant that Moyers would be the youngest presidential appointee in history. During his confirmation hearings before the Senate in early February of 1963, Moyers was suddenly challenged by Republican Senator Frank Lausche of Ohio. Lausche dyspeptically cited Moyers's youth and lack of administrative experience, declaring that Moyers was "still wet behind the ears." This remark brought Senator Russell Long, Democrat from Louisiana, to his feet, saying that Lausche had just insulted the sovereign state of Louisiana, its people and himself, and that was because, Long explained,* he, *Long, had first been elected to the Senate when he was only twenty-nine. A third senator then asked, "Exactly how old are you, Mr. Moyers?" Moyers replied, "Twenty-eight," and then, in a fully audible aside, added, "and a half." Laughter rippled through the Senate chamber. Moyers was installed in the executive suite of the Peace Corps within the week.*

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task force moved out of the Mayflower Hotel and into a building identified with government in midtown, the fifth floor of ICA headquarters was offered. So he took it, and there he stayed. My spectacular view didn't really count; the fifth floor was the floor of maximum prestige."

Gale began Peace Corps life as editor of the "Congressional Presentation FY 1964," as he suspected would be the case, Haddad had decided that Gale, with his editorial experience and his mellow, jocular personality, could rescue this important document from prolonged interoffice squabbling, as had recently been the case.

Nonetheless, storm clouds gathered and over just such a petty issue as Haddad had hoped to avoid. When Gale and his Special Projects staff were close to finishing the final draft, Howard Greenberg, director of the Office of Management, stopped him in the hall. "By the way, Bob, I assume that you're putting the budget figures I sent you right up front in the presentation, ahead of everything else. I mean, you are, aren't you? Because that's what Congress wants to see. They don't want to read a lot of little stories about how great the Peace Corps is."

Gale felt his composure beginning to crack for the first time since his arrival. "Why no, Howard, quite the opposite. The introduction comes first, naturally. Then the country reports. Then the maps and graphs. The budget figures come last. After all, we say we're asking Congress to appropriate thirty million dollars in the first paragraph. The country reports reflect how we spent the money we got last fiscal year. They justify it. Haddad is very keen that this thing be as good a piece of journalism as we can make it. Shriver wants it to be readable. He wants to capture the imagination of Congress. So far, Congress really likes the Peace Corps. Sarge wants them to *love* it. So that's the approach I've taken. This is what I was hired to do."

Greenberg bristled. "The budget, you say, is *last*? Well, that's crazy and that's wrong and I won't stand for it." Gale lowered his voice almost to a whisper: "Haddad wants it this way. And it has been my experience that Haddad asks for what he knows Sarge wants. So you'd better see Haddad."

Greenberg then pulled a time-honored bureaucratic trick on Gale, suggesting that Haddad, Gale, and Shriver meet in Greenberg's office at about 4:00 P.M. The ploy: Lodge a complaint against the greenest member of the staff and then propose a conciliatory gathering on your own turf with the principal adversary and the highest power present. Gale caught on within seconds, although he was just the innocent

newcomer that Greenberg imagined him to be. But he thought, "I can see it now. I walk into Bill Haddad's office and say, 'Hey, Bill. I just ran into Howard Greenberg and he's mad that the budget's going to be at the end of the presentation and he wants it changed and he says he won't let it out of the building as it now stands. Wants a meeting with you and me and Sarge late this afternoon in his office. Asked me to set it up with you.' " Gale shudders at the thought of Haddad's reaction had he actually blurted out the situation. "He would have gone completely bananas, probably fired me on the spot, maybe killed Howard."

A meeting did occur that evening. Score one for Greenberg. But it took place on the eleventh floor. Score one for Haddad and Gale. Both Haddad and Gale attended. Score another for Greenberg. But the meeting was held at 10:00 P.M., four hours past Greenberg's usual departure time. (Haddad swore he could not get there a minute earlier; he was meeting with Shriver!) *Many* points for Haddad and Gale. Bill Moyers, the twenty-nine-year-old deputy director of the Peace Corps and Washington wunderkind, showed up expressly at the request of Haddad, partially to intimidate and partially to mediate. No such luck. The meeting actually took place in the Division of Evaluation, down the hall from the Division of Special Projects. Bob Gale arrived carrying the by-now eighty-page congressional presentation, and the double doors to the Division of Evaluation were closed. Gale's assistant was in the front office of Special Projects that muggy spring evening when all hell broke loose, as Gale had thought it might. Haddad and Greenberg were suddenly in a ferocious shouting and swearing contest. Gale had asked his assistant to prepare to stay until midnight, if necessary, "in case I need someone to drive me or anyone else to the hospital." His assistant explained that she drove a 1961 "Unsafe at Any Speed" Ralph Nader Corvair and could not take too many of the wounded.

The eleventh floor elevator doors opened and the assistant of "Young Bill Moyers," known as "Even Younger Dick Nelson," stepped off. Nelson was twenty-two years old. ("Bill had to have someone younger than himself working for him," says Nelson, now forty-four.)

"How's it going?" Nelson inquired. Gale's assistant replied, "Very noisily. Even your boss and my boss have begun to shout, and as you know, they are known for never shouting. Could you break in on it?" Nelson agreed to break in on the thunderous meeting down the hall on the pretense that either Cope or Suzanne Moyers, the very young

children of his boss, was running a fever and Dad was needed at home immediately. Nelson went down the hall, threw open the doors, and everyone froze. Not a sound except the buzzing of a half-dozen flies that had flown in the huge opened windows. It was hot in the cavernous room, the temperature being in the eighties, as it could easily be in late April in Washington. The "gladiators" were soaked with perspiration and looked drained. Each stood in a different part of the room, as if to avoid potentially disastrous bodily contact with one another. Gale was pale and still clutching the congressional presentation. Haddad and Greenberg were purple from their vocal exertions. Moyers was poised warily by the door, his eyes darting anxiously back and forth among the other three as if to anticipate who would do or say any unsettling thing next. Nobody moved.

Nelson was about to make his preplanned announcement about Bill Moyers's sick child when Moyers suddenly shattered the hot, still air with a long banshee shriek, dashed across the room, and flung himself out of the eleventh-floor window.

Haddad, Gale, and Nelson were aware that Moyers had not committed suicide; they knew that there was a walled parapet around the eleventh floor of the Maiatico Building. "Young Bill Moyers" had simply vaulted out onto the narrow but safe terrace. But Greenberg was horrified: "Oh no, Bill, noooooo! Dear God, Bill, NO!" howled Greenberg in unbearable distress. Running to the window from which Moyers had just jumped, Greenberg got another shock: Young Bill Moyers was standing on his own two feet, outside the eleventh-floor window, peering in with a fiendish glee: "Come on in, the water's fine."

The budget came last.

A week later, "Congressional Presentation FY 1964" was finished. The next day, members of Special Projects and Evaluation proofread the final version of the document furiously, Gale had it printed on an emergency basis, and at midnight, Victor Crichton, an associate of Haddad's on loan to Gale, set off on his Vespa to deliver it to Shriver in Rockville, Maryland.

♦ ♦ ♦

In late April of 1963, Bob Gale received a late-night phone call from Haddad. "I can't make the senior staff meeting tomorrow. Got to go out of town. You go in my place. It's time you saw the group in action. Take notes, but don't speak unless spoken to. Don't get trapped. If

the Peace Corps way before I had. Well! I had been a vice president of his daughter's alma mater and now I was a Peace Corps official. From then on, Butts just tore the whole place apart for us, gave us the whole schmeer. Found students to make signs for us. Everything.

Wisconsin Mailings

By midweek, Gale got his hands on what was allegedly a highly guarded mailing list of all graduate students at Wisconsin—they numbered nearly seven thousand—which included law and medical students. He realized they might be less motivated than undergraduates to become Peace Corps Volunteers due to the fact of their having invested so much time and money on their professional educations. "But seven thousand skilled young professionals at a great university that loved the Peace Corps and were within shouting distance—it was just too much to pass up." Gale called Washington headquarters to see if they could get a special mailing out by Friday morning so that the students would have it on Monday, just as the follow-up team rolled into town. He, Gale, could dictate a press release over the telephone and then send headquarters a printout of the mailing list on labels by special delivery *and* . . . The answer was an adamant no. Washington, in the person of Howard Greenberg, said it couldn't be done that fast, not possibly. Gale was told that it was a crazy idea, out of the question. A dozen reasons were given. All of them sounded realistic, Gale had to admit, but he was too fired up to give up quite so easily.

"All right," Gale told Kiker, "we'll show 'em. We'll do it ourselves."

Kiker was appalled. "Just what in the hell makes you think we can do that?"

"You go write a release that reminds them that Kennedy, Sorensen, and Rockefeller will be on campus as of Monday and will be able to discuss options with them. Make it sound like Peace Corps service is another year or two of graduate school, but *free*. All expenses paid. Stipend at the end of service. A nest egg before entering their chosen professions." Gale was becoming incandescent with delight at his scheme. "Then go see Bob Taylor. I'll bet he can get someone in the president's office to run off the releases for you. They'll probably even type it for you on a mimeograph sheet. I'll see about getting a printout on mailing labels of all the names and addresses and then I'll try to find a store that has seven thousand number ten envelopes in stock. Of course, there goes the May rent and the grocery money, but what the heck?

We'll need extra hands. I'll ask Porter Butts if he can round up a few students, and then off we go."

"But what do we do about a return address, Bob?" asked Kiker. "I mean, that is *key*, man. We can maybe stuff, lick, and apply mailing labels to seven thousand envelopes if we don't eat or sleep for the next three days—any of us—but we couldn't write 'Peace Corps, Washington, D.C.' seven thousand times by hand even if we had nothing else to do. Anyway, it would look damned unprofessional. But there's got to be a return address or those kids won't even open the thing. Here's this anonymous envelope that looks like third class mail, so who cares?" Kiker sensed that he had begun to dampen Gale's ardor for the scheme. But no. Suddenly, Gale sparkled all over. "I've got it! I'll con one of those movable type stamps from somewhere and we'll frank 'em ourselves—saying 'Peace Corps, Washington, D.C.'—or have the kids take turns doing it. It's gonna be wild, but I swear, we can do it."

"Are you sure that's legal?" asked Kiker with a slight, nervous laugh.

"Oh sure. Why not?" replied a now unstoppable Gale.

By early Thursday evening, Gale and Kiker had actually acquired all of the necessary materials. Eight students corralled by Porter Butts showed up in the Student Union and they, Gale, and Kiker formed two assembly lines, stuffing, licking, applying mailing labels, franking the envelopes, and tying them into bundles. By about 3:00 A.M. the job was three-quarters done, but no one had the energy or will to go on any longer, not even Gale. Thanking the students profusely, and realizing that it was a miracle of sorts that had kept them going for so many hours at boring, repetitive tasks for no pay and no glory, Gale and Kiker gave them their business cards and wrote their home addresses and phone numbers on the back, urging them to call or write them for job references when the time came. "Honestly, we mean it," said a weary Kiker. "Call on us. We can never thank you enough for all of your help."

As it later turned out, five out of the eight joined the Peace Corps after graduation, but at the time, they looked perplexed, even stunned. Finally, one of the girls said, "Oh, but we expected to see you again tomorrow. The job isn't finished. We always intended to finish it. That is, if you can use us."

"Doug and I got all choked up over that," says Gale. "All we could do was mumble our thanks and nod."

One week had passed. It was time to go home. Gale and Kiker had not slept more than four hours a night.

As they were driving to the airport in a rented car on Sunday evening, they tuned in Papa Hambone one last time on the car radio. Papa Hambone was just closing his program. "He said, very slowly—and I'll never forget it," says Gale, "Ah likes the Peace Corps [pause] because it swings [pause] just a little [pause] *all over the world.*"

Doug and I just screamed and yelled and punched each other and laughed and cried and almost ran off the G.D. road."

♦ ♦ ♦

At the first senior staff meeting attended by Kiker and Gale after their trip to Wisconsin, they were greeted by applause. "That was something new," says Gale. "I certainly wouldn't call it a hero's welcome, but then, any kind of compliment was hard to come by from that competitive bunch. Howard Greenberg was the first to speak, which was unusual, even unheard of. And God knows, he and I had had our differences. But he said 'Bob Gale and Doug Kiker here, went out two weeks ago to the University of Wisconsin. They broke more rules and regulations than anyone in the United States government, as far as I know. Though I won't go so far as to say they've broken the law, they did come close a couple of times. [The staff chuckled appreciatively, thinking that Greenberg was joking.*] But we aren't going to fuss about trifles. These guys and their follow-up team, Pat Kennedy, Jay Rockefeller, and Camilla Sorensen, brought back 485 completed applications—that is, to be precise, 485 nine-page questionnaires *and* 485 Peace Corps tests. Four hundred and eighty-five students at the University of Wisconsin took the time to do all of that with final exams approaching. The most we ever got before from a recruiting trip was forty or fifty." (Gale was getting anxious; it wasn't like Howard Greenberg to gush. Was he being sarcastic? Had he been rehearsed? No. Couldn't be. Nothing was ever rehearsed at the Peace Corps. But what was this preamble all about?)

Greenberg continued, seeming now to strive for great dramatic

Since a few of the envelopes sent to the Wisconsin graduate students were inevitably misaddressed, they landed back at Peace Corps headquarters in Washington. Howard Greenberg lit upon them and saw what Gale had done. Greenberg liked to tell Gale later that he could have gotten five years in prison for every illegally franked envelope. Given seven thousand envelopes, that comes out to thirty-five thousand years in prison, Greenberg would say. "I let Howard have his little joke," says Gale.

friends at both schools who could be of help, but Berkeley, Gale knew, was going to be an all-out Peace Corps school in any case. Of USC he wasn't too sure; he had heard more than once that its undergraduate student body was, well, politically indifferent and intellectually lazy.

"Since I was now director of Recruiting, I had to go where I knew I'd do well. I didn't necessarily have to do better than anyone else. No. That's not true. I *did* have to outdo everyone else. And at Berkeley, I did. At Berkeley, Doug, Linda, and I got nearly two hundred questionnaires in one week—and the advance team is not really required to get *any* applications—and then the follow-up team came in and mopped up about seven hundred more. Sarge came out and spoke at most of the schools where we were recruiting, and at Berkeley and San Francisco State he got absolutely tumultuous welcomes."

The spectacular numbers gleaned at Berkeley—plus the response to Shriver personally—made everyone forget that Gale's effort at USC had been a flop. "Even though a friend of mine, Tom Mickell, who was vice president for public relations and development at USC, did everything he could for us—got us a booth in the plaza in front of the library, which was the best possible spot, and helped us schedule in our speakers, gave us contacts and entries—it just didn't matter. The last day we recruited there—a warm, sunny October Saturday—only seven kids, in a student body of several thousand, passed by our booth on the way to the library. And none of them gave us more than a glance. Those who had stopped during the week apparently thought we were an early-day version of Club Med. I've heard that the scene has changed enormously since."

The working day for the advance teams began at about 8:00 A.M. and ended between 11:00 P.M. and midnight. Both in Los Angeles and in San Francisco, the word would get passed from team to team in the early evening where everyone was going to congregate that night. "And we'd congregate until about 3:00 A.M. in various restaurants and bars. Everbody wanted to compare notes, and nobody felt like passing up a night out in these two cities, which offered such great nightlife. Washington was *important*, but Washington had no nightlife."

The advance teams tended to be more rambunctious than the follow-up teams, partially—indeed, if not wholly—because "advancing" was Gale's "beat," and as the Prince of Partying, he tended to pick people whose skills, attitudes, and metabolisms were similar to his own.

In Los Angeles, by night, it was Dino's for dinner. ("A table for

twenty-five, Mr. Gale?" an incredulous maître d' would inquire. "At 1:30 in the morning?") Once it was a strip joint, the Body Shop, just off Sunset Boulevard in Hollywood, with a smaller, game group that would not be shocked and tell tales to the higher-ups at Peace Corps headquarters.*

In San Francisco, nighttime leisure hours were spent at such famous places as the Top of the Mark. ("We took most of the tables. We called ahead to say, 'We are in Mr. Shriver's party.' Sarge was still in Washington," chortles Gale.) Just as many fun-filled wee small hours were spent in North Beach, a Bohemian, ethnically various section of the most beautiful city in America. Interteam and intrateam romances bloomed as the moon rose over the Golden Gate Bridge and the second or third stinger was consumed.

Jim Walls, a former reporter for the *San Francisco Chronicle* and subsequently a writer for the Division of Public Information, often played "tour director" for the Peace Corps horde, since he knew his way around. One evening he appeared in one of his favorite old North Beach haunts, Enrico's, with a tall, striking brunette named Yvonne. Yvonne (whom Walls called "Y" and who bore a slight resemblance to Vivien Leigh) was a top model in San Francisco and an "old and dear friend" of Walls. According to Walls, who enjoyed being outrageous, Yvonne had a terrible hangover. "Y," coaxed Walls, "Tell 'em about your hangover." Y said, slowly and evenly, with no expression on her splendidly chiseled porcelain face, "My hangover is so large that you could make *awnings* out of it." The Peace Corps gang thought that they had never met anyone so divinely decadent. Walls, who bears a close physical resemblance to John Cheever and whose wit approaches that of Peter DeVries, had upstaged all others for the time being. However, his preeminence was short lived. At 3:00 A.M., even when the most dedicated of Peace Corps advance team revelers were beginning to wearily disperse and head for their hotels, a finale of surprising vigor took place. Sally Bowles stood on a North Beach

Because the Peace Corps group at the Body Shop didn't look like anyone else on the premises, or like Californians in general, some of the other patrons got curious. "They were also curious because we were laughing and joking among ourselves and not gaping every second at the proceedings on stage," says Gale. "They started asking us who we were. I kept whispering 'For God's sake, don't tell them we're from the Peace Corps.' Here we were, the Holy Ones, in a strip joint. I told the gang just to say that we worked for a government agency, and then to clam up and look mysterious. By the time we left, everyone thought we were from the CIA, which was fine with us."

Shriver had to set up a fully operating agency of the federal government within a matter of weeks, had to recruit, winnow, and train several hundred Volunteers and get a hefty number of them into the field, working hard, living humbly, and behaving themselves, before the first leaf of autumn 1961, fell in Lafayette Park. This challenge had no precedent but it had to be met for three reasons: one, because Shriver had publicly proclaimed that it would be done; two, because most of the first Volunteers were bound to come out of the class of 1961 and would be assigned to training programs on college campuses that could only accommodate such operations during the summer months; and three, because Congress was slated to debate and vote on the Peace Corps bill in September of 1961, and thus, there simply had to *be* a Peace Corps. Shriver was not about to go up to the Hill with a lick and a promise, under which circumstances he would surely be pelted with taunts of "It won't work," or "Nice idea, but where are the Volunteers?"

For Shriver, failure was unthinkable. Indeed, failure *had* to be unthinkable. One may permit one's mind to hover around the spectre of failure when one is faced with a difficult but doable task; such a negative mental exercise only adds more luster to the victory when it predictably comes. But in the case of something that has never been done before—where the obstacles are multiple and formidable, where there are no guidelines or "book" to go by—one must simply summon up a vision of success that is impenetrable. Fortunately, Shriver was and is a man who has success written all over him; he radiates optimism and pulsates with robust mental and physical health. People wanted to believe in him and did. But he also needed people he could believe in; he also needed inspiration for the "towering task" ahead. While Shriver was a very conventional man in many ways, and while he had proved himself a capable executive in managing Chicago's enormous Merchandise Mart for his father-in-law, he saw almost immediately that conventional behavior and conventional management techniques would not work in putting the Peace Corps together. In his last nod to convention for some time, Shriver brought over Jack Young, who

had been serving at NASA, another new agency, as director of management analysis. Young had also worked at McKinsey and Company, management consultants. Even the Peace Corps had to start with an organization chart, and the first one that Shriver and Young came up with included the five associate directorships under the director and deputy director that dictated the basic structure of the Peace Corps throughout the tenures of both Shriver and his successor, Jack Vaughn. Young became the Peace Corps' first associate director for management, and he piped the Peace Corps' charter staff members on board before leaving to return to NASA.

"That had to be quite an experience for someone like Young, who came out of both corporate world and government," says Warren Wiggins. "Here was Young's nice, orderly organization chart, and suddenly Sarge flings open the doors and starts hiring at incredible speed and with great flamboyance a whole slew of people, some of whom came running to us and few of whom Sarge had to pry out of budding, even spectacular, careers in law, medicine, academia, journalism. Sarge made no pretense that this was an orderly or predictable affair. He was grabbing at talent, period. He was looking for certain skills and certain kinds of personalities—people who could understand a volunteer movement, could relate to exciting adventurous young people and who could fit together as a unit that would have spiritual force *and* generate great publicity."

Since Shriver possessed moral authority and an uncanny knack for public relations himself, he saw no conflict in the two qualities coexisting in others or within an entire staff. "It really didn't matter what you were—a lawyer, a fisherman, a preacher, a government bureaucrat," says Wiggins. Shriver was in a hurry. Shriver created the Peace Corps in twenty-one days (from February 7, 1961, when he lit on Wiggins's blueprint, "The Towering Task," to March 1, 1961, when the executive order, Bill Josephson's contribution to the creation, was signed by President Kennedy). "That's a record for a government agency," says Wiggins. "Something like a year or two is usually the case. But he got it together that fast; he created its laws, its principles, and he staffed it up."

When you staff up that fast, Wiggins points out, you are going to get people who by their nature are gamblers—very ambitious people, people who are willing to drop everything to try something new. "Shriver couldn't wait three months for a guy; he had to come at once. So, the first priority was talent and the second was availability. If he found

somebody he thought had unusual talent, he'd think of a job for him to do, or let the person create one if there wasn't something on the organization chart that suggested itself. This is the complete reverse of the way things are normally done." But Shriver knew that he had to have the most dazzling staff in Washington, and he used the bait of excitement and job flexibility to assemble it.

"Look," says Wiggins, "Government agencies just don't go out *looking* for guys like Tom Mathews."

TOM MATHEWS

The sun was setting behind the mountains in the ski resort of Alta, Utah, and a night chill was building. Tom Mathews was making his last exhilarating run of the day, looking forward to a hot toddy in the lodge, a hearty dinner, and, tomorrow, another perfect day of late-spring skiing. He had reached the euphoric point where he had forgotten all about his job at the *San Francisco Chronicle* and the strain of daily deadlines.

Seating himself at the lodge's bar, he ordered his toddy and glanced around idly to see if he could spot a familiar face. He spotted instead the newly famous figure of Secretary of Defense Robert Strange McNamara, also in ski clothes, having a drink at the other end of the bar. Mathews mused on the oddness of McNamara's presence at that time and place: The New Frontier was known to be notoriously workaholic, so what was President Kennedy's top guy at the Pentagon doing on a ski holiday just two months after inauguration? The bartender then arrived with Mathews's toddy, bantering with this Utah native and Alta regular.

The telephone behind the bar rang; the bartender answered it casually, then began nodding earnestly, suddenly turning and announcing, "*Washington* is calling." McNamara rose immediately and reached across the bar to take the call.

"No, I'm sorry, Mr. Secretary," explained the bartender. "It's not for you. It's for Tom."

Tom Mathews took the phone, as baffled as if the call were coming from Mars. "Yes. This is Tom Mathews."

A voice crackling with purpose and high spirits came through: "Tom, this is Sarge Shriver calling from the Peace Corps in Wash-

ington. I've heard a lot of great things about you from Pierre Salinger and Fred Dutton, and I want you to come work with us and help put this new thing together. How soon can you get here? What about tomorrow?"

"Well," began the utterly flummoxed Mathews, "I'm on vacation and I have nothing but ski clothes and bad sunburn."

"That's fine, Tom. Come as you are. See ya tomorrow." Click.

Tom Mathews, then thirty-nine, had been happy in his job at the *San Francisco Chronicle* and had planned to spend the rest of his life working and skiing in the West. He had never "thought East" or "thought federal government." But in the space of a few moments, he had talked to the brother-in-law of the president of the United States and had been offered a job in the already near-mythic precincts of the New Frontier. The message was, put your life on "hold" and get East fast. And funnily enough, he knew he was going to do it. He grabbed his shaving kit, jumped into his car, and careened into the Salt Lake City airport in time to board a flight for Chicago, which would connect with another flight bound for Washington, D.C.

The following evening, when most office workers are turning off their lights and going home, Mathews arrived at Peace Corps headquarters at 806 Connecticut Avenue to find the slice-of-pie-shaped twelve-story building ablaze with lights and its inhabitants scurrying about with an energy level that one usually associates with the morning hours. Bill Haddad, associate director of the Peace Corps for Planning, Evaluation and Research was leaving his fifth floor office when the elevator doors opened, revealing what Haddad describes as "an apparition—a short round guy in ski clothes, ski boots, a fur cap, and a crimson face on which was fixed the grin of a man who was in on a fabulous joke."

Haddad approached the apparition: "Jesus Christ. Who are you, anyway?"

"I'm Tom Mathews of the *San Francisco Chronicle* and I'm looking for Sarge Shriver. He's expecting me."

"Okay, Tom," said Haddad. "I think I believe you. Come with me. I'm going into a meeting with Sarge right now."

Haddad began to shake with silent laughter and Mathews just kept grinning. Haddad opened the conference room door and announced to the assembled group: "Hey, you guys, I think I've just met a new staff member. Here he is—Tom Mathews of the *San Francisco Chronicle*. Am I right, Sarge?"

"When I walked into that room," recalls Mathews, "Sarge jumped

up and yelled, 'That's my man! T'rrific!' And the rest of them, oh God, they just went crazy, laughing and screaming and pounding the table." When the hilarity abated, Shriver explained that he had just twenty-four hours earlier summoned Mathews off a mountain in Utah and said "Come as you are, and as you see, he has." Shriver needn't have explained; the early staff was used to sudden, startling happenings and hirings and had immediately put two and two together in Mathews's case. It was a foregone conclusion that Mathews would be hired, having come highly recommended by two influential men at the White House, Pierre Salinger and Fred Dutton, plus the fact of the panache of his arrival.

Mathews spent the night at the quaint little Claridge Hotel a few doors away and the next day being briefed by the Peace Corps staff. By the end of the day, Shriver and Haddad formally popped the question: Would Mathews be deputy director of public information under Ed Bayley (a newspaperman and former aide to Governor Gaylord Nelson of Wisconsin), hired five weeks earlier? Mathews immediately called his wife, Bonnie, in San Francisco, and told her the astonishing news—that he'd be moving East and starting this new job immediately and that she should follow as soon as possible. "She was stoic," says Mathews. "She said she felt like a squaw. Pack up the pots and pans and the teepee and move on."

Mathews then called his nineteen-year-old son and namesake at Princeton (now a senior editor at *Newsweek*), "a Peace Corps type if ever there was one," says Mathews. "Hi, Tom. I'm in Washington."

"Hey Dad," said young Mathews excitedly. "What are you doing here in the East?"

"I've joined the Peace Corps. How do you like that?"

After a pause, young Mathews issued a long, admiring whistle. "Nooooo shit!"

That was in late March 1961. The Peace Corps was one month old on April 1.

FRANK MANKIEWICZ

In May 1961, Frank Mankiewicz was living in Los Angeles and practicing law. He had come to the conclusion that this was not an appropriate role for a young man of thirty-six who had worked for a Kennedy victory and who was now very much aware of the high