

STATEMENT BY THE HONORABLE ROBERT SARGENT SHRIVER, JR.,
DIRECTOR OF THE PEACE CORPS, BEFORE THE
SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE, MARCH 13, 1962

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

I am pleased to appear before this Committee to request authorization of \$63.75 million for the Peace Corps in fiscal year 1963.

A few days ago Under Secretary of State Ball testified in support of this authorization before the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House. He told the Committee that "...we probably are getting more for our money in the Peace Corps than in almost anything else we are doing."

This conviction -- that the money authorized and appropriated for the Peace Corps by Congress last year is being soundly and prudently invested -- is basically the reason we seek your support for ^agrowing Peace Corps.

Members of Congress and officials of the Administration, as well as substantial numbers of private citizens and organizations, have expressed their pride in the achievements of the Peace Corps thus far.

We intend to keep it that way.

We will continue to select the best qualified men and women for Peace Corps service.

We will continue to train them as thoroughly as possible.

We will continue to give them the support they need to work effectively abroad.

We will continue to undertake only the most suitable projects and ones in which Volunteers can make the greatest contribution.

On the basis of this approach, we hope you will approve this request for \$63.75 million.

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Response to the Peace Corps -- at home and abroad -- has been far greater than our budget request would indicate.

Since March 1, 1961, more than 20,000 Americans have volunteered to serve their country in the Peace Corps. New applications are now coming in at the rate of 2,000 each month.

Requests from developing countries throughout the world are for many times the number of Volunteers that we have agreed to supply. Every one of the countries where Peace Corps Volunteers are now working have, on the basis of the initial performance of these men and women, requested additional Volunteers.

Aware of this heavy demand and the increasing supply of Americans willing to serve, we have, however, projected a cautious and careful buildup of Volunteers.

Consistent with our presentation last year, we plan to have 5100 Volunteers in training or overseas by the end of August. This group represents the "freshmen class" of an operation somewhat analogous to a new two-year college.

As these Volunteers move into their second year of service, we intend to enter a new "freshmen class" of 4900 Volunteers.

This analogy is particularly appropriate because the Peace Corps' "natural program year" begins at the same time as the academic year in this country--in September.

This is the time when recent graduates of colleges and universities are most available for training.

It is also the time when the contracts of professional people -- teachers, nurses, and others -- expire and they are eligible to enter the Peace Corps.

This period is, in addition, most suitable for our procedure of utilizing college campuses and staffs for training

programs. And it is at the time of year when the input of Volunteers abroad -- most closely meets the needs of the host countries.

This cycle will enable the Peace Corps to have almost 10,000 Volunteers in training or overseas by August, 1963. In view of the fact that many of the Volunteers now in service will be completing their assignments about that time, we believe this figure to be a realistic and workable one in which quality will not be sacrificed to quantity.

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In this growth of the Peace Corps we will continue to coordinate very closely with the State Department and the Agency for International Development.

Aware of Congressional concern that this coordination be effective, the Peace Corps has been working closely with the country teams and ambassadors where our programs have been developed.

All Peace Corps projects are cleared with the regional bureau in State and AID.

They are coordinated with the Bureau of Cultural Affairs and the United States Information Agency where appropriate.

Every project has been signed off by the Secretary or Under Secretary of State. The Secretary personally conducts a careful annual review of Peace Corps program and budget, assuring maximum cooperation for a united effort. And as provided by the Act, every project with the UN is approved by the Secretary.

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As the Peace Corps grows, we are convinced that the benefits to the United States will increase correspondingly.

More Americans will receive unusual training for future leadership in business, education, government, labor, and other areas of American life.

More Americans will have an intimate and personal awareness of the problems of the underdeveloped but aspiring countries whose future is so closely linked with our own.

More Americans will know foreign languages, foreign countries, and foreign people.

More Americans will have a sharpened interest in the field of their endeavors -- in teaching, medicine, social work, vocational training, and so on.

And more people in the villages, schools and factories, in the shops and clinics of Africa, Asia, and South America, will come to know personally something of what the United States is all about.

In this way, we believe the Peace Corps can fulfill the purposes of the Act passed last year by the Congress.

I will be pleased to try to answer any questions you have.

Thank you.