

STATEMENT OF  
HONORABLE JACK VAUGHN, DIRECTOR, PEACE CORPS  
BEFORE THE HOUSE FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE,  
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Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to have this opportunity to discuss the past achievements and the future plans of the Peace Corps.

During the four months I have been Director of the Peace Corps, I made it my first order of business to meet with Volunteers and Peace Corps staff around the world. I have seen the changes wrought by their enthusiasm and hard work, and by the Volunteer spirit that is the essence of the Peace Corps. As an American, I am proud of these men and women. As their new Director, I am excited by the challenge that their accomplishments in the field pose for Peace Corps leadership in Washington.

This morning I would like, first, to outline the work our Volunteers are doing today, and then to sketch some of our plans for the future. Finally, I want to share with you our thinking on the proposed Partnership Exchange Program. I want in particular to invite your questions about the Exchange Peace Corps, and to obtain your guidance on the course it should take.

First, the work of our Volunteers today. There is diversity, for the Peace Corps program in each city and village is shaped by host country officials, our country staffs, and by the Volunteers themselves to match the skills of the Volunteers to the particular needs of the areas served. But of course, there is pattern as well. We are learning more each year about where Volunteers can be most effective and how they can best meet the needs of those they serve. We are aiming-- and I think to an increasing degree we are succeeding--to meet those requests for Volunteers that place them where they can be a critical force in the development of the country or area they serve.

The work of Peace Corps Volunteers falls into four principal categories. About half are teaching. A quarter serve in rural and urban community development programs. Ten per cent are involved in health programs and another ten percent serve in agricultural development.

Volunteers are changing the patterns of education in many countries. In Tanzania, for example, nearly 40 per cent of the trained elementary and secondary school teachers are Peace Corps Volunteers. As in many developing nations, students had

learned by rote, rather than by involvement and serious questioning. President Julius Nyerere, a former teacher himself, urged a change when he said:

"It is no use the teachers giving to their pupils the answers to existing problems of our nations. By the time the pupils are adults, the problems will have changed. Instead they have to develop among their pupils a problem-solving capacity--an ability to think, to reason, and to analyze the skills and information they have acquired, and thus create new ideas and solutions to new problems."

And this is what the Volunteers are doing. By infusing the spirit of free questioning and free debate they are helping to create a new philosophy of education for Tanzania and other countries.

One of our most dramatic breakthroughs in education--and one that holds great promise for future programs elsewhere--has been in Colombia. There teaching practices are being revolutionized by the use of a nationwide education television system. This program began in 1964, through the joint efforts of the Peace Corps, AID and the Colombian Government. Educational television now reaches nearly a half-million primary school children and 6,500 teachers in seven departments of Colombia from Bogota to the Caribbean. Peace Corps

Volunteers have been of crucial importance to this program, both in creating an effective receiving network in the schools and in establishing the basic organization of the program.

Community development -- whether in the villages or city slums -- is tedious work, but the slow changes encouraged by Peace Corps Volunteers have been inspiring. In Bolivia, to take one of many examples, the host Government, with AID assistance, is sending hundreds of trained community development workers into the villages. Peace Corps Volunteers are at their sides, providing the encouragement, support, and skills at the grass roots that are necessary to a successful program. This program, with the support of Peace Corps Volunteers, is making a profound change in the lives and aspirations of thousands who had given up hope of any life beyond a bare subsistence.

Improving health conditions offers infinite opportunities. In Malawi, for instance, a successful pilot tuberculosis eradication program has demonstrated that Peace Corps Volunteers working under the supervision of a few professionals can achieve major progress toward elimination of a disease within a country. Volunteers, together with Malawian counterparts, are working with villagers, surveying their health

needs, urging them to undergo diagnosis, and to follow prescribed courses of treatment. These Volunteers, and Volunteers in similar programs around the world, are saving lives. They are also demonstrating that diseases which have crippled and decimated populations for generations can be controlled. They are pointing the way to the day when these diseases will be controlled.

Finally, India is a prime example of the role that the Peace Corps can play in agricultural development. Five years ago a skeptical Indian leadership accepted 26 Volunteers. Today, there are over 700 Volunteers working in every Indian state, over 400 in agricultural programs. The total number will double before the end of 1966. Some 1,100 Volunteers--about two-thirds of those we will have in India--will be working in conjunction with the Indian Government's Intensive Agricultural Areas Program. They will be at the cutting edge of a program that India has defined as crucial to its development.

With this brief sketch of our present areas of effort, Mr. Chairman, let me turn for a moment to our plans for the future.

The legislation now before this Committee would permit the Peace Corps to increase its total Volunteer strength from an estimated 14,800 on August 31, 1966, the end of our program year, to 16,000 a year later. Despite the expanded scope of our program, however, we are able to limit our requested authorization during fiscal 1967 to 112.15 million dollars-- 2.85 million dollars less than the authorization for fiscal 1966. This is due in part to a program of management improvement and cost reduction, and in part to the fact that we expect our average annual cost per Volunteer to fall--perhaps by as much as \$200 per Volunteer--in the next fiscal year. We will remain a lean outfit.

Qualified Americans are applying to serve in the Peace Corps in unprecedented numbers. We had estimated earlier this year that 9,200 applicants would enter Peace Corps training by the close of our current program year. Now we expect that number to be almost 10,500. We do not really know the limits of the numbers of potential Peace Corps Volunteers.

Nor have we come close to meeting all sound requests for Volunteers. In response to some of our unmet requests, programs are now underway for Korea, Chad, Bechuanaland, Mauritania, and Guyana. A major new program is now beginning

in the Trust Territory of the Pacific, where President Johnson has asked the Peace Corps to honor a request for Volunteers to improve the bleak economic and educational conditions of those islands. As the result of special efforts in programming and recruiting, 375 Volunteers should be on their way to the Trust Territory by the fall--200 to serve as elementary teachers and community development workers, 100 as health aides, and 75 to serve in public works programs.

Growth for the sake of growth is not our objective, Mr. Chairman. As a matter of fact, our rate of growth in total Volunteer and trainee strength is declining every year. Next year we expect to grow by only about 8 per cent. Our goal is to meet as well as possible those requests for Volunteers that place the Volunteers where they can be the force that helps a country or a community turn the corner toward change and progress.

We are intensifying our efforts to identify those projects in which Volunteers have maximum effectiveness, and to concentrate our efforts in such projects. I cannot say how much or how fast the Peace Corps should grow. I can say it will grow no faster than the number of sound and productive assignments

Volunteers are asked to fill. I do not want, Mr. Chairman, just to ride along on the wave of the Peace Corps' early success. I intend to navigate a course only so long as I know where the Peace Corps is going and why it is going there.

As we plan for the future, we will continue to ask this central question: How can we encourage commitment and participation by those being helped?

The Peace Corps' most important role may be the way in which it urges commitment and involvement on the part of peoples facing the problems of modern life for the first time. People who for generations have been resigned to their condition are now beginning to take an active part in the struggle for a better existence. The Peace Corps encourages this sense of commitment in a number of ways:

First, each Peace Corps Volunteer demonstrates the lesson of what a single person can do to better the world around him.

Second, we ask the countries that receive Peace Corps Volunteers to contribute in cash, in the form of housing, supplies or transportation or a combination of these.

Third, we insist that our efforts be combined with the efforts of the host country and its people.

In the Peace Corps' experience, a shared commitment has proved the key to another vital achievement--the achievement of communication and understanding between the helper and the person helped.

If our Volunteers can work with host country people who are as concerned about the tasks at hand as they are, the doors to meaningful communication are wide open. Time and again, our Volunteers and the people they associate with find themselves working together on shared goals and shared tasks. Under these circumstances, friendship and mutual respect and understanding develop almost necessarily.

Mr. Chairman, I am convinced that it is just this friendship, just this respect and understanding, that is our surest hope for peace.

Nearly two years ago we began another program to encourage greater communication between Americans and people overseas, and a greater commitment on the part of those overseas with whom we work. This is our School-to-School program. Under this program, an American school raises funds to meet the cost of certain building materials for a school in an underdeveloped country. The people of that country do the actual planning

and construction work themselves. The Peace Corps acts merely as a conduit between schools, referring offers of assistance from the United States to communities abroad where there is interest in building schools. Peace Corps Volunteers assist by encouraging the communities to organize and do for themselves.

Now the President has asked the Peace Corps to expand the School-to-School program. We have served as intermediary for the construction of about 116 schools during the last two years. We intend now to encourage 1,000 School-to-School partnerships. These will not only emphasize assistance in school construction, but will also help American schools to participate in meeting other important educational needs overseas.

School-to-School partnerships are one part of the Partnership Exchange Program in the Peace Corps' proposed legislation. The second aspect is the Exchange Peace Corps, suggested by the President in his Message to Congress on International Education and Health.

The Exchange Peace Corps would work like this. The sending country would recruit, select, and provide initial training for Exchange Volunteers, applying standards that are agreed

upon by the United States and the sending country. The sending country would also pay for the international transportation of its Volunteers. Once the Exchange Volunteers were in the United States, the Peace Corps would provide an 8-12 week period of intensive training. Volunteers would then be assigned to agencies and schools that had requested their service. They would serve for one to two years. Funds for allowances would come from the schools and agencies with which the Exchange Volunteers work.

The Peace Corps would coordinate and administer the Exchange Peace Corps, but the major responsibility for the programs, operation and financing would go to the individual countries sending Volunteers and to sponsor schools and other institutions in the United States.

Mr. Chairman, I am particularly enthusiastic about the Exchange Peace Corps. I see it as a natural continuation of the work we are now doing overseas. This program offers an opportunity for those countries which have been receiving Peace Corps Volunteers to contribute substantially to us in return. I have emphasized the importance of involving those nations with the United States in common projects and joint endeavors. It seems to me that a country which offers to pay

for the recruitment, selection, initial training and international transportation of a group of its citizens to work in the United States is making an important commitment.

An Exchange Peace Corps also seems to me to offer a unique opportunity to continue our work of building bridges of understanding between our people and the rest of the world. Understanding, Mr. Chairman, is a two-way proposition. The Exchange Peace Corps--like the Peace Corps--is based on the philosophy that we have much to teach, but we also have much to learn.

I have little doubt, Mr. Chairman, that this program, if authorized, will succeed. Since the President proposed to create the program, some 17 countries have indicated an interest in sending Volunteers. In this country many schools have asked for Volunteers to teach their languages and to teach about their cultures. For example, the Riverside, California schools would like to introduce a new course in world cultures at the ninth grade level to be taught by Exchange Peace Corps teachers. The Superintendent of Schools in Montgomery County, Maryland, has pointed out the need for "real, live relationships" between American students and people from the

non-Western world. The Director of Language Training for the New Mexico Public Schools has asked for teachers of Spanish for elementary and secondary schools.

We will proceed carefully. Our first interest will be in ensuring that the Exchange Volunteers have productive jobs and adequate support and supervision in this country.

Mr. Chairman, I am very anxious that this program be understood. As one way of getting at the issues involved in the proposed program, let me tell you of the questions I have heard asked about the Exchange Peace Corps.

I have been asked if Exchange Volunteers will be good enough to make a real contribution in this country. When I hear this question, I can't help thinking back to the early days of the Peace Corps itself, when Sargent Shriver described to foreign leaders what the Peace Corps could mean for their countries. Sarge likes to recall the head of state of an Asian country who told him he would not object to Peace Corps Volunteers, but they would have little to offer the ancient culture of his country. Since then, that country and many more have seen the worth of our Volunteers; they have multiplied their requests for Volunteers many times over. I think, Mr. Chairman, that the same sort of thing will happen once Exchange

Peace Corps Volunteers begin to work in this country. Just by being here, they will contribute to our work of building international understanding. But, in addition, I think we will find that they do jobs in this country that very much need doing--and that they do them well.

Exchange Volunteers will be selected, according to standards and procedures agreed between the sending country and the United States, to fill specific jobs requiring specific skills. They will be able to speak English. They will be screened for security purposes by the American Embassies in their countries before they are issued visas for the United States. All indications are that, just as we have felt in the case of our Peace Corps Volunteers, the sending countries will want to send only their best to represent them.

I have been asked, conversely, if we are not requesting Volunteers who are too highly skilled, whose services their own countries badly need. In the short run, this point has some validity. In the long run, however, I am convinced that the sending countries will profit greatly from the knowledge, the skills, and the broadened horizons that their returned Volunteers will bring back with them.

I have also been asked if our program will duplicate existing Exchange Programs. It will not. First, our program will draw Volunteers primarily from countries that have not participated widely in the current programs. These are the nations of Asia, Africa and Latin America, which the Peace Corps has already helped bring closer to us. Second, our program will draw primarily upon young citizens of other nations at the beginning of their careers. It will involve greater training and fuller involvement of the Volunteers in American life. Just as we expect Peace Corps Volunteers overseas to contribute their total abilities to their assignments, we would expect Exchange Volunteers to engage themselves in contributing beyond the limits of their particular jobs. Third, the program would involve far more financial and substantive participation by sending countries than is the case in current exchanges. Finally, while most exchange programs have emphasized teachers, many of our Volunteers will work with social agencies, health organizations and youth groups.

I have been asked, finally, if Exchange Volunteers will really return to their home countries when their assignments are completed here. I am confident that, with some rare exceptions, they will. Their visas--so-called "J-visas"--will

require that they leave the United States shortly after the termination of their service. The time limitations on these visas are extended only rarely, and we would oppose any extensions. In fact, fewer than one per cent of those persons who have come to this country on J-visas in Government exchange programs have had these visas extended. A major thrust of the program will be preparation of Volunteers for work in their home countries. I am sure that we, with the sending countries, can build incentives into our program, as well as prohibitions, that will result in a rate of return very close to 100 per cent.

And now, Mr. Chairman, I ask for your help and the help of this Committee. I am sure the Committee has other questions about the Exchange Volunteer Program, and I want to try to answer them. I very much want to hear the Committee's views and receive its guidance on how the program should develop.

Thank you.