

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

Mr. Hunter

C.F.
5751

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Monday, May 2, 1966
10:20 a. m.

FG105-6
FG145
FG105
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MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

SUBJECT: Peace Corps Proposal for the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands

1. ~~Stewart Udall and Jack Vaughn are requesting an appointment with you to discuss a joint Interior-Peace Corps proposal for using Peace Corps volunteers in the Trust Territory.~~ They seek your support and direct participation. Bill Moyers and I have reviewed their proposal and endorse it. In my view, it makes a substantial contribution to solving a serious and sensitive problem.

X 2. After visiting the Territory last January, Ambassador Eugenie Anderson wrote a very critical report on the Pacific Trust Territory, expressing her alarm over economic, health and social conditions in the islands. She viewed the situation as grave, and regarded it as a source of potential embarrassment in the United Nations. Arthur^XGoldberg and Joe Sisco share her view.

3. The Peace Corps reviewed her report and saw in it both an opportunity to provide wide-scale assistance in the immediate problem of the Trust Territory and to offer young Americans a dramatic and constructive opportunity for service in the cause of peaceful development in contrast to Vietnam. This latter thought is best summarized in a paragraph in the Peace Corps' suggested wording of the Presidential statement they want you to make:

"At a time in our history when I have had to make the unhappy decision to send young Americans overseas to fight, I find comfort in issuing here a call for young Americans to go abroad to serve peaceful purposes. It is a much happier task to issue to young Americans a summons to lend a helping hand than it is to issue a call to arms; to ask them to participate in mankind's struggle for a better way of life than it is to ask them to fight."

4. The Peace Corps offered its assistance to Interior and in cooperation with the Interior staff a proposed program was drafted. Secretary Udall has reviewed the proposal and enthusiastically supports it.

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-2-

5. Last week a Peace Corps representative went to Honolulu to discuss the program with the High Commissioner of the Trust Territory and some of the Assistant Commissioners. They also were enthusiastic about the plan and indicated that there would be a good reception on the part of Micronesian officials in the Trust Territory Congress. They pointed out that Micronesian officials had often commented on the lack of Volunteers in Micronesia. The High Commissioner indicated that Micronesian officials would be eager to request Peace Corps assistance. Their request is now in hand.

6. ~~The Peace Corps' proposal calls for a special recruiting effort May 9 through May 20,~~ which will send in its initial phase 200 elementary teachers/community development workers, 100 health aides, and 75 Volunteers for public works. Later installments will cover programs in agriculture, communications, credit unions and co-ops, and other phases of economic development.

7. Since it is so late in the college academic year, ~~the Peace Corps needs special help in mounting the program. They ask for a Presidential statement~~ endorsing the program and requesting the Peace Corps and the youth of America to respond in a special way to a request of the Micronesian people.

8. I and members of my staff have reviewed the Peace Corps' proposal in detail. ~~I am in favor of it.~~ The proposal has also the strong endorsement of Secretary Udall, Ambassador Goldberg, and Assistant Secretary of State Joseph Sisco. In order for the Peace Corps to launch its recruiting effort on May 9, it will require an announcement on or about May 7. ~~With this in mind, Secretary Udall and Mr. Vaughn would like to meet briefly with you on May 2 or 3. I hope you will be able to make it possible.~~

9. ~~I have a draft of an announcement that could be released to the press toward the end of this week~~ to start the ball rolling. I have asked Bill Moyers and others on your staff for their comments on the draft, a copy of which ~~attach (Tab A)~~ to give you an idea of what is being proposed.

W. A. Rostow
Rostow

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SUGGESTED WORDING FOR THE PRESIDENT'S ANNOUNCEMENT OF
THE PEACE CORPS PROGRAM IN THE PACIFIC
TRUST TERRITORY (MICRONESIA)

I have a brief announcement to make.

On May _____, there was relayed to me by the High Commissioner of the Pacific Trust Territory and the Secretary of the Interior a request from prominent leaders of the new Congress of Micronesia asking for Peace Corps Volunteers in the Pacific Trust Territory.

As you know, since World War II the United States has had the responsibility for administering the Trust Territory as a strategic trust under the United Nations. The day rapidly approaches when the people of Micronesia must decide what their self-governing status will be.

However, we all know that strong political and social institutions and a vigorous economy are prerequisites of stable self-government.

Since the war the United States has been interested in assisting the Micronesians to develop better schools, improved health programs, and the means of economic development. The pace of this development has not been as rapid as one would like to see. Critical shortages of effective middle level manpower -- of classroom teachers, of health aides, of community development workers -- have sharply curtailed the pace of development.

However, I am now happy to say that I see a solution to this problem.

In the last five years the Peace Corps has established itself as a principal supplier to the emerging nations of middle level manpower for programs of economic and social development. The Peace Corps now has extensive experience in the fields of education, health, public works, and community development. In addition, it has been able to instill in host country nationals the pride of self-help and citizen participation. All these are needed in the Trust Territory.

I, therefore, want to announce that I have asked the Peace Corps to mount an intensive, relatively short-term special project for the people of Micronesia. I am today calling upon young Americans, particu-

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-2-

larly those who are finishing their college careers next month, to respond to the call of the Micronesian people. I am also asking Volunteers who will complete their service in the next two or three months, and those who have already given two years to the Peace Corps to seriously consider another period of service in the Trust Territory. We will need teachers, health workers, and people to work in public works, agriculture, and construction. We, of course, invite people who have these skills, but I want to reassure those who want to make a contribution that they can develop the required skill in a Peace Corps training program.

At a time in our history when I have had to make the unhappy decision to send young Americans overseas to fight, I find comfort in issuing here a call for young Americans to go abroad to serve peaceful purposes. It is a much happier task to issue to young Americans a summons to lend a helping hand than it is to issue a call to arms; to ask them to participate in mankind's struggle for a better way of life than it is to ask them to fight.

In the days of the Old West there was an established custom where members of a community would assemble from time to time to assist a newcomer in establishing himself as a member of the community. In a gesture of friendship and fellowship members of the community would agree to give a certain portion of their time, and on a given day would arrive at the new homestead to lend a helping hand. Often the homestead would be without a barn, without fences, sometime even without a house. In a community effort a house would be built, fences erected, and a barn would be raised. In this spirit, as the people of Micronesia seek to establish themselves in the world community, however they see fit, I am asking young Americans to give a portion of their time during the next four years and take part in a modern day "barn raising" for the people of Micronesia. I am asking young Americans to welcome, through their helping hand and assistance, Micronesians to our world community.

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