

9/1/66

BRIEFING INFORMATION  
FOR THE WHITE HOUSE ON THE  
PEACE CORPS PROGRAM IN THE TRUST TERRITORY

1. Background:

On or about January 1, 1966, the attention of the Peace Corps was drawn to consideration of a potential program in the Trust Territory. In 1961-62, the Peace Corps had considered small programs in the Trust Territory which, due to competitive demands for Volunteers in other countries, did not materialize. However, early in 1966, the confluence of critical reports, including the Petition of Grievance, the W.H.O. report and, more especially, the report by Ambassador Eugenie Anderson, U. S. Ambassador to the Trusteeship Council, led the Peace Corps to renew its consideration of a Peace Corps program for Micronesia. The above-mentioned reports and the earlier report submitted to President Kennedy by Anthony Solomon were reviewed carefully. All these reports reflected critical manpower deficiencies in the fields of education, health, public works, and community development. Many of them cited specifically the need for Peace Corps participation.

The position reached by the Peace Corps upon completion of its review was that the Trust Territory provided a special opportunity for the Peace Corps. However, it was essential to further Peace Corps consideration of this project that Micronesian officials, representing the people of Micronesia, desired Peace Corps Volunteer participation. With this in mind, the Peace Corps initiated informal discussions with both the Department of the Interior and later with the High Commissioner and members of his staff. The outcome of these meetings was to establish clearly that Peace Corps Volunteers were needed in the Trust Territory and would be well received in the Trust Territory by the people. Expressing interest, the High Commissioner forwarded to the Secretary of the Interior on May 3, 1966, a request for Peace Corps Volunteers in the Trust Territory, indicating

that the request had the endorsement of members of the Congress of Micronesia and of the District Legislatures. This request was submitted to the White House and in response the President, by letter, requested "the greatest possible involvement on the part of the Peace Corps" in assisting the people of Micronesia "as they seek to establish themselves in the world community." On May 6, the formal announcement of Peace Corps participation in the Trust Territory was made jointly by Secretary of the Interior Udall, Ambassador to the United Nations Arthur Goldberg, and Jack Vaughn, Director of the Peace Corps.

Following this announcement, a Peace Corps programming team visited the Trust Territory for approximately three weeks. The team consulted with the High Commissioner and members of his staff in Saipan and visited District Centers for consultation with District officials, both U. S. and Micronesian. As a result of this joint programming effort, a Peace Corps program for approximately 600 Volunteers was scheduled.

Concurrent with the programming mission a special recruiting effort was conducted in the United States for Peace Corps Volunteers to serve in the Trust Territory. In a two week period more than 3,000 young Americans volunteered for service in the Trust Territory.

2. The Peace Corps in the Trust Territory:

The 600 Volunteers, programmed as a result of joint Peace Corps Trust Territory consultations, were divided into two phases: Phase I, consisting of approximately 400 Volunteers, and Phase II, consisting of approximately 200 Volunteers. Phase I was scheduled for August through October 1966 training; Phase II was scheduled for November 1966 through January 1967 training. The 400 Volunteers in

Phase I were further sub-divided into two groups: Group A and Group B. Group A consists of 196 teachers who would also be trained in community development, 6 lawyers who would serve in the Districts as public defenders, and 6 volunteer secretaries for assignment in the Peace Corps district offices and national headquarters in Saipan. The Peace Corps has signed a contract with Westinghouse Corporation to train Group A. This training is underway in Key West, Florida and will be completed October 22, 1966. Group B, which consists of approximately 80 health workers who will work in the fields of environmental health and will establish control programs in leprosy, tuberculosis and filiarisis; 35 public works Volunteers who will represent skills in architecture, surveying, civil engineering, and construction; 12 community development supervisors; 12 urban youth-recreation leaders; 6 Volunteers who will serve as small business advisors; and 15 specialists in the medical field including nurses, medical technologists, x-ray technicians, and pharmacists. In addition, Group B will include 6 Volunteers, one for each District, trained in radio procedure and maintenance. Group B is training under the auspices of the University of Hawaii at a Trust Territory training site established on Molokai island.

Volunteers of both Group A and B of Phase I will enter service in Micronesia on or about November 5, 1966.

Phase II of the Peace Corps program, which will begin training in November, will also be sub-divided into two groups. Group A will be composed of approximately 100 teachers who will also be trained in community development; and 12 lawyers who will commence the codification of law. The training will again be under the direction of Westinghouse in Florida. Group B, which consists of approximately 50 Volunteers for health, public works, and community development programs, will again train under the auspices of the University of Hawaii on the island of Molokai, Hawaii.

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While program plans beyond Phase II are still incomplete, preliminary discussions have proceeded far enough to estimate that the total numbers of Volunteers serving in the Trust Territory at any one time during the next five years will be approximately 700 - 850.

3. Relations Between the High Commissioner and the Peace Corps:

Consistent with Peace Corps practices in all of its host countries, Peace Corps Volunteers are assigned as "grass roots" manpower. Accordingly, all Peace Corps Volunteers will serve under the immediate supervision of local Trust Territory supervisors and officials, either Micronesian or American. For example, a Peace Corps Volunteer teacher will work within the local school system, probably under the authority of a local school principal. In this case, a Peace Corps Volunteer teacher is called upon to meet all the responsibilities and obligations of local teachers, Micronesian or otherwise. Furthermore, the Peace Corps Volunteer has the additional responsibilities of fulfilling the spirit and the purposes of the Peace Corps Act. The same would apply to any Peace Corps Volunteer working in any program in the Trust Territory.

Both Volunteers and staff, of course, operate under the authority of the High Commissioner in the Trust Territory. Basic programming decisions for the Peace Corps, including the nature of the program, the timing of arrivals, and the job assignments of Volunteers, will be decided upon through consultation between the Peace Corps Director and the High Commissioner. All major programming decisions must have the concurrence of the High Commissioner and, if possible, the agreement of appropriate Micronesian leaders.

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4. Peace Corps Staff:

Consistent with Peace Corps operations elsewhere, the Volunteers will be supported in-country by a Peace Corps staff under the direction of a Peace Corps Director for the Trust Territory. The Peace Corps Director will be stationed in Saipan and will be joined there by a Deputy Peace Corps Director, a Chief Administrative Officer, an Administrative Assistant, and a Peace Corps Volunteer secretary. The Peace Corps Director will have in each District a Regional Director and a Deputy Regional Director. In addition, each District will have a Peace Corps physician assigned to the Peace Corps staff for the preventive and curative health maintenance of Volunteers. It should be noted here that as a general rule Peace Corps physicians attempt to spend a portion of their time in volunteer medical activities in their communities. The same would apply to the Peace Corps physicians in the Trust Territory. In addition to the Peace Corps staff outlined above, there will be members of the Peace Corps staff who have been assigned solely for technical support purposes. It is anticipated that the Peace Corps Volunteer teachers will be supported by three such staff members serving the Volunteer teachers in the entire Trust Territory. The health Volunteers will similarly be supported by two staff members specializing in public health.