



UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
OFFICE OF TERRITORIES
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20240

October 14, 1966

Memorandum to the Files

From: Mrs. Ruth G. Van Cleve

Subject: TT-PC Operating Agreement

Because it may prove useful at some later point to have a record of the steps leading toward the proposed Operating Agreement between the Government of the Trust Territory and the Peace Corps, an agreement that is not yet consummated, I am setting forth below a recital of the principal developments.

1. We in Interior believed that it could be important, during the hearings on the Trust Territory Authorization bill scheduled for July 19 (in the House) and July 21 (in the Senate), to have an agreement setting forth the manner in which the Trust Territory and the Peace Corps would cooperate in connection with the upcoming Peace Corps program there. Accordingly, during the first two weeks of July, Mr. Robert Vaughan, I, and others in the Office of Territories met frequently and at some length with Mr. Ross Pritchard, and others of the Peace Corps, in an effort to frame an agreement. We hoped to be able to present to the High Commissioner, upon his arrival in mid-July, an agreement which he would be willing to sign, and at the same time, to obtain the signature of the Director of the Peace Corps, all before the hearing dates.

We were unable to resolve any of the difficult questions. We had hoped to deal definitively with such issues as the relationships between Peace Corps Volunteers and Trust Territory Government employees in the districts; relationships between district Peace Corps directors and our district administrators; relationships between Peace Corps staff personnel and staff personnel at Trust Territory headquarters at Saipan. It seemed to us that, while the Peace Corps representatives often agreed orally to the objectives we sought, they subsequently disagreed with the words we used to state them in writing. At the same time, the Peace Corps doubtless believed that we were being uncooperative and foolish in our efforts to place Peace Corps Volunteers and staff within the machinery of the Trust Territory Government.

2. When Mr. Norwood arrived in mid-July, he stated, in a meeting in the Under Secretary's office at which most pertinent Interior people

were present, that he did not believe such a detailed agreement was essential. He said that he believed he could himself draft an agreement that would serve the necessary purposes in the Trust Territory, while being acceptable at the same time to the Peace Corps. It was agreed by everyone present that he should undertake to do so.

3. Mr. Norwood did draft such an agreement, it was discussed with Mr. Pritchard on July 21, and that afternoon Mr. Norwood signed it. At Mr. Pritchard's behest, Mr. Norwood struck out certain language which Mr. Pritchard objected to. Mr. Norwood initialled the deletion, signed the agreement, and presumed that precisely that agreement would soon be signed by Peace Corps Director, Jack Hood Vaughn. Mr. Pritchard indicated that he believed the agreement would be acceptable to Mr. Vaughn, but it was of course understood that he could not commit Mr. Vaughn.

4. Beginning in early August, Mr. Norwood from time to time by radiogram asked us in the Office of Territories to urge the Peace Corps to execute the agreement. He explained that he had need of it so as to advise his officers and employees throughout the districts of the responsibilities they might soon be expected to assume. We accordingly undertook to telephone the Peace Corps two or three times weekly throughout August and early September to urge that the agreement be signed and that we be notified of the signing as soon as possible.

5. On September 8, a Peace Corps secretary telephoned my secretary and stated that the agreement had been signed. We so advised the High Commissioner that afternoon by radiogram.

6. On Friday afternoon, September 16, we received here two photographed copies of a retyped agreement, apparently signed by Jack Hood Vaughn (though our copies showed initials only), but with no covering letter or other explanation, written or oral. Upon comparing the Vaughn-September 8 version with the Norwood-July 21 version, we noted numerous changes (precisely 7), at least some of which were substantive. Accordingly, on September 19, we wrote Mr. Norwood (after advising him by radio not to sign the agreement), calling his attention to the changes and urging that he be sure none gave him difficulty.

Prior to writing my September 19 letter to Mr. Norwood, I attempted to learn by telephone from the Peace Corps that day whether it had advised Mr. Norwood of the changes. I learned that

"at some earlier time" the Peace Corps "thought" it had mentioned to him that "perfecting changes" would be made. I thus feared that Mr. Norwood had received copies of the agreement without further elaboration, just as we had.

7. We later learned that the agreement had been sent to Mr. Norwood with Mr. Vaughn's covering letter of September 8, in which Mr. Vaughn said in part that "For purposes of clarification I have made several small changes in the language, although nothing of a substantial nature. I did add the very last line regarding the desirability of contributions from the district legislatures and municipal councils to Peace Corps operations." A copy of the September 8 letter was sent to Bob Vaughan with a covering letter of September 19, probably written after my telephone inquiries of that day.

8. Having learned that the Peace Corps had called Mr. Norwood's attention to the fact of changes, I advised Mr. Norwood that we had no objection to his signing the agreement if the changes were acceptable to him. Mr. Norwood in turn concluded that the changes were not objectionable, except for the one referred to in the above quote. He signed the agreement and returned it to the Peace Corps in Washington, noting the language to which he objected.

9. Along with the changes in the agreement which we learned of on September 16, we were troubled to see that the Peace Corps had classified the agreement "Limited Official Use." We also called Mr. Norwood's attention to this, pointing out that he could not make the wide distribution of it that we had all foreseen. He asked the Peace Corps directly to remove the classification, as has Mr. Pincetich, the Peace Corps Director in the Trust Territory.

10. The Peace Corps has stated recently that it will declassify the agreement only if the High Commissioner agrees to additional language setting forth the nature of the relationship between Peace Corps Volunteers and Micronesians. We have not seen the proposed language. We have asked Mr. Norwood whether he would find it useful and timely for us to intercede at a high level to request declassification. By telephone the night of October 12 (which call concerned essentially other business), Mr. Norwood informed me that he and Mr. Pincetich had concluded that, by using material in the House Committee report on the Trust Territory Authorisation bill (H.R. 17505), they could distribute to all the necessary people in the Trust Territory the information which they will need to have before the Peace Corps Volunteers arrive.

(Sgd.) Mrs. Ruth G. Van Cleave

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