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

October 26, 1966

Memorandum

To: The Secretary  
(Through Assistant Secretary, Public Land Management)

From: Director, Office of Territories

Subject: Peace Corps strains

In several connections over the last several months, our patience has been strained almost beyond endurance by Peace Corps people and their methods of operating. I have composed numerous outraged letters for you to sign and send to Jack Hood Vaughn, but I have on each occasion discarded them. The composition has apparently provided the necessary catharsis. Also, I have not been sure that expressing our displeasure would really be productive. But I believe you ought to know of the kinds of situations in which we have found ourselves, because we may have to ask you for your help one day soon.

I will advert briefly to two recent events by way of examples, and will then detail at some length a third. These are illustrative only. I could supply many more.

First, on October 18, Kevin Delaney of the Peace Corps telephoned to say that he needed to see Bob Vaughan and me on an urgent basis. We arranged to meet at 3:30 that day. When we assembled, he presented to us a copy of a memorandum, dated one week before, which Ross Pritchard had sent to Douglass Cater at the White House. The subject was the Trust Territory, and the purpose was to offer a suggestion (classified) which the President might announce in Manila. It was, frankly, a dreadful suggestion, and I told Mr. Delaney so. It was also in the area of our responsibility, not the Peace Corps'. I also pointed out that, what with the President then in flight, our views were being sought much after the fact. The following day I prepared and Assistant Secretary Anderson signed a memorandum to Douglass Cater, expressing our disapproval of the suggestion. I sent copies to State, Defense, and the Peace Corps promptly. We have heard nothing further concerning the matter. Perhaps the suggestion would have died without our helping to bury it. In all probability we will never know.

Secondly, Senator McCarthy took to the floor of the Senate on one of its closing days to deliver an extended speech on the Trust Territory.

He proposed, among other things, that administrative responsibility for the area should be shifted from you to the Secretary of State. While we will probably not know definitely the source of his inspiration, the content of the speech makes almost certain that some of it was supplied by the Department of State, and there are other features which make almost as certain that some of his information came from the Peace Corps. Some features parallel the Pritchard-Cater memorandum and others State Department proposals relative to the political future of the Trust Territory. We presume that the chain involved Ross Pritchard to Eugenie Anderson to the Senator.

Thirdly, we have had a most trying time attempting to develop an operating agreement between the High Commissioner and the Peace Corps. We began in July, when we discussed such an agreement at length during several sessions with Ross Pritchard, among others. We were unable to agree on any of the critical provisions. It seemed to most of us that Mr. Pritchard was willing to agree to almost anything in the discussion stage, but that he would then do a complete about face when confronted with language in writing. When Mr. Norwood arrived in town in mid-July, he undertook himself to draft an instrument, one which he felt would be sufficient for him and acceptable to the Peace Corps. His version, typed in final form, was discussed with Mr. Pritchard on July 21. With one deletion, which Mr. Norwood accepted (and initialed), Mr. Pritchard thought the instrument acceptable and said he believed Jack Vaughn would sign it. On that basis, Mr. Norwood signed it on July 21.

Beginning in early August, Mr. Norwood importuned us at least weekly to importune the Peace Corps to cause the instrument to be signed, or at least considered. He needed the agreement in order to advise his officers and employees of their upcoming responsibilities. This we knew, as did the Peace Corps, and accordingly we embarked upon a program of telephoning the Peace Corps several times a week for several weeks, asking them to get on with the agreement. We were told that there was apparently no substantive problem; Mr. Vaughn simply had a great deal to do.

Finally, on September 8, a telephone call from a Peace Corps secretary to mine revealed that the agreement had been signed. We so notified Mr. Norwood by radiogram that day. About ten days later, I received in the mail two machine copies of a Trust Territory-Peace Corps agreement, initialed by Vaughn and dated September 8, but without a covering letter or other explanation. When I compared this instrument, which had obviously been retyped, word for word with the July 21 version, I saw that numerous changes, some of them substantive, had been made. No mention of this had been made to us, although the opportunities to do so were numerous. I also noted with shock that the agreement had

been classified. (Since we had originally wanted the agreement to present to our Committees during ceiling bill hearings in July, a fact which the Peace Corps knew; since the Peace Corps had from the beginning asked that the agreement be subject to ratification by the Congress of Micronesia, which would certainly have made it public; since not a word in it bore any relationship to the security interests of the United States -- for all these reasons the classification was baseless. Additionally, it prevented Mr. Norwood from using the instrument in the way he'd at all times contemplated, by making its terms known to all hands in Micronesia.

I called the Peace Corps immediately to find out (1) whether Mr. Norwood had been consulted, or at least advised, of the changes, and (2) why the instrument had been classified. I was told that they "thought" Mr. Norwood was aware of the changes, and that it had been classified because it was "inappropriate" to have the Micronesians see the agreement.

Mr. Norwood in fact received the agreement with a covering letter from Jack Vaughn, which stated that a few perfecting, nonsubstantive changes had been made. Mr. Norwood replied to the Peace Corps, noting that the changes were in several instances substantive, that although none had been discussed with him he found all except one acceptable, that he had deleted the one he found unacceptable, and that he hoped the agreement would be declassified forthwith.

The Peace Corps said it would declassify it only if certain additional language were included concerning Peace Corps relations with the Micronesians. It had never suggested that it had a problem on this aspect before. In due course it produced its language, we accepted it (subject to the High Commissioner's concurrence) with one change which was agreeable to all. The High Commissioner has today advised us that the changes are acceptable to him and presumably the agreement is now signed and declassified.

It should not have taken roughly four months to develop this instrument, and the bureaucratic bad manners which the Peace Corps displayed, not to mention the bureaucratic dishonesty, is without parallel in my experience. Happily, it seems that the difficulties are largely in Washington. Mr. Norwood and the Peace Corps people in the field seem to be getting along admirably.

(Sgt.) Ruth G. Van Cleve

Mrs. Ruth G. Van Cleve