



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

PERSONAL/CONFIDENTIAL

December 19, 1967

Hon. William R. Norwood
High Commissioner
Trust Territory of the
Pacific Islands
Saipan, Mariana Islands 96950

Dear Mr. Norwood:

Ruth has asked me to acknowledge your letter of November 29 regarding the history of the Peace Corps. Your letter arrived after she entered the hospital for an operation, but I did discuss it briefly with her during a post-operation call I made at the hospital.

There is not very much that we can add to the information which you already have regarding the history of the Peace Corps involvement in the Trust Territory. Your understanding is consistent with what we know.

In 1961, when the Peace Corps was first created, High Commissioner Goding did send an application asking for a number of volunteer teachers. This request was turned down, partly because of concern over the legality of Peace Corps involvement in the territory, but, we believe more importantly, because the Peace Corps involvement was intended to be in non-American flag areas.

Although from time to time the question of Peace Corps involvement in the Trust Territory was raised, it was never seriously considered until after the 1965 Congressional visit to the Territory. Ambassador Anderson apparently undertook a major campaign to get the Peace Corps into the Territory. Interior's involvement came late and the Peace Corps and State Department pushed the project through despite concern voiced by several of us that the proposal involved possibly too many people and had not been very well thought out. We particularly urged that the project not be announced until such time as it could be carefully cleared with the two Interior committees and until its relationship with our then proposed ceiling authorization could be sorted out with the key members of the Congress.

As you know, this did not take place, despite the Secretary's effort to clear the proposal with the Chairmen of the Committees. The then ceiling proposal was immediately labeled the "State Department-Peace Corps Proposal, and there was nothing that we could do to convince the Congress otherwise.

I realize this does not give you much information, but unfortunately there is very little in the way of documentation that we have.

With respect to circulation of your letter to Jack Hood Vaughn, as a result of some of the inquiries based upon House Foreign Affairs Committee questioning of the Peace Corps Program, a certain discreet circulation has been made in Washington. For example, the Peace Corps staff involved in the testimony had apparently not been apprised of your letter, and the Bureau of Budget, which had raised questions regarding the Vaughn statement as reported in the press, requested a copy.

The other day Secretary Anderson and I met with the Committee with respect to plans for the trip to Micronesia. It was after that meeting that I telephoned Gordon Findley and had him forward to you my request for information on schedules, members of Congress of Micronesia, etc. During the course of the discussion, however, the Committee made abundantly clear that it will take a close look at Peace Corps activities and programs in the Territory to determine the relative usefulness and effectiveness of the program. If I may add my own two cents, I definitely feel that there are too many volunteers who may not be very well equipped to do the jobs that you need done or the jobs which the Micronesians feel need to be done. The resolution in the last session of the Congress of Micronesia asking for qualified Japanese volunteers is, I think, symptomatic of this problem. I think too that if the number of volunteers is not kept within manageable proportions, you may well be faced with a lesser ceiling or with renewed pressures to have the Trust Territory reimburse the Peace Corps.

Sincerely yours,

George R. Milner
Acting Director

GM/tv 12-19-67