



PEACE CORPS

volunteer

FEBRUARY 1969

Defining the Volunteer ethic

By WARD HOWER

One of the ways in which Peace Corps is losing its soul is by making a fetish of programming. A man who goes to Milwaukee to earn his living as a taxi driver is exposed to the danger of becoming a racist. A man who spends too much time looking at pictures of naked women risks addiction to auto-eroticism. Just so Peace Corps, by riveting its attention to the programming process, and to program criteria, is becoming a development agency instead of a Volunteer movement. As a development agency its performance and potential are relatively insignificant; as a Volunteer movement it might change the world.

'The Peace Corps, by riveting its attention to the programming process, and to program criteria, is becoming a development agency instead of a Volunteer movement.'

The central and saving truth is this: what a Volunteer does is important; but it is infinitely more important that he do it as a Volunteer.

Anecdotal material and local color will now be supplied for purposes of illustration, but with concern for brevity.

Twenty miles or so from the capital city in one host country, on a dirt road near a village, is a secondary school. Originally established as part of an Anglican mission, the school is now government aided and controlled. Like most of the 50-odd secondary schools in the country, it is beautifully sited, solidly constructed, and impressively equipped. It is a boarding school. Although close to the capital in miles, it feels remote and isolated, and is not in fact part of the urban complex. The social and economic gulf between the school and the surrounding farms and villages seems unbridgeable, as it was indeed intended to be by the former colonialists. They founded a system of secondary schools precisely in order to nurture in a

special sub-culture cut off from the life around them, a class of civil servants and administrators who would adopt colonial standards and serve colonial interests.

To this setting, nearly three years ago, came R.K., a Peace Corps Volunteer privately prepped in the States, possessed of a brand new law degree from Princeton, to teach English. A comfortable and reasonably satisfying role awaited him. He was soon made head of the English department. His pupils were bright and eager, his classes interesting and full of challenge. He knew soccer, and was delighted to find that his school had a long tradition of excellence in that sport. Assigned to staff housing on the compound, he found that this included cunning furniture, a fireplace to drive away the occasional chill and damp, a houseboy to see that wood was carried and properly laid and to serve his tea. His living allowance was more than sufficient to take care of his needs and provide for extraordinary creature comfort. If he adminis-

tered his department with skill and finesse, taught well, added his bit to the soccer tradition, assumed some extra responsibility as dorm master and handed out allowances on Saturday mornings, he would fit in perfectly, doing exactly what was expected of him by Peace Corps and the Ministry of Education, spend a lovely two years, and go home with honor, having done his bit for peace and friendship.

When he does come home, R.K. will have quite a bit more to show for his years with Peace Corps. His soccer proteges have not only done well in competition with teams from other secondary schools; they have taught the game to youngsters from the farms and villages who won't go to secondary schools. They and other students have started a school garden which supplies a large portion of the food needed on the compound. They work in the gardens with their own hands. So does R.K. They have also carried their own hard-won gardening expertise into the countryside, helping farmers to grow new and better crops for family use and for cash. With their own hands they have built a new wing to the students' dorm. They have started adult literacy classes. They have begun a tradition of holiday work projects sponsored by the school featuring, for openers, a cattle spraying and dip station, built and staffed by students. These and other activities are manifestations of a coherent philosophy about what secondary education can become in such a country. R.K. takes little credit for what is being done in his school, saying that he has not really been in the forefront. The headmaster was willing and eager. So were the students. Host national teachers, and even some of the expatriate staff, have pitched in. But R.K. was there. He helped. And he knew what he was doing.

R.K., who had thought he would be a lawyer, now intends to do his bit for life in secondary education. He is working on a sort of "head start" English syllabus for a special six-week

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Pat Brown, editor; Judy Thelen, associate
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ON THE COVER: Malaysian mother and child, by Paul Conklin.

transition period to help bridge the gap from elementary school, which is taught in the local language, to the English required for secondary schools.

D.B. lives and works at a settlement in the same country about 45 minutes out of the capital. His father is a dairy farmer in New York State, but D.B. is no agronomist. The settlement has 193 families, recruited from various tribes and regions in the country, some from the streets of the capital. It also has about 350 acres of coconuts, 500 acres of cashews, 150 dairy cows, and a hen house full of beautiful White Leghorn layers. D.B. lives in a mud and wattle house. There is no fireplace, no running

water, no fridge. There is a squat toilet in the backyard.

Many of the country's hopes for the future ride with this settlement, and a score of others more or less like it. Here the peasant people are to learn to extend the principles of the traditional family life to a broader version of cooperative living. Property is held in common. Everybody works. Everyone's basic needs are cared for. There will be steady progress from subsistence farming to production for export, from the hoe to the ox-drawn plow to the tractor. Volunteers, mostly generalists, are assigned to these settlements. Some rudimentary agricultural and book-

keeping skills are cranked in through training, but they are there mostly to help out in any way they can, without a clearly defined job role or relationship to the administrative structure.

Nevertheless, D.B. has had a fascinating and productive experience as a settlement Volunteer. First he took charge of the books, creating order and confidence. The settlement families know how and why records are kept. D.B. spends a substantial but diminishing portion of his time in the office. He is training host national clerks to keep the books. He found that the current accounts on the dairy herd showed a profit, but that there were severe losses in the capital accounts attributable to a 20 per cent annual death rate of mature producers. D.B. made persistent efforts to reduce the attrition through spraying and dipping. Finally he concluded that the cattle—they are mixed European types, mostly Guerneys and Holsteins—are not suitable for the hot, humid and insect-infested coastal region. His recommendation that the herd be moved up-country and replaced with African types was greeted with panic in the administrative hierarchy, which feared that the farmers would leave the settlement even on rumors that the milk cows were to be moved away. D.B. set to work, patiently and carefully, to educate the farmers to the real nature of the problem, with the objective of generating among them a movement to petition the Ministry to replace the stock with better breeds. Meanwhile, the settlement committee had been brought, chiefly through D.B.'s steady prodding, to petition the Ministry for money to establish substantial egg production. Upon learning that the Ministry proposed to advance capital for construction of a fancy brick hen house at a cost of \$2,000, he designed a perfectly adequate structure, with dirt floor, mud and wattle construction, wire screening and sheet metal roof, which the settlers built themselves at a cost of less than \$400. It is full of healthy layers. The eggs sell in the capital for about 50 cents a dozen, and the project makes money for the

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settlement, after provision for amortization of the capital advanced.

Of course D.B.'s use of the local language is fluent and colloquial. The settlement secretary drew me aside to lavish praise on him. When I replied that this was nice to hear, he seized my arm, and said with some urgency that I didn't understand; he had known and liked several Volunteers, but this one, he wanted me to know, was really special.

As D.B.'s period of service drew to a close, the settlement committee met several times to draft a clumsy but eloquent plea to the Ministry that he be requested to stay another year. The Ministry, after some delay, advised that D.B. could not stay, but that he would be replaced by a host national veterinarian.

Neither R.K. nor D.B. is a super Volunteer. The standards they have set for themselves and met are not rare in this particular country, or in Peace Corps. They could be contrasted, of course, with Volunteers like J.F., who also teaches in a secondary school. It is located in a good-sized town. The students don't board, and there is no staff housing on the compound. J.F. has a nice house in town, though, where he lives alone except for the *Playboy* pinups which cover the ceiling of his living room. At noon on a Sunday, he was grumpily doing his own breakfast dishes, this being the houseboy's day off. The school has a garden, but J.F. doesn't work in it. He doesn't know how, and besides, nobody expects qualified teachers to do this kind of work.

J.F. had a hard time getting started, principally because the Peace Corps hadn't taught him how to teach. He's doing okay now, though, and has learned that teaching isn't really very hard, once you get the hang of it. For recreation, he tools around the countryside on his very own Honda—not Peace Corps'; he bought it with money saved from his living allowance. He is very well thought of at the local golf club, where he enjoys full membership and where, later on the same Sunday afternoon, the only black face visible at the clubhouse was behind the bar. Naturally, he sees no need to learn the local language. After all, the reason they want expatriates to teach in the secondary schools is so the students can learn good English.

'A Volunteer's program doesn't seem to have much to do with whether he is a good Volunteer or not.'

Volunteers like R.K. and D.B. can also be contrasted, though less sharply, with other fairly common types. For example there is J.M., an architect by profession, who also accepted Peace Corps' invitation to train for work in village settlements. He was assigned to a new development specializing in tobacco. J.M. didn't know much about tobacco, but he said he had no trouble picking up all he needed from reading two or three pamphlets. It troubled him that there was no clearly defined job at the settlement, and no structure to which he could relate, "up or down." He guessed that he was supposed to serve as a sort of liaison between the manager and the settlers. He started a garden, which was successful but not imitated. On a typical day, he dropped into the office for 10 to 15 minutes to see if the manager had any special chores for him, and then spent time "just talking with the farmers." In his spare time, he hiked a lot, went off into the bush and read, enjoyed cooking. He said that the settlement had made no discernible progress toward the genuinely cooperative organization which is one of its goals: There is a market for tobacco, and it is a financial success.

J.M. is not a sour Volunteer. He says he got exactly what he wanted from Peace Corps: a real change, a chance to live in the bush and learn about a strange country and culture, time to think. He likes the country and the people.

Examples could be multiplied. The country has many Peace Corps programs, differing widely in methods and goals, and in the work performance and life style expected of Volunteers. In each can be found a sprinkling of tremendous Volunteers, along with many good ones, some indifferent, and a few bad—in about the same proportions.

But let's nail down the point. The point is that a Volunteer's program doesn't seem to have much to do with whether he is a good Volunteer or not. And this point, if valid, means that Peace Corps, in Washington and in the field, is devoting most of its talent, energy and creativity to asking the wrong questions.

I would argue that a Volunteer doing soil surveys, without a counterpart, not training a host national to carry on his work, supervised by and reporting to a third country national, cruising the countryside in a Land Rover in partnership with another Volunteer, not really exposed in his work situation to the host people or culture, can nevertheless be a good Volunteer and have a great experience. The same could be said of a research scientist locked away in a laboratory eight hours a day, or a nursing aide in a hospital or a janitor, or a secondary school teacher living on a compound, or a generalist assigned to a new agricultural settlement.

I would argue that it is better for the host country, for the United States, for peace and friendship and for the world to have a good Volunteer doing any job at all than to have a bad or indifferent Volunteer assigned to the most relevant, structured, need-filling and nation-building work that is to be done there.

Finally, I would argue that a good Volunteer is, quite simply, a bearer of the Volunteer ethic.

Having established these points to everyone's satisfaction (that is, by the end of the third volume), I would suggest that the proper study of the Peace Corps is the Volunteer. If Volunteers in some countries are confused, unproductive, and unhappy, is it wise to look at their programs, first, last, and always, for explanations and cures? Is it wise to assume, without really putting it to the test, that Volunteers will be accepted in foreign lands only to the extent that they establish their credibility as economic developers? Is it proved, in this third decade after the collapse of Nazi Germany, that the capacity to produce goods is the key to a good society? Is it possible that more of us should be concerned, more of the time, with efforts to define the Volunteer ethic, to identify its bearers, to sustain their purposes through training and in service, to present them abroad honestly, for what they are?

'If Volunteers . . . are confused, unproductive, and unhappy, is it wise to look at their programs, first, last and always, for explanations and cures?'

Does the Preamble to the Peace Corps Act really state three Goals (most likely in order of diminishing importance) which define and limit what we are authorized to attempt? Of course it doesn't. It begins, "The Congress of the United States declares that it is the policy of the United States *and the purpose of this Act* to promote world peace and friendship through a Peace Corps . . ." (Emphasis added).

Is the evaluation of a Peace Corps activity more nearly like:

A. Measuring the cost-effectiveness of adding vitamin supplements to the diet of a flock of laying hens, or

B. Judging the worth of a new play, painting, or symphony?

The former can be measured; the latter cannot. A work of art cannot finally be judged except in terms of the duration and intensity of human reaction to it. Nevertheless there is such a thing as the profession of drama, art or music critic; and there are people who must decide whether or not to produce a play, buy a painting, or perform a symphony. Check lists and measurement devices, however sophisticated, are rarely used for these purposes.

It is possible to argue that Peace Corps is both a development agency and a Volunteer movement. As a development agency, it is a little like the flock of layers: some kinds of input and output can be measured. As a Volunteer movement, Peace Corps is like a work of art: its value depends upon human reaction, over time, to that which is unique about voluntarism. The investment of the Volunteer, like that of the artist, is justified by the necessity to communicate something to another human being, and by faith that communication is possible. Evaluation ought to be primarily concerned, as a critic is with art, in shaping and directing this aspect of Peace Corps.

Nearly all Volunteers, and all of the best ones, are more concerned with communication than with eggs.

It is a truism that the right answers come only in response to the right questions. Even now, it seems worthwhile to keep trying to ask the right questions. It may not be too late to consider what is unique about the act of volunteering.

If we were asking the right questions, we wouldn't have troubled ourselves in quite the way we have over

'The investment of the Volunteer, like that of the artist, is justified by the necessity to communicate something to another human being.'

the issue of compound living. It isn't necessary to talk about the hair shirt Peace Corps to a Volunteer like R.K., even if he does live well; and it isn't useful to talk about it to a Volunteer who would flounder in any conceivable program. If we were clear in our thinking as to what voluntarism is really about, we wouldn't be calculating the time when a host country will no longer need Peace Corps Volunteers to teach in its secondary schools; we would be thinking of sending Volunteers to those schools as long as the country will accept them, and preparing for the time when some qualified host national teachers can be spared to teach in our own high schools.

In any case, there is reason for confidence in the future of the Volunteer movement, whether or not it is paced by this agency. One who volunteers—not to save souls or to sell an ideology or to seek immolation, but to promote peace and friendship—affirms a new ethic. His act is the necessary culmination of a sequence of thoughts or feelings which is becoming less and less uncommon. It has several components: we value material things too highly; we are not sufficiently ashamed of hypocrisy; processes are more important than objectives (the means justify the end!); one is not fully human until he acts, directly, compassionately, and in some sense sacrificially, in response to human need. This is a part of what young people are trying to tell us. Voluntarism is relevant to this ethic. Peace Corps can be. Those who advance it have their reward, and they will be followed.

Ward Hower is deputy director of the Office of Evaluation. A lawyer who has been a Marine fighter pilot, a high school and college teacher and a legislative assistant on Capitol Hill, Hower came to the Peace Corps in 1964 as deputy director in Brazil. Subsequently, he headed the Peace Corps program in Guyana. In his article above, the Volunteer situations described have been generalized and the initials used are fictitious.

Malaysia

Children swimming in the river, Johore, West Malaysia —*John Timblin*





Chinese men working at a forge
in Kuala Lumpur —*John Timblin*



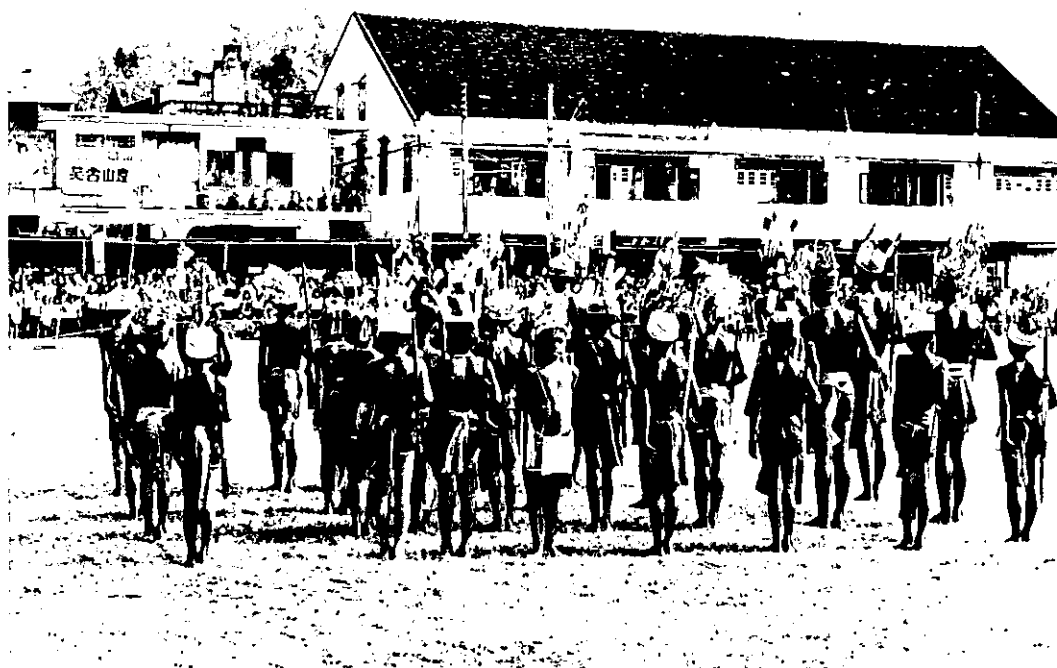
Tamil Indian girl
in Johore —*John Timblin*

An assembly of diverse cultures makes a collage of Malaysia. The Asian nation is a coexistence of many peoples, among them the Malays, Chinese, Indians and smaller indigenous groups such as Ibans, Kenyans, Kayans and Kadazans. Politically, Malaysia is the union of peninsular Malaya and the Borneo states of Sabah and Sarawak. The country's eastern and western areas are divided by the South China Sea. Separate pieces of this national collage—a cross section of Asian life—are presented here through photographs by Volunteers who have served in Malaysia.



Iban longhouse in Sarawak, East Malaysia —Howard Koons

School boys during
physical drill contest
—Don Sutherland





Children at Iban longhouse
in Sarawak —Howard Koons

Bread eating contest at school
sports day in Sarawak —Don Sutherland



Malay fishermen
bringing in the boats
—Charles Donahue



Man and wife at harvest time in Kelantan, West Malaysia —George Sanders

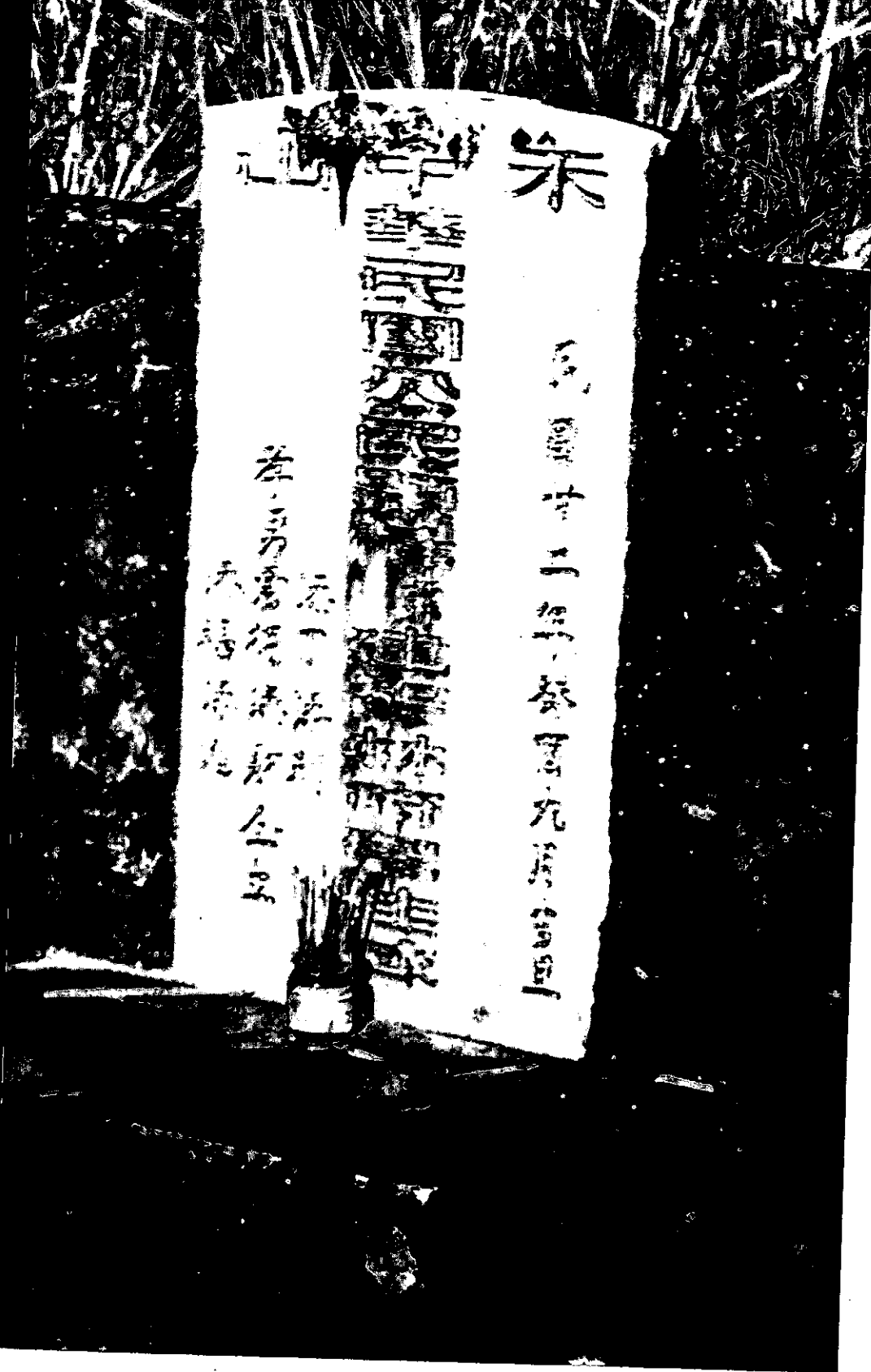




Fruit stand in Kuala Lumpur —*John Timblin*



Woman collecting barnacles on Pankor Island, West Malaysia
—*John Day*



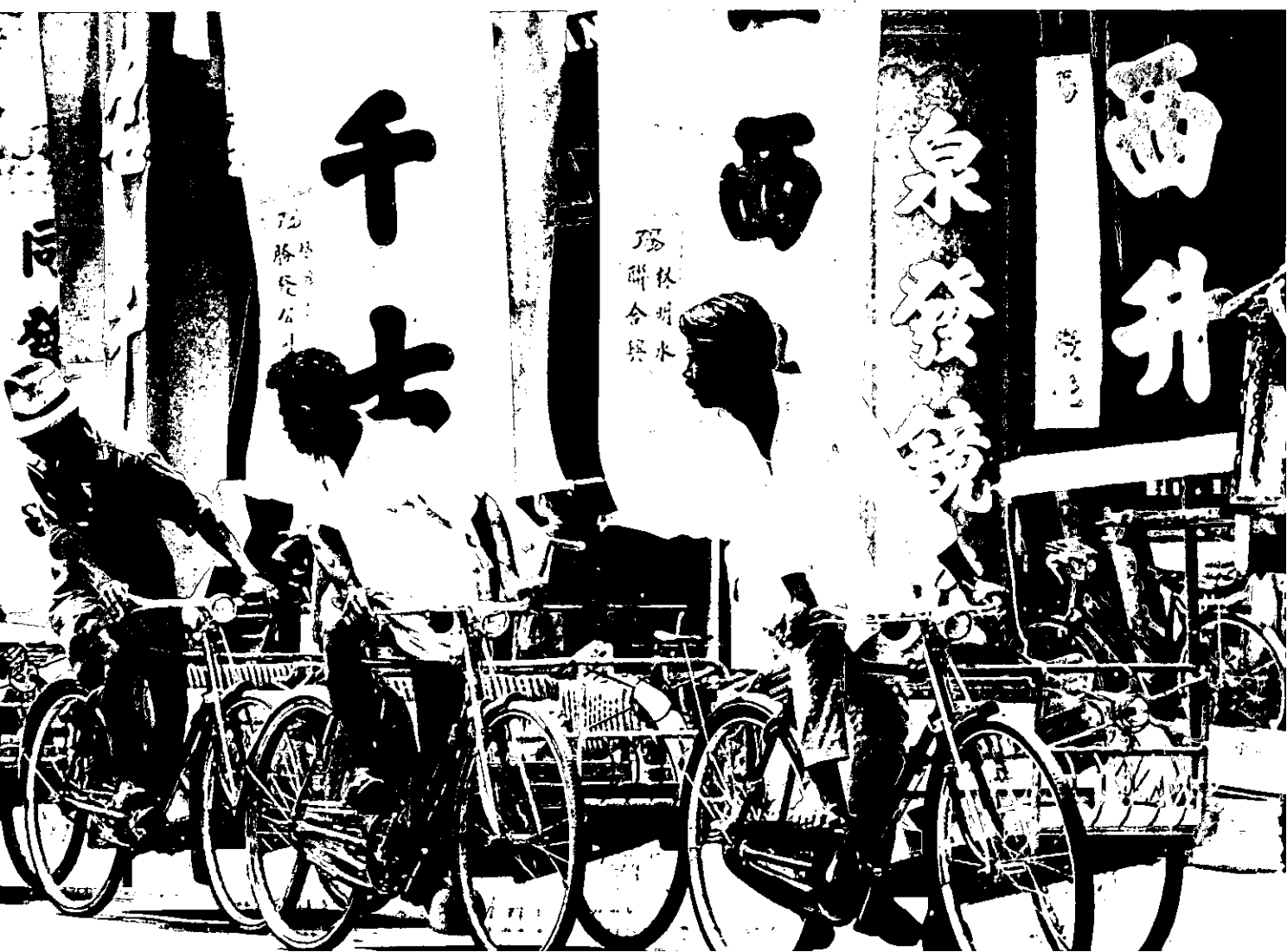
Chinese gravestone
—Charles Miley



Trishaw drivers carrying banners
in a Chinese funeral in Johore —John Timblin



Chinese temple
to goddess of mercy
in Penang, West Malaysia
—Sharon Clarke



Kenyan woman, Sarawak —Howard Koons





Malays at prayer in a Malacca mosque, West Malaysia —Ron Brandt

ABOUT OUR CONTRIBUTORS:

—**John Timblin** taught industrial arts for three years in Johore, West Malaysia.

—**Howard Koons** taught high school science in Negre Sembilan, West Malaysia.

—**Don Sutherland** teaches math and science in Sarawak, East Malaysia.

—**Charles Donahue** worked as a TB Volunteer in a chest clinic in Trengganu, West Malaysia.

—**George Sanders** taught high school science in Kelantan, West Malaysia.

—**John Day** taught courses in radio and television at the technical college in Kuala Lumpur, the capital of Malaysia.

—**Charles Miley** is working with a new primary syllabus in Sarawak, East Malaysia.

—**Sharon Clarke**, correspondent for *THE VOLUNTEER*, is a TB Volunteer at a chest clinic in Johore, West Malaysia.

—**Ron Brandt** is a TB Volunteer in a hospital chest clinic in Malacca, West Malaysia.



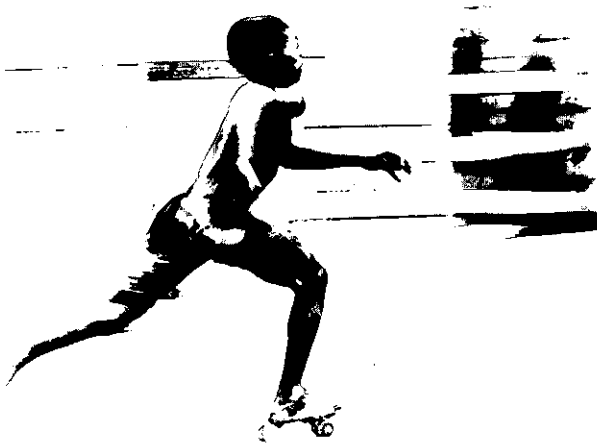
Sidewalk palm reader in Penang —Sharon Clarke

By DALE DEASON

Anatomy of a Peace Corps failure

In July, 1966 the Peace Corps started an in-service course for rural primary schoolteachers in the Dominican Republic. Its purpose was to give a high school education to the large number of Dominican rural teachers who had only an eighth grade education or less. The original Peace Corps commitment involved 29 Volunteers and one staff member. The Volunteers taught in training centers in five medium-sized towns to which the teachers traveled during the summer and each Saturday during the school year to attend classes. The curriculum included most of the standard Dominican high school subjects in addition to intensive instruction in educational methods. The methods courses were followed up by the Volunteers with visits to the teachers' schools during the week. After three years of these courses and classroom visits, the teachers were to receive a certificate, a salary raise, and an opportunity to qualify by examination for full normal school graduate status.

During the first two years, the size of the program increased dramatically. In July, 1967 a group of 35 Volunteers arrived in the Dominican Republic to staff six new training centers. In July, 1968 still another group arrived to replace those leaving and to staff four additional centers. This brought the number of centers to fifteen. At this point, more than 80 Volunteers, over half of the entire Peace Corps contingent in the Dominican



Roller skating
in Santo Domingo

Puchi



The people of the Dominican Republic shown here were photographed by John Terence Turner during his Peace Corps service. Turner, a former correspondent for THE VOLUNTEER, worked in a tuberculosis program in Elias Piña. His photographs of Volunteers and Dominicans previously have appeared in THE VOLUNTEER and in Peace Corps recruiting brochures. Several of the photos presented here were part of a recent exhibit at Peace Corps headquarters.

Republic, were involved in teaching and supervising some 950 rural teachers.

A scant four months later the four newest centers had been closed, about 20 Volunteers had returned to the United States, relations with the Dominican government had been strained, and the whole teacher training program was being phased out. These dramatic changes were not the result of any decision or action by the Dominican government. They were Peace Corps moves which the Volunteers themselves initiated.

There is no event or series of events which will explain this sudden development. The explanation lies, rather, in an evolution of Peace Corps Volunteer attitudes which finally reached culmination. It is these attitudes and the concepts behind them, common throughout the Peace Corps, which most deserve study.

These concepts are the various intellectual formulations which are used to develop, operate, and motivate the work of the Peace Corps. They function at various levels. Directors, programmers, and evaluators obviously hold and use such concepts in their work. Volunteers and staff members in the field also use these concepts. They use them to organize, motivate, and justify their work. I would like to examine the concepts which operated in the Dominican Republic teacher training program, particularly those of the Volunteers and staff. The

inadequacy of these concepts explains our failure better than any other factor.

The teacher training program struggled for two and a half years with the persistent problem of inadequate Dominican interest and participation. It was an American program and we all knew it. All of the money was provided by the Agency for International Development. The day-to-day business of the program was handled by Peace Corps staff members, from the Peace Corps office. On larger questions, Dominican acquiescence to Peace Corps desires was sought and obtained. In the field the Volunteers designed and implemented curricula without Dominican participation or review. It was around this situation that a debate swirled and the various concepts were brought into play. From the day that the Peace Corps forced the opening of the teacher training centers to the day that it forced their closing, the issue of Dominican participation was dominant and almost everyone took a stand.

One can identify two general positions taken by the participants. There was always a very small minority of Volunteers who considered the American dominance of the program to be adequate reason for abandoning it. The overwhelming majority, however, felt that American dominance was unfortunate but not sufficient reason to halt or seriously alter the program. They pointed to the very real progress

being made by the Dominican teachers and argued that the balance was heavily in favor of continuing and expanding the program.

Both of these positions can be identified, linked to a concept, and criticized. Both positions failed; they allowed a bad program to continue for two and a half years. The majority position failed because it was proved incorrect. The minority position failed because, although correct in one sense, it was completely ineffective as a base for arguing the case it supported.

I would call those who held the minority position the "smug moralizers." These people argued that American dominance of the program proved, ipso facto, that the program should not exist. This position was essentially a moral one and was therefore ineffective. Its advocates were easily satisfied with their clichés about the importance of host country national participation. They saw no need, and did not seem able, to translate their maxims into practical arguments applicable to our program. Most people operate on practical consideration and are not strongly influenced by moralism per se. The majority saw no reason to turn against an apparently excellent program simply because it violated some sort of "rule" which no one could effectively apply to our situation.

The Volunteers holding the majority position may be labeled the "uncritical do-gooders." Their concept was that



*Old woman who lives
near Haitian border*



Fermin, of Santo Domingo

of simply helping people. Their failing was basically a lack of sophistication. I was a member of this category during most of my service and feel that I can describe how we viewed our work.

We taught our classes and visited our teachers. It was not easy but we knew that our teachers were improving. We were aware of the lack of Dominican participation but did not feel that it was a crucial matter. We were helping our teachers and knew that our friends were doing the same in many other locations. We felt ourselves part of a program that was rapidly upgrading the proficiency of many teachers and therefore a part of a peaceful revolution in the Dominican countryside. Some abstract theory as to the need for Dominican involvement seemed irrelevant.

Our failing was our oversimplified view of what was really needed to change Dominican rural education. The story of the phase out of the program is largely the story of how we slowly became more sophisticated about our work. We began to see it as dependent on other factors. Teacher proficiency is only one of many necessary factors in an adequate educational system, and our teachers' lack of training was only one of many problems. They were underpaid. Most of them taught students who would never go beyond the third grade. They had no

job security. They had no way to obtain the materials we taught them to use. Although we were training teachers, there was no progress being made in any of the other areas essential to real educational change. More importantly, there was no commitment by the Dominican government to change any of these areas. The goals we had set for our program, certification and salary raises for the teachers, seemed less and less likely to come about. Moreover, the real value of these goals, considering the larger picture, began to appear less certain. Well trained teachers would have no meaning in the old system, and the system did not look like it was going to change. Worse, we were not even doing anything which gave reasonable hope of stimulating change. In ten years there would be nothing really different about the rural schools. Teacher training alone was not enough to even begin to change things.

No success without host

Thus we saw that the program was out of step with the rest of the rural educational situation. We had created something artificial which, because of its artificiality, would wither away and have no lasting effect. At last we understood *why* the lack of Dominican involvement was important. It was important because it was sympto-

matic of a general Dominican lethargy about rural education. This meant that the kind of change necessary to give meaning and value to the training of teachers would not be forthcoming. Our success at helping teachers was therefore meaningless to Dominican educational development.

The experience of the Dominican Republic teacher training program may be viewed as valuable in that it enables us to isolate and examine some common patterns of Peace Corps thought. Each of the patterns contains elements of validity. But our experience highlights some pitfalls which must be avoided in the future.

The concept which emphasizes the importance of host country national involvement and participation is valid. It did not serve us well, however, because its advocates were content to present it as a moral tenet rather than a very practical consideration. It is an old idea whose advocacy has become cliché-ridden. No one could wield it effectively enough to make the planners pause. Our experience should indicate the importance of dusting off this old concept and demonstrating its validity in new situations. The question of why host national participation is important will continue to be asked by exuberant Volunteers certain that they are being successful despite a lack of host country participation. Unless someone can



A man blows water on his gallo in preparation for a cockfight



Market scene in San Juan de la Maguana

answer with practical applications to specific situations, the concept will not be heeded.

Another pitfall is found within the most common pattern of Peace Corps thinking—the urge to be of service, to do good. Since this idea is the *sine qua non* for all Peace Corps efforts, there are pressures created in its favor. All Peace Corps Volunteers are understandably anxious to believe that they are “doing good” and they usually manage to do so. This creates pressures against abandoning programs; to halt a program is usually to admit that a group of Volunteers has not been doing good, or at least not very much. It rarely happens. These pressures to continue existed in our program and had much to do with our delay in facing reality.

The pressures, however, are not so significant at the staff level. They do not explain why the decisions were made to begin and then (twice) to expand and why it was the Volunteers rather than staff who initiated the program's phase out.

One part of the “doing good” concept is exemplified by a personality type which may be called the “Peace Corps lover.” Like other lovers, this type wallows in sentimentality toward the object of affection and can be neither critical nor demanding of it. Enthralled with the Peace Corps “idea,” they see no necessity for going

much beyond the basic situation in which young Americans work with and “help” natives. The complexities of development and programming thus receive little attention. Those who thought this way were easily satisfied with our program. They did not attempt a serious look at the long-range factors necessary for true success. Under such an approach the Peace Corps is (as our program was) basically an exercise in public relations.

People and/or progress

Another pattern of Peace Corps thought is often referred to as the “people to people” element. It is a part of virtually all of the formulations which are used to operate the Peace Corps. There is no question that this basic humanism is the single most crucial element of what the Peace Corps is and should be. The problem is that some Volunteers and staff act as if “people to people” alone were enough. Some part of the support for our program was based on the fact that it fostered many good relationships between Volunteers and the Dominican teachers. On this basis the program could have been continued no matter what the other circumstances. Mere “people to people” aspects alone cannot justify a program. Sound programming should involve an effective combination of “people to

people” factors and relevancy to development.

We criticize A.I.D. for steamrolling toward instant progress and ignoring people. A.I.D. looks down its nose at the Peace Corps for its irrelevancy to national development. The unique opportunity and challenge of the Peace Corps is to combine the two and become a more effective force for change. The Dominican Republic teacher training program represents an effort in this direction which failed. The failure and its lessons can serve to make the next effort more successful.

Editor's note: There are now 60 Volunteers working in 11 teacher training centers in the Dominican Republic. Five of these centers will complete the three-year training cycle in June and the Volunteers who staff them are scheduled to leave the five centers at that time. Present plans call for Volunteers to continue teaching in the six remaining centers until those training cycles end in June, 1970.

Dale Deason spent 18 months as a Volunteer in the Dominican Republic teacher training program. He taught in one of the training centers and later coordinated support efforts and served as a Volunteer-staff liaison. He holds a B.A. in education from the University of Illinois and an M.A. in history from the University of California at Los Angeles.



Girl from a small community near Haitian border



Mother and son in their stall at the public market, San Juan de la Maguana

Volunteer and trainee deaths in 1968

Six Volunteers and three trainees, out of more than 12,000 in the Peace Corps in 1968, died during the year.

The Volunteer deaths included: Mark Raymaker, 24, of Greenbay, Wis., who disappeared while working in Tanzania and was declared dead five and one-half months later; Alexei Zbitnoff, 23, of Ukiah, Calif., an urban community development worker, who died of self-inflicted gunshot wounds in El Salvador; Salvador Vasquez, 25, of the Bronx, N. Y., who worked with youth clubs in Colombia and died there in a bus accident.

The last three deaths of 1968 all were the result of auto accidents: Virginia Zink, 26, of Pittsburgh, was a biology and chemistry teacher in Western Nigeria; Thomas Laffey, 25, of Pittsburgh, was finishing his third year as a teacher in Malawi, and William Hellyer, 26, of San Bernardino, Calif., worked in agriculture in India.

All three trainee deaths occurred in November: John O'Brien, 22, of San Francisco, was training in Hawaii for a Fiji program when he died in a fall; John Beckner, 23, of Bellevue, Mich., drowned in Malaysia while training for work in that country, and William J. Ackerman, 23, of Rapid City, S. D., died of an overdose of drugs in Colombia while training for rural development work there.

Beginning with the deaths of Colombian Volunteers David Crozier and Lawrence Radley in an airplane accident in April, 1962, there has been a total of 49 Volunteer deaths and 4 trainee deaths. Vehicular accidents, plane crashes and drowning have been the principal causes.

Dr. John Harkness, director of the Peace Corps Medical Division, has reported that the death rate from all causes for Volunteers is about the same as for a comparable age group in the United States. Most Volunteers are in their early twenties. The death rate for the 15-24 year old age bracket in the U.S. is 1.1 for 1,000 persons.

Only one Volunteer has ever died of disease. This rate is better than that of a comparable group of Americans living in the U.S. and not

exposed to nearly the same range of diseases as are the Volunteers.

Dr. Harkness said that before the days of modern medical advances—the gamma globulin inoculations against viral hepatitis being one example—disease probably would have been fatal to a sizable percentage of Volunteers in some parts of the world. But today it is such things as motor vehicle accidents which are more deadly to the Volunteers, and that is true for young people in the U.S. as well.

Writing and art sought for book

All forms of writing and art work by past and present Volunteers are being sought for a proposed book on Peace Corps experiences. The book's editors, Dennis Eros and former India Volunteer Steve Donovan, seek essays, poetry, sculpture, paintings and drawings, photos and films for "A Peace Corps Portfolio." Plans include a possible film adaptation of the published book.

The editors stress that all items submitted need not be of professional quality; rather, they first seek "expressive extensions of individuals."

"We would like to hear from Volunteers and returned Volunteers who feel that their thoughts on the Peace Corps, Peace Corps life, and related experiences as Americans in a foreign land bear publishing," they said.

Interested persons should contact Steve Donovan, Shanti Publications, P.O. Box 235, North Scituate, Mass. 02060.

'New Dimension' in travel

Concentrating on the "people" aspect rather than the "place" aspect of travel, a new organization hopes to show developing countries to American tourists just as Peace Corps Volunteers see them.

New Dimension Travel is headed by Philip Lilienthal, a former Volunteer in Ethiopia, and will take up to 50 people to Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda and Ethiopia this fall.

While some game parks and beaches are included on the itinerary, the

three former Volunteers accompanying the travelers will guide them principally into meetings with students, host country officials, Peace Corps Volunteers and official Americans abroad.

While the expected cost of the three-week trip is described as "reasonable," the accommodations will be first class.

Lilienthal said the idea was stimulated by the sight of hordes of tourists rushing to countries like Kenya and emerging weeks later untouched by any knowledge that there was more to the country than animals and comfortable surroundings.

"We hope to attract people between the ages of 35-60 who are aware of the gap separating nations, as well as the one separating generations, and would like to learn more about both," he said.

Interested persons may write to New Dimension Travel at 11400 Orchard Lane, Reston, Va. 22070.

Peace Corps to return to Guinea

The Peace Corps will return to the West African nation of Guinea this summer, after an absence of two and a half years. Guinea President Sékou Touré, who expelled the contingent of 62 Volunteers in November, 1966, has requested 21 Volunteers trained in general mechanics, including machinists, electricians, machine tool, diesel and car mechanics. The return marks the second time the agency will have resumed operations in a former host country. (The Peace Corps returned to Ceylon in 1967 after an absence of two and a half years.)

Henry Norman, who had headed the first Guinea program since its inception in 1963, also will return as Peace Corps country director.

The Peace Corps ouster in 1966 resulted from strained relations between the U.S. and Guinea subsequent to the detention by Ghana of the Guinean delegation to the Organization of African Unity. Among the Volunteers expelled were 28 agricultural workers, 19 mechanics, 14 teachers and one secretary.

Skilled workers are presently being sought for the new program. Recruiters are focusing their efforts in industrial areas, visiting factories and labor unions. The Peace Corps also

hopes to expedite selection procedures by using a revised, short form of the questionnaire and later, by conducting interviews with applicants, followed by on-the-spot invitations to training. The abbreviated questionnaire and the pre-invitation interviews are variations of methods previously used by the Peace Corps to recruit and select Job Corps graduates as Volunteers. The questionnaire especially has been criticized as being too lengthy and too academically oriented for the potential applicant who has skills but not necessarily a college education.

The new group will receive training at the Virgin Islands Training Center and at the Organization for Rehabilitation through Training in Geneva, Switzerland.

Letters to The Volunteer

THE VOLUNTEER welcomes letters on all subjects of interest to the Peace Corps. Letters of 300 words or less are most suitable for publication. All letters are subject to condensation.

Jobs wanted

TO THE VOLUNTEER:

I would like to make some comments on the articles, "The Peace Corps fetish" and "Finding jobs for women" in the October VOLUNTEER. It has always seemed to me that the Peace Corps organization was little more than an employment agency. Its job was to get jobs for capable Americans in other countries. Peace Corps Volunteers were to fill jobs that could not be filled by the local people or to add manpower where necessary. So I have always felt that the real responsibility that the Peace Corps had was to find me a decent job—in my case, in India. I took on faith when I went into training that there was such a job—and that I would go to India and work on that job for two years.

I have sadly come to find that that job doesn't exist (after being in country one year), that it never existed,

but that it took me one year to realize it. My husband and I were sent to work in a nutrition scheme in India; Sally Yudelman can generalize her case about women Volunteers in South America to married couples in India. We're in the same boat though it is small comfort now.

The problem now seems to us—Peace Corps didn't find us a job. They said they did, but we don't have one, and I think a fairly good case can be made that they could have suspected as much before we came. So as Park Teter noted, I also find myself becoming more and more of a crank. I am told to "branch out," to be "creative." Frankly, we've tried and been unsuccessful—we're failures then. And to make matters worse, since we haven't produced anything, or come up with something clever, our pleas are not quite listened to—we are dismissed as cranks.

This brings me to the point of this letter—I have two questions to ask. From our little town in Western India, we cannot claim to be experts. So we would like to ask . . . How many other Volunteers are stuck without jobs, were sent into "unstructured" programs and told to be "creative" and found only emptiness? Secondly, are there any other comments on the idea of the Peace Corps as an employment agency? For it seems to us the organization has not fulfilled the responsibility it had to us, of finding us a job for two years. It has played a big game with us, gotten us to India, given us a "site," put us on a list, and is not taking responsibility for the consequences of that action.

MARCO CONK

Bombay, India

'Causes' of the rebels

TO THE VOLUNTEER:

Mr. Vaughn's article, "The cause of the rebels" (November VOLUNTEER) showed considerable sympathy for the disaffection of our generation with the world we have inherited. By now we have come to expect such understanding from the Director.

But I would like to make one correction on the basis of my experience. The letter should read: "The causes of the rebels." Plural, not singular. From the inside, the pluralism of the young activists and thinkers is perhaps their most salient feature. Perhaps even "causes" is the wrong word, for it implies a coherence or unanimity which I am not sure exists.

If there is any consensus among us (which I doubt) it may be in this belief: that the greatest good lies in the unimpeded development by each individual, for himself, of his own experience, values and life style. What we are reacting against, perhaps, is a society which impedes the appreciation of the individual human experience.

ALAN PAGE FISKE

Chitipa, Malawi

IVS in Vietnam

TO THE VOLUNTEER:

Several Volunteers have suggested sending the Peace Corps to South Vietnam. May I inform you that a volunteer organization, International Voluntary Services, has been working there since 1958.

IVS volunteers teach English, work with farmers, work in refugee camps, hospitals and orphanages. The volunteers are contracted for two years and live on a Peace Corps type salary. Many of the IVS volunteers are former Peace Corps Volunteers.

WILLIAM SERAILE
Former Volunteer

Vietnam

'Equal but separate'

TO THE VOLUNTEER:

Although I agree with the intent of the letter by former Volunteer Daniel F. Wood, published in the November issue, I believe his argument rather missed the point.

There are, of course, many loopholes in the Selective Service laws that are exploited by the better educated and the financially blessed. I would not, however, suggest that service in the Peace Corps affords an opportunity to avoid the draft and all of its troublesome moral ramifications.

No credible Volunteer would think of Peace Corps service as an alternative, but rather as a primary expression of one's belief in one's ability to contribute to the historically retarded humanization of the society of man. My opinion is that this mission is superior to the current mission of the Armed Forces. That the Peace Corps is a voluntary service does not dilute its contribution to the strengthening of the American world political status.

I am presently serving in the U.S.

Army, and I am able to assure Mr. Wood that I am not "removed from the field of consideration" with respect to being jailed by the militarists for adhering to a line of thinking that inspired me to volunteer for the Peace Corps. The Army refused my application to be classified "conscientious objector" because I do not predicate my moral code on religious grounds. I now face a possible court martial, which would be naught but a prelude to condemnation and incarceration. The crime and the dishonor is in the contradiction of government policies and is not on the part of those persons who refuse to morally subvert their labors realized while serving the cause of peace.

As long as there are politics of violence, I must advocate the discriminatory policy of "equal but separate," i.e., Peace Corps or Armed Forces. This should marry nicely with a conservative view of the world.

C. RICARDO CAMPBELL
Former Volunteer

Fort Benning, Ga.

Limits same for both sexes

TO THE VOLUNTEER:

I was unpleasantly surprised, after an exciting three years as a female in rural community development in Chile, to read Sally Yudelman's article (October VOLUNTEER) stating that women really have a limited role to play in the Peace Corps in Latin America.

Of course the *macho* culture of Latin America is an obstacle to women, both Latin and North American, but it is not insurmountable if a woman has some maturity, common sense, intelligence and initiative. I spent two years with another girl in a rural post in southern Chile working with Mapuche Indians and I re-enlisted for a third year alone in the same spot. Initially there certainly was opposition from middle class Chileans to our constant work attire of jeans and boots and riding daily alone on horseback in Indian communities, but the Indian and Chilean poor had no such difficulties in accepting us. We worked primarily with men and in projects that perhaps might be considered "masculine"—building bridges, roads, a school, a medical post. It was what the Indians wanted and what they were willing to work for. If anything, our being females made the work easier, par-

ticularly in getting through the government obstacle course to secure bulldozers, trucks, equipment, and technical aid. We did not lose our "femininity" in the process as the Chilean males would often bend over backwards to help what they considered helpless females.

More important perhaps than just some successful projects was our relationship to Chilean women. Many of them have tremendous abilities to offer their communities but they have been repressed by the dominant Latin attitude towards the uselessness of women. But we established close friendships with many women, both uneducated *campesinas*, wives of rural property owners, and a few middle-class professionals who became key factors in initiating health programs on the Indian reservations and serving as the health students who ran them. It was these women who exerted the pressure on male public officials to provide the materials for the school and upgrade the agricultural extension service to Indian *campesinos*. And it was these peasant wives who prodded their husbands into working on the roads and bridges and the medical post.

The difficulties Mrs. Yudelman alludes to for Peace Corps females in rural development seem to me to be the fault of Peace Corps selection because these difficulties apply as well to male Volunteers in isolated rural posts. Personal maturity and initiative are required of both male and female Volunteers, and it was obvious in Chile that as many males lacked these qualities as females. I don't think I ever was so disgusted with the Peace Corps as the day I rode into a neighboring village to discuss a project with a husky, strong male Volunteer and found him asleep at 12 p.m. He did this every day and in the afternoon he played soccer because he couldn't figure out what to do alone although the Indians around him were constantly coming to our village to request help in building roads, bridges, schools, and improving their agriculture.

And as for problems with Peace Corps regional directors, I don't understand what she is talking about. I rarely saw my director and rarely needed to and he felt likewise. The people I saw were Chilean hospital directors, agronomists, teachers, political representatives, when I needed support or aid—it is their culture and

their problems, not those of the Peace Corps or the local director. If Volunteers need constant support and help from their American director, whether they be female or male, then they better be sent home; they are accomplishing little for the development of the host country or themselves.

GAILE P. NOBLE
Former Volunteer

Ithaca, N. Y.

On 'our Nepal'

TO THE VOLUNTEER:

As for Dor Bahadur Bista's recent article (November VOLUNTEER) I vigorously agree with his identification of Nepal's problem—self confidence. However, I violently disagree with his logic.

His concept of a Peace Corps Volunteer as a philosopher-guide-conversationalist smacks of White Man's Magic/AID Programs. Dor Bahadur is a compassionate and enlightened man who loves his country and is a high-level theorist and a good one too. But he does not give the guy in the Nepali hills full credit for his vibrant will to live in a world where the odds are stacked against him.

I found the Nepali man and the Nepali woman in the villages generally knew what their problems were and they were only too willing to work to solve them.

It's a bitter lesson you learn in the Peace Corps. It is not in being a linguist, a good fellow. It is humility and humility is nothing more than facing the reality of what you are as a person. Dor Bahadur is a theorist and a scholar. I was a "technician." But for two years we both lived in our Nepal.

JOHN J. GLEASON
Former Volunteer

New York City

Money: no solution

TO THE VOLUNTEER:

In reference to a letter by Joseph Shafran (October VOLUNTEER), I believe that he should not confuse "successful enterprise" (money making) as the only way to help people. Being an ex-businessman, I also believed that "money" could solve all the world's problems. But, because of this Peace Corps experience of serving as a Volunteer at the roots of real poverty, I have found myself doing all of

the negative things that Mr. Shafran is against: "soul searching, self evaluation, growing up, finding myself," and even "discussing the love of mankind." As a direct consequence, I have come to realize that the problems that plague Venezuela, Kenya, Thailand, India, Harlem and Watts are not just the desire for a "successful enterprise" (making more money).

Mr. Shafran inferred that this introspection is a detriment to Peace Corps goals and to our effectiveness (as regarded by our host country nationals). Hopefully, we will learn from our new experiences and be more capable to open our eyes to the real problems of the world. This (introspection) in no way is hindering the Volunteers' progress with marketing cooperatives, savings and loan coops, consumer coops, educational instruction, health orientations, planning of better cities and community development.

True, "money is necessary," but Volunteers will not solve the world's problems at the grass roots level. Any change will have to come from the top levels of government, business, religion, and through the systems of education. But, for thousands of years and through billions of dollars, it seems ironic that we (the people of "enterprise") are still seeking solutions to our innumerable problems. Therefore, money and time cannot solve everything.

To be successful, one must make mistakes, and with all the success the Peace Corps has, I do hope that "the bettering of American youth" is not to be misinterpreted as a negative factor considering the Volunteers are trying to better mankind through their positive efforts.

BARRY DALE STROCK
Santiago, Venezuela

On 'minority Volunteer'

TO THE VOLUNTEER:

As a former Volunteer and a Negro American, I was interested in the articles regarding the "minority Volunteer" (October VOLUNTEER). I could easily relate some of the writers' experiences to my own. However, I found my contacts with the indigenous population, while admittedly disconcerting on occasion, not nearly as traumatic as my contacts with my fellow Americans.

I was the only Negro in my group of approximately 67 Volunteers, and

Memorandum

TO : The field
FROM : The editors
SUBJECT: Transition

DATE: February, 1969

Taking note: The Peace Corps now operates under a Republican administration for the first time in its seven-year history. For Director Jack Vaughn, the transition coincides with the beginning of his fourth year as head of the agency, the post he assumed March 1, 1966. "I think we should be able to do business as well under elephant power as under donkey power," said Mr. Vaughn. That reminds us of another elephant trip Vaughn took at the New Delhi airport in 1966 (at right). His co-passenger on the ride was deputy director Brent Ashabranner, then the Peace Corps director in India.



□ □ □

THE VOLUNTEER welcomes new associate editor Judy Thelen. A Volunteer in Venezuela from 1965 to 1967, Judy returns to the Peace Corps after a one-year stint on Capitol Hill as press and research assistant to Congressman Robert Denney of Nebraska. She holds a B.A. in journalism from the University of Nebraska and completed the four-month program of advanced studies at the Washington (D. C.) Journalism Center. In Venezuela, Judy and her husband Ken worked in YMCA programs in Maracaibo and Caracas. As extra assignments, Judy edited "JumpUp," an in-country Volunteer magazine, and served as Venezuela correspondent to THE VOLUNTEER. In her new job she will be working closely with all our current correspondents.

□ □ □

Reflections on re-entry: A Volunteer about to finish his Peace Corps service thought up the National Emergency Relief for Volunteers Ending Service. The acronym: NERVES.

□ □ □

Malaysia Volunteers Madeline Stabile, Stephanie Miranda and Kate Griffin are responsible for the following contribution. They call it a "Peace Corps Baffle-gab Thesaurus." Their instructions: "All an over-worked staff member need do is pick a 3-digit number to assist him in his efforts to forge our '677'."

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|-------------------|---------------|----------------|
| 1. culturally | 1. human | 1. stimulus |
| 2. effectively | 2. motivated | 2. response |
| 3. realistically | 3. articulate | 3. commitment |
| 4. idealistically | 4. relevant | 4. dialogue |
| 5. mutually | 5. flexible | 5. catalyst |
| 6. creatively | 6. altruistic | 6. experience |
| 7. personally | 7. credible | 7. image |
| 8. constructively | 8. sensitive | 8. attunement |
| 9. intellectually | 9. satisfying | 9. involvement |

this proved far more anxiety producing to me than any other facet of my tenure. I had to face their queries as to how I managed with the indigent people, why Negro men wear moustaches, an occasional slur related to my color, and uneasy tension which grew out of the American social structure relative to Negro and white. Communication at more than a superficial level was unlikely if not impossible with precious few exceptions. This was true because my peers perceived me not as an American but rather as a Negro. Further exacerbating the gulf was the fact that our cultural and life experiences were totally different even though we came from the same country. Paradoxically, I understood their culture, but they could not comprehend mine.

Apparently there had been some reports of Negroes being subjected to some indignities in the host country, yet no one, officially or otherwise, had the foresight to discuss this with me fearing, I suppose, some negative reaction on my part. Actually, I found myself much more at ease with the indigenous people, established close friendships with several, and preferred their company to that of my peers.

In retrospect, I think a person of a "minority" group can make it in the host country if he can understand that the apparent hostility and wonderment is based more often on curiosity than dislike or prejudice. It also occurs to me the Peace Corps should endeavor to assure that any person of a "minority" group should have at least one "of his own" with whom she or he can communicate. I know it

would have made a significant difference for me.

WILLIAM MERCER JR.
Former Volunteer

Baltimore

Bravo, Warwick!

TO THE VOLUNTEER:

There's nothing like hitting the nail on the head! Who did it? As far as I'm concerned, Mal Warwick did in his article, "Toward a social revolution." (October VOLUNTEER).

His pointing out how social progress starts with people changing their attitudes was excellent. Recognition of this should permeate Peace Corps.

The most important role for the Volunteer is as a person who offers himself to the people to help facilitate attitude changes. This is an unstructured role, but it's basic. Without it nothing can really take root. I feel it's an approach worth emphasis.

ERNEST POWER

Alfredo Chaves, Brazil

Host national writers

TO THE VOLUNTEER:

The best article I have come across in THE VOLUNTEER since returning from my Peace Corps tour in Bolivia was "In our Nepal" by Dor Bahadur Bista (November VOLUNTEER).

It would be well for THE VOLUNTEER to include at least one article such as the one written by Mr. Bista in each issue by a qualified national from a different country. The Volunteers would then know how their efforts were viewed by the people of

the country instead of the views from Washington.

From my own experience I particularly concur with Mr. Bista when he states that there should be a minimum number of Volunteers in any given area. There were only 35 members of Bolivia I who were spread out all over the country with not more than two or three Volunteers in any one area. At the time we left, two years later, the fifth group had just arrived and we could see them beginning to isolate themselves in groups.

Volunteers lose their rapport with the common people when they do this as the in-country people then class them as another American group—such as the military, religious and diplomatic—who always segregate themselves into close-knit groups apart from the natives.

During our termination in March of 1964, which Jack Vaughn attended, we repeatedly suggested that the best way to keep the Peace Corps effective was to keep the quality of the Volunteers high and quantity low. Whether this is being followed or not I do not know but, since Mr. Bista brings up this point, I assume it is not.

I also am not familiar with the present method of recruitment employed but I believe the Peace Corps concentrates mostly on college recruitment. I believe a group such as ours, whose members ranged from 18 to 65, is more effective. The older members stabilize the group and their experience is invaluable in a developing country.

ELLA DORAN
Former Volunteer

Kent, Ohio

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