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**THE WORLD WAS ONCE FLAT**

**University of California at Berkeley  
Address  
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The relationship between the Peace Corps and the University of California at Berkeley has a very long history--at least by Peace Corps historical standards. Incidentally today concludes two years of Peace Corps history.

It was at this campus that the very first Peace Corps Volunteers to go overseas were trained. That training has served them well. Throughout their term of service they have been a credit to this University, to the Peace Corps, and to themselves. Since that first training program, other Volunteers have been trained here for service in Ghana; research on Peace Corps activities has been conducted on this campus; and a group of trainees are here now in preparation for community action and health activities in Panama.

There is little new that I can say about the academic and administrative excellence of this campus. Sargent Shriver has demonstrated amply--by his actions as well as by his words--the respect in which he holds your institution. I do not feel that I can improve upon his praise--nor do I feel inclined to try. For the moment, the best I can manage is to express the hope that the Peace Corps and Berkeley will maintain in the future the spirit of cooperation which has prevailed in the past.

There are now some 251 people who attended the University of California in the Peace Corps and of these 135 are from the Berkeley campus.--No other university has so many Volunteers although other California institutions have also done well. Of all of our Volunteers from the 50 states, almost one-quarter of them attended California colleges and universities.

Today I would like to look backward over the last two years and try to assess the unprecedented response to the Peace Corps-- as an idea--as a concept--.

I am reminded of the first voyage of Christopher Columbus. The Great Admiral set forth, about 470 years ago, across an uncharted sea. Most observers thought he would fail to reach his destination. Some even thought he would sail to the edge of our familiar, flat, finite world, and then fall off--getting the come-uppance he deserved. The scientists and scholars of the time were the surest prophets of doom; and the supporters of the venture were known as crackpots, visionaries and fools. However, a queen had the daring to stake her jewels; a crew was assembled--mostly beardless youths; and the tiny fleet set sail. Timidity and the counsel of fear almost prevailed in the course of the voyage, but the bold and resolute won out and reached the Indies. As a last twist, I might remind you that Columbus sought only a commercial route to the Orient, not a New World. A route to the Orient was ultimately found by the mariners of Europe, but Columbus discovered an unsuspected continent which stands on the way.

As you know, I'm sure, my story of Columbus is a fable of the Peace Corps. And I do think our 20th century voyage is reminiscent of the voyage of Columbus almost 500 years before. I say this with no apology for the presumptuousness of my grand comparison, for I believe in the importance of the Peace Corps as part of our national future, and I know you do not begrudge me my fable and my hopes.

I need not remind you that two years ago the men who launched the Peace Corps were called visionaries, crackpots and fools. I recall one morning reading in my daily newspaper about the fact that one of America's most prominent and respected citizens called the Peace Corps a juvenile experiment. I will not push the comparison of ladies offering their jewels for pawn, as I do not know of key personages in Washington having offered up their worldly goods to ensure the launching of our organization. In a broader sense, however, our nation has offered up its most valuable possession--its youth--as a stake in this daring venture across the seas.

Columbus' crew consisted mostly of boys between 15 and 18 years of age. We are of two minds in the Peace Corps when we talk about our youth. We like to advertise the opportunities for older people, to note that there are as many grandparents as teen-agers in the Peace Corps, and to point with pride to our Volunteer in Pakistan, Ralph Cole, who is 76. [Story about Ralph Cole]

But it is the last twist of the Columbus story that I really want to speak about tonight. Looking backward and assessing that voyage, the important thing about it is--what was discovered. And what was discovered was an unsuspected continent. The fact that it was unsuspected in no way diminishes the importance of that discovery.

In looking backward and assessing the Peace Corps, we might also say that the importance of the first two years of the Peace



Corps lies less in what has been accomplished than in what has been discovered. I would like to outline what we think have been the discoveries of the Peace Corps in the belief that in these discoveries we have the true historical importance of the first two years of the Peace Corps.

The first discovery has been the effect of Peace Corps service on the Volunteers. Our original intention was to select mature young Americans and send them abroad. Even though I believe we have been successful on the whole, we are finding that the Volunteers who have spent nearly two years in the Peace Corps are different people from the ones who joined early in the summer of 1961. Their intellectual, social and personal growth has stretched our conception of maturity in a young adult. For better or for worse, these men and women, when they come home, are going to reject their old patterns of life and seek new ones. These young men and women are going to be a new and significant national resource. In three months, the first of thousands of ex-Volunteers will begin pouring back into the mainstream of our national life. With their language skills, their intimate knowledge of a foreign country, and their grass roots experience they will seek and get jobs with our universities, our Foreign Service, AID missions and other government agencies, with businesses and banks, with church movements, with Foundations, with the UN and with all the other institutions whose concerns extend beyond our national borders.

Many of them will seek to extend their formal education with a new purpose in life as a guide and a stimulus to educational achievement.

The institutions they enter, now or after further education, will be influenced; some may be transformed. Those Volunteers who return to their homes throughout America will be influencing and changing U. S. opinion. In a fashion that is new in our history, we are steadily building a constituency informed in foreign affairs. Recently one of our wiser Ambassadors remarked that the expense and effort we are putting into the Peace Corps could be fully justified on this last ground alone.

A second discovery has been the potential influence of the Peace Corps on the way of life of other overseas Americans. Not only do the Peace Corps Volunteers live modestly, in the manner of their host country colleagues, but the Embassy Commissaries and PX stores are off limits to our professional and administrative staff overseas as well. They are instructed to find modest housing--to avoid the foreigners' compounds so often called "golden ghettos" by resentful host country nationals. I am not suggesting that the U. S. Ambassador should necessarily live the life of our Volunteers or our staff abroad. It has been a useful thing, however, to show that Americans can live that way; and I believe our Peace Corps example is becoming contagious.

When the Peace Corps was being organized I don't believe any of us foresaw the organization of similar Corps by other

countries. This was one of the dividends of the Middle Level Manpower Conference held last fall under Peace Corps auspices in Puerto Rico. At this conference, the developed nations of the free world met together with the developing nations of Asia, Africa and Latin America in order to discuss the problem of allocating human skills, the stumbling block in the way of progress in so much of the world. Developed nations--the Netherlands, Norway, Germany, Denmark, Belgium and New Zealand--are all starting to form their own Volunteer service groups modelled on the Peace Corps. Developing nations--Chile, El Salvador, Jamaica and Honduras--have announced counterpart Peace Corps, within the framework of the Alliance for Progress, designed to work alongside foreign Volunteers in the social and economic development of their own lands. Some of these countries will, in their first year, put into service more Volunteers in proportion to their total populations than we in the United States achieved.

The third discovery is thus the appeal of the Peace Corps concept to the other countries of the world and their rapid adoption of the concept.

The fourth discovery reminds me of the rabbit who climbed a tree. The answer as to how he did it was that he had to, there was a dog after him. Like that rabbit, we had a major problem in that we had to determine in a hurry and without precedent how best to train our Volunteers for service abroad in only two to three months. We needed to cram into ten weeks a heavy dose of

language instruction, skill training, area studies, American civilization, Peace Corps orientation, preventive health, and other essential training needs. In solving our problem we have, of course, relied heavily on the resourcefulness and ingenuity of the American colleges and universities. In the process, many of these institutions have reported to us that they themselves have developed.

Strange languages have been taught for the first time on campuses across the nation--Hauza, Pushtu, Mende, Nyanja, Timni, Tamil, and Twi. New area studies programs have been established, serving both the Peace Corps and the community of scholars. The pressures and needs of the Peace Corps have opened up areas of experimental education on U. S. campuses which our academic friends tell us are among the most interesting developments in contemporary life. A number of universities have also expressed interest in using Peace Corps service as part of their graduate area studies programs, integrating the Peace Corps' two years of intensive exposure to a foreign culture with their own academic discipline in the social sciences.

Thus the fourth discovery has been the impact on these training institutions--American colleges and universities--of the process of the rapid, thorough, and intensive preparation of our Volunteers.



The fifth discovery has been the unexpected by-products of the Peace Corps in the field of health. I am reminded once again of Washington Irving's classic account of the voyage of Christopher Columbus. According to Washington Irving, the Spanish grandees who opposed the voyage took the firm position that, and I quote, "it would be impossible to pass the insupportable heat of the torrid zone." This has a familiar ring. Certainly not since the war has our country faced a problem of preventative tropical medicine on such a scale. And our Medical Division is doing pioneering work which is already creeping into the pages of our scientific and medical journals. To take one example, our Medical Division recently began using large injections of gamma globulin as a preventative for hepatitis, a health problem that was giving us trouble in a number of countries. To give you an idea of the impact of this, I might say that the first place our Medical Division turned for gamma globulin was to the Red Cross. We were promptly informed that our request represented 10 percent of the total supply in Red Cross hands. Needless to say, we found other sources to date for our gamma globulin, being unwilling to deplete the Red Cross stock to that extent.

But, really, these first five discoveries are but the smaller islands -- the real unexpected discovery of dimension -- that new continent -- lies in what we are just beginning to see on the horizon.

The sixth discovery transcends all the others for we are beginning to see an extension, a growth of the general value system of America. It is this main thought of central importance that I would like to leave with you for your consideration.

When we began organizing the Peace Corps, we thought it would prove the capacity of American youth for idealism and for service. We hoped to show that America had not grown selfish and soft. I believe we misjudged the Peace Corps' potential effect. This experiment is not merely displaying our latent capacities; it is creating them. Human ideals and enthusiasm are not static qualities -- with one person out of every hundred, or thousand, or ten thousand, endowed with<sup>a</sup> motivation for service. The desire for action is contagious; and I believe we have yet to feel the full repercussions of the Peace Corps' stimulus in the broad area of Volunteer service. Too often in the past, service to one's country has been thought of in purely military terms.

If the value system of America is really growing through the Peace Corps, it can best be examined -- and possibly explained -- in terms of why people volunteer -- and why they are volunteering in increasing numbers.

Why do Americans volunteer for the Peace Corps?

It is a question Volunteers rarely answer satisfactorily to others and often not even to themselves.

Let me quote from two letters we have received from Volunteers abroad -- John Demos, Peace Corps Volunteer, writes from Ghana:

"From the very start, the question of motives was raised, 'why did you join the Peace Corps?' Everyone seemed to want to

know -- newspapermen, psychologists, politicians -- even people you met at parties. Invariably, we gave these queries an unfriendly response -- partly because they soon acquired the hollow ring of a cliché; partly because the reasons were complex, profound, and personal; and partly, perhaps, because we weren't sure of the answer ourselves."

David Ziegenhagen, a Volunteer in the Philippines, was recently asked why he volunteered. He replied, "I am happy I still cannot answer that question. Whatever my original motivation was, it has long since been pushed aside by the Peace Corps experience itself, and not even hindsight can recover it. Every day I discover at least a dozen reasons why I should have volunteered."

But still the question remains: Why do Americans volunteer?

I do not think Americans are volunteering as they do out of duty to state or to God or with reference to law, either divine or human. This duty could be discharged with less effort.

I think they volunteer and perform as they do because of a personal private virtue that lies in a portion of the self that we may call conscience.

To me this is the core. It is the stuff of which our way of life is made. It is others who have erected the state as a deity to worship. It is we who have enshrined in our way of life regard for the individual.

But we may take this matter of conscience a step further. Let us define it as being a loyalty higher than to the State.



The welfare of the State is not the sole end of man. Man's common humanity takes precedence. More may be required of the good man than of the good citizen. And, more is required of the good Peace Corps Volunteer than the good man.

It is here that we in America and in the Peace Corps are different from our adversaries. Their way of life can never allow pursuit of one's own conscience. We postulate that freedom is the base of our society: That higher than the State there is the personal morality of conscience. It is our tolerance of conscience that makes our way of life worth our living.

And to defend this we will give our time and our temper, our future and our fortunes. Its compromise we shall not endure.

There, perhaps, lies the reason Americans are volunteering, the reason why 4,515 new Americans signed up to serve in the Peace Corps last month alone. In January of 1962, 935 new Americans applied. In January of 1963, 4,515 Americans filled out applications to serve for two years.

And there, perhaps, lies the reason why last month Peace Corps Headquarters received more than 7,000 letters of inquiry a week from Americans asking about the Peace Corps program. This is a five-fold increase in twelve months of the rate at which Americans are becoming involved in the Peace Corps.

The pursuit of the Volunteer is the pursuit not of profit or of pleasure; it is the pursuit of principle. Their purpose is their todays and our tomorrows. Their desire to serve is their excellence. Their desire for service represents the best

in this country. This desire to serve represents a seeking out of -- and a response to -- a new dimension of the value system of today's Americans.

This, then, is the sixth -- and major -- discovery of the Peace Corps: The observation that Americans, by their response to the opportunity for service and sacrifice are demonstrating that our society can take on a new feature -- that a standard has been added to our value system.

You may say that voluntarism, service and sacrifice are not new to America -- and that, in fact, they are part of our heritage. I would respond--true, and maybe then what we have is a rediscovery of an important element of our society that may have been somewhat dormant of late. In addition, the change of scale in the expression of these values, as a result of the Peace Corps, has been so great that it can, perhaps, be fairly described as a change of nature. In any event, the Peace Corps is blazing a new trail in the world and whether or not we are using old or new tools is of secondary importance. We are developing new goals and standards for today's citizens that will make their lives more significant and will contribute to the securing of peace and stability in the world.

The impact of this sixth discovery -- the desire for the opportunity to sacrifice and serve as a part of the value system of modern Americans -- is as difficult to assess as was the assessment in Spain in 1493 of the first reports of the initial discoveries of Columbus and their potential impact on Europe and the world.

But let's talk a moment about that possible impact.

Young Americans looking for a new standard of challenge and service are happiest in the Peace Corps where the situation is most difficult. Volunteers have already reduced barriers to the man considering public service, the fear of being different and the fear of being thought a foolish idealist. We, as a society, need to raise our sights to theirs.

We need to ask ourselves: If Americans -- and young Americans in particular -- are finding in the Peace Corps new opportunities for service and sacrifice that make their lives more complete, then maybe this "discovery" has a broad applicability that all of us need to explore -- explore rapidly, urgently, and completely. Let me conclude by a series of questions, none of which will I attempt to answer today:

Are we, in fact, really giving adequate consideration to volunteer service here in America in time of peace? Are we thinking in terms of a broad enough response to the reclamation of our wasted youth? The mobilization of our resources to an attack on our societies' glaring problems? The creation of new skills and resources which will enable America to move ahead? The fact that the opportunity for service and sacrifice needs, in this modern age, to be organized for the majority of Americans, not for just an elite corps: Are we, in fact, really considering the pros and cons of a society in which we have "universal voluntary service" in time of peace as a regular dimension of citizenship?



Are we being bold enough -- in our Federal Government, in our states, in our universities -- in considering the role of voluntarism as a full feature of American life? Is voluntary service, as an added major feature of American life, something that would enable this society to really tool up to become a fuller society in the last three decades of the 20th century?

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Abroad, have we explored the applicability of the six discoveries of the Peace Corps to our Diplomatic Service? To our Information Agency? To our AID program? Have we really assessed which parts of these programs might be better accomplished by Volunteer service? Have we really thought about the alternative to developing bigger, better, more structured, more rewarding career systems for the conduct of portions of our foreign affairs -- namely a system of volunteers drawn from the citizenry? Have we thought through the experience of the Peace Corps in building its staff for overseas administration from all walks of life? Have we tried to balance out those losses to efficiency and professionalism that occur with the Volunteer, against his great assets? That he is abroad, not as a part of a career, but out of a motivation to serve? Have we, in fact, taken a hard look at the six discoveries of the Peace Corps and asked the question -- where else are they applicable? How do we test their potential contribution? How do we -- if we can -- invigorate our whole foreign participation with some of the enthusiasm, freshness, frankness and basic desire to serve, to sacrifice, to achieve, that characterizes those Peace Corps Volunteers who have blazed such a new



path? In summary, we need to take our sixth discovery -- that Americans desire an extension of their value system -- and employ this force on a wider front in the cause of peace.