

PEACE CORPS

NEWS

PROPERTY OF
ACTION
LIBRARY

Vol. 1, No. 1

June 1961



Peace Corps volunteers will train within sight of Mount Kilimanjaro.

Photo courtesy, Government of Tanganyika

The moral purpose that guides the United States in its foreign affairs has been given a new dimension -- the Peace Corps.

Thousands of you have completed questionnaires for entry to the Peace Corps, and many thousands more have written they want to be considered for service.

You have given answer to President Kennedy's appeal: "Ask not what your country can do for you -- ask what you can do for your country."

All those who filled out the questionnaire have been notified of the first examination dates, May 27 and June 5. Further details are contained in this newsletter.

The first projects have been announced, one in Tanganyika and one in Columbia. They are described more fully on the inside pages.

This newsletter is intended to give you as rapidly as possible the developing information about Peace Corps policies, projects and possibilities for your participation.

The tasks ahead will be arduous, sometimes hazardous and frequently frustrating. They will require stamina, courage and maturity. But they will enrich your life as they will give sign to the world that we are a responsible nation.

PRESIDENT ANNOUNCES SECOND PEACE CORPS PROJECT - Only a few weeks after he had announced the newly-organized Peace Corps would assist Tanganyika in its farm-to-market road surveying program, President Kennedy on May 16 told the nation of the Corps' second project -- in Colombia. Sixty-four volunteers, he revealed, will be assigned to the Latin American country to work in small rural communities in farming, rural construction and public sanitation.

"I am particularly pleased that the second project will be in Latin America," the President said, "because of the many ties of mutual respect and mutual ideals which bind us together as brother republics in this traditionally free and democratic hemisphere."

Unlike the first project, to be administered wholly by the Peace Corps, the Colombia project is a cooperative undertaking. Volunteers will work with Colombian nationals in a joint community development program sponsored by CARE, a private voluntary agency, and Colombia's Department of Community Development.

A record of leadership in farm groups and a reasonable proficiency in Spanish will count heavily in a candidate's favor when volunteers are being selected. Colombian authorities have recommended a background in small farming. Knowledge of how to care for small farm animals and how to build and maintain secondary farm buildings will be essential.

After a two-month training course in an American university, the 64 volunteers will arrive at the end of the summer in Colombia. There they will be given another month of training at a center near Bogota. Only then will they join their Colombian counterparts on assignments in Colombia's villages.

ENTRANCE TESTS - This month the Peace Corps begins the task of selecting its first volunteers to serve in Peace Corps projects in developing countries.

The Peace Corps is actively recruiting for engineers, surveyors, geologists, secondary school teachers, teachers of English as a second language, workers in community development and agriculturists.

To be eligible for Corps membership, candidates must take a written Entrance Test. The first of these tests, for all who want to join the Corps this summer, will be given on Saturday, May 27, and on Monday, June 5, in over 330 civil service testing centers throughout the country and in Puerto Rico.

Candidates hoping to qualify for any one of the variety of Peace Corps assignments, with the exception of secondary school teaching, will take the first of the two tests. Those interested in teaching English, biology, chemistry, physics or mathematics in secondary schools will report for the June 5th test. In some instances, a candidate may wish to take both examinations.

Being able to do a job well will be one of the first qualifications of a Peace Corps volunteer.

"What we want are practical people with basic skills," says Dr. Nicholas Hobbs, director of selection. "The tests are designed to measure an individual's capabilities regardless of the extent of his schooling."

Candidates will be tested for their competence in a particular skill, for their knowledge of American history and American institutions, for their language aptitude or achievement.

There will be no such thing as a passing score. While an individual may be weak in one area, he may excel in another and thus become the ideal volunteer for a certain project. Different projects will require different abilities, training and knowledge.

All persons who have filled out the Volunteer Questionnaire should have received in the mail a letter notifying them of the examinations, with a list of testing centers, an identification card and a form for indicating preference in assignment. If you have not received your letter, write or wire immediately Peace Corps, Washington 25, D. C.

All others wishing to join are urged to return their questionnaires to Peace Corps headquarters and report for one or both of the Entrance Tests.

CANDIDATES FOR TANGANYIKAN PROJECT WILL BEGIN TRAINING END OF JUNE - On June 26, approximately 56 candidates will enter the Tanganyikan training project. From this number, at the end of some eight weeks of training in the southwest of the country, 28 men will be selected -- 20 surveyors, four map geologists, four civil engineers. Other qualified candidates will be assigned to a reserve pool of Peace Corps volunteers for future projects.

Those selected will go immediately after stateside training to an additional seven-weeks orientation program, to be given by the Tanganyikan government, in a training center close to Mount Kilimanjaro and the Tanganyikan-Kenya border.

The training curriculum in both America and Tanganyika will be rigorous. In this country it will provide for not less than 60 hours of training per week for a minimum of eight weeks. Peace Corps officials presently are determining the American educational institution where training will take place.



A Tanganyikan learns to survey and check grades.

Photo courtesy, United Nations

Training in the United States will be comprehensive. It will include intensive refresher work in the necessary technical skills. For example, Geologists will brush up on photogeology, mineralogy and petrology. Everyone will review American history, government and social institutions. There will be a special course on international affairs. Candidates will study Tanganyika's geography, political economy and culture. Language study in the United States will be sufficient to enable volunteers to learn Swahili rapidly during their subsequent period of training in Tanganyika.

The 28 men finally selected and then further trained in Tanganyika will work out of the District Centers of practically every province in the East African country. Surveyors will be responsible for making critical surveys and alignments for feeder roads into intensive agricultural areas. They also will help train young Tanganyikans in surveying techniques through on-the-job training. The civil engineers will be responsible for supervising the maintenance, grading and surfacing of main territorial roads. They will also oversee the construction of bridges, the installation of culverts and the design of drifts. Three hard-rock geologists and one soft-rock geologist will conduct geological surveying and mapping in selected areas of Tanganyika.

Volunteers who serve in Tanganyika will gain great satisfaction from the fact that their assistance is all-important in the economic development of the country. Today, though the country's economy is based largely on agriculture, only nine percent of its land area is cultivated. Lack of adequate roads to permit rapid movement of crops and produce to market is a major limiting factor.

Sir Ernest Vasey, present Minister of Finance, has named surveying and survey training the chief priority in development of the area. "As things now stand," he said recently, "the country can produce only two Tanganyikans trained in land survey work in the next five years." With the help of Peace Corps volunteers this number will be increased many times.

Now a UN Trust Territory, Tanganyika on next December 28 will become the 22nd African state to gain its independence since World War II. It is roughly the combined size of Texas, Louisiana and Arkansas and lies just south of the Equator between the great lakes of Central Africa and the Indian Ocean. Topographically, it is one of the most spectacular of African countries. Within its boundaries are the continent's highest mountain, Mount Kilimanjaro, with a permanent ice cap, rising to 19,340 feet above sea level, and Lake Tanganyika, the world's second deepest lake.

Volunteers will be stationed in each of the three main climate zones in the tropical country -- the hot and humid coastal region, the hot and dry central plateau and the semi-temperate regions around the slopes of the mountains.

Like all countries in the central belt of Africa, Tanganyika is rich in wild animals. After a few months in the country, volunteers will no longer be surprised to see herds of grazing antelope, elephants feeding in the rain forests, giraffes grazing the thorn bush. Vacations may take them to the Serengeti Plain, Tanganyika's internationally-famous game preserve.

In their work, Peace Corps volunteers will come to know many of Tanganyika's tribes. The country's nine million Africans are divided into some 120 tribes, some numbering as few as 1000 members while the largest, the Sukuma, has a membership of over a million. And volunteers will be able to speak with most. While languages and dialects are almost as numerous as the tribes, Swahili is understood in most parts of the country.

DIRECTOR OF PEACE CORPS VISITS NINE COUNTRIES - Robert Sargent Shriver, Jr., Director of the Peace Corps, returned to Washington in mid-May with a brief case-full of project proposals and firsthand knowledge of foreign enthusiasm for the Peace Corps. During a three-week trip, he visited Ghana, Nigeria, Turkey, Pakistan, India, Burma, Malaya, Thailand, the Philippines and Singapore, where he talked with government leaders and with American ambassadors and officials stationed in the countries. So keen was the interest of the governments contacted that the prime challenge now facing the Peace Corps is to have on tap a wide and ready array of volunteers ready for service by the end of the year.

Do you have friends who are interested in volunteering for the Peace Corps who need further information before deciding? Do you have questions you'd like answered? The Peace Corps Fact Book will give you answers to the most commonly-asked questions. It is available, free of charge, to anyone writing to the Peace Corps, Washington 25, D. C. We'll be happy to send you one or more copies.

PEACE CORPS
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.
OFFICIAL BUSINESS

POSTAGE AND FEES PAID
PEACE CORPS