

Org 1 Peace Corps

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From Our Point Of View

Latest Peace Corps Moves Leave Nobody Looking Good

THE things young Peace Corps volunteers are being charged with these days in some host countries would be laughable, were they not such a reflection upon immature governments and a smear upon the image of the Corps.

Especially in Latin America, but in parts of Asia and Africa, too, the Peace Corps is being asked to leave. And one is led to believe that in some places our money is still welcome even if our aid is not.

The men and women of the Peace Corps are, of course, open to charges that they are fronting for the CIA, or that they are propaganda outlets for the U.S. government, or that by teaching family planning the Volunteers are really trying to destroy the indigenous populations.

Place this mythical Volunteer over against the real one — the one who is critical of his own government and hardly a collaborator of the CIA or a trained mouthpiece for the government — and a balanced picture emerges.

The leftward nationalism now sweeping through Latin America

is hurting operations such as the Peace Corps. Banning the Peace Corps wouldn't be so bad if these countries were successful in establishing volunteer agencies of their own to work among their countrymen.

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STILL, there was no help from the local quarter, either, when all the aid agencies were lumped into one Action Corps. Supporters of this shuffle could say that an outfit such as the Peace Corps wouldn't lose its drive and identity, but try telling that to a Volunteer. It's easily seen that one into many doesn't go.

This melding of the volunteer aid agencies may easily be misread abroad as "politics" by a partisan President. The apparent de-emphasis of the Peace Corps into one huge agency may be viewed as a lack of interest and support on our part for what was once a success. The leftist nationalists of Spanish America then have an excuse to belittle the Peace Corps and eventually request it to leave.

There's nothing uplifting about the whole business. Nobody comes out looking good.