

CAPITOL STUFF

By TED LEWIS

Washington, March 29—A puzzling question still remains unanswered in connection with the White House action today which formally ends any further secret financial infiltration by the CIA or other government agencies of private American organizations.

That question is whether the new, clean and wholesome, above-board policy means also that our spy-boys can't infiltrate the Peace Corps.

Should CIA Infiltrate Peace Corps?

Since it has leaked out that the CIA has tossed around millions to control the policies of organizations like the National Student Association, this Peace Corps issue has become increasingly disturbing.

In Congress it has been quietly suggested that the CIA money would have been better spent to improve our anti-Communist image abroad if it had

been funneled into the Peace Corps, not the youth and other private cultural and educational organizations.

A high respected Peace Corps official himself has privately admitted that most of the 15,000 corpsmen now serving in 53 host countries are doves on the Viet war issue. The only exception is the corps contingent in Thailand—most of whose 500 members are definitely hawks.

In other words, while the CIA has been sneaking money into private organizations so their overseas operations wouldn't undercut the Administration's Viet policies, the Peace Corps has been allowed to go its free and easy dove way.

The present head of the corps is Jack Hood Vaughn, but the promoter who got it going is poverty czar Sargent Shriver. And it was Shriver who, back in 1961, using his effective combination of hard and soft sell, obtained a policy decision which made the Peace Corps off grounds for an infiltration by the CIA.

This immunity was sweeping. Peace Corps volunteers were not informed about it. But there were even corps safeguards established just in case the CIA's department of dirty tricks forgot about the hands off agreement.

Peace Corpsmen, for example, became ineligible for a CIA job for five years after they had ended their Peace Corps tour of duty. And if they had an intelligence community background before they sought to enroll, they were automatically turned down.

Shriver has said that he went to "extreme pains" to get a commitment to keep the corps pure, from then President Kennedy in 1961 and also from both CIA director Allen Dulles and his successor, John McCone.

Dovecotes in Sensitive Spots?

So, the net result—if the dove and hawk count can be believed—is that virtually all around the world in touchy spots abroad young doves are cooing and presumably people in the underdeveloped and neutral countries are listening.

And until the policy is changed, there is not one damn thing our CIA operatives can do about it.



Jack Hood Vaughn
Explains purpose of corps

Which brings up the purpose of the Peace Corps. There is a considerable Congressional argument about that purpose. Rep. Otto E. Passman (D-La.), whose House Appropriations subcommittee annually considers the \$100 million-plus the corps wants, thinks the name Peace Corps is a misnomer. He thinks it is really a "Technical Assistance Agency."

Director Vaughn totally disagrees. As he testified before Passman's committee: "The purpose of the Peace Corps is to try to achieve peace."

And Vaughn elaborated: "To me this means better communications between nations and people, better understanding, a kind of tolerance and understanding that has been so lacking in world affairs as long as I can remember."

To which statement of purpose there might be added the plans President Johnson has for the Peace Corps in fiscal 1968: Assist more than 400,000 farmers in their struggle against hunger, help educate more than 700,000 school children, help train 55,000 teachers, provide health services to more than 200,000 persons, help 75,000 men and women help themselves through private enterprise.

Such plans indicate how the Peace Corpsmen get around among folks abroad. And if some native asks how about the Viet war, do they say what they think? The kind of people the Peace Corps wants—and gets—according to Shriver, are those who do think for themselves and say what they think, presumably.

Do-Gooders, Dreamers, Nonconformists

And by and large they are the intellectual fringe, the do-gooders, the dreamers, the nonconformists. They are basically, here at home, the core of the dove element, so it should be expected that they would also be doves while abroad under Peace Corps auspices.

Well, there will be more of them operating abroad next year, if the Administration gets the money it wants out of Congress. There are 15,000 volunteers now serving abroad. By August, 1968, there will be 19,000, active in 60 countries, not just 53.

Johnson's special CIA investigating committee today touched on the need of having the real image of America made clear to the world through private organizations.

"It is of the greatest importance to our future," the committee reported, "and to the future of free institutions everywhere that other nations, especially their young people, know and understand American viewpoints."

But if the Peace Corps is overloaded with doves, do the young people in foreign lands get a clear understanding of American viewpoints?"

Obj. 1 Peace Corps