Nigeria V and VI Arrive Jan. 4th

What for Ex-Volunteers?

The Okene Plan

A great deal has been written about the effect that returning Volunteers could have on the formation and application of American foreign policy. Peace Corps has been mentioned as a natural recruiting ground for the foreign service, etc., and as a molder of public opinion in matters affecting foreign policy.

Two years service abroad will not equip the Volunteer to answer questions concerning foreign policy, but he will surely return home with a greater knowledge and a wider understanding of the problems and policies of that country. Will it be possible, though, for him to work through the existing Peace Corps organization or political groups? Would it be politically possible for PC Washington to lobby for—say—an aid bill for India or Nigeria? Wouldn’t an organization of former Volunteers and directors be in a better position to advocate policies affecting our foreign relations? If so, why?

Firstly, because the organization’s activities would be outside government control, it could advocate positions that might be politically unfeasible for the administration in power. Secondly, the organization would not take upon itself the abuses, criticisms and dogma of existing political parties and pressure groups. Thirdly, the organization, if backed by a large number of ex-Volunteers, would be able to capitalize on the prestige of the Peace Corps. Finally, if size alone is to be considered, one merely has to note the projections of PC Washington. But more important, Volunteers are likely, on returning home, to assume relatively important positions in public life—outside Peace Corps service. However, an alumni organization would serve as a continuing source of information and a powerful vehicle of expression that the volunteer could not hope to match on his own.

With what specifically might this organization concern itself?

One hundred and twenty new PCVs will arrive in Lagos on the afternoon of January 4th, bringing total Nigerian PCV population to 310. The new Volunteers, trained at UCLA and Columbia, are scheduled to leave for their regions January 7th, after orientation in Lagos.

At Columbia University, the trainees, all without previous teaching experience, worked under the direction of Gray Cowan, an African Studies expert who was also director of the Sierra Leone project. At Los Angeles, UCLA political scientist John Ballard directed the other half of the Volunteers, the experienced teachers. Mr. Ballard, incidentally, will be teaching next year at the University of Ife, Ibadan.

The Western Region is slated to get 55 of the new volunteers; 30 will be sent to the North, 23 to the East, and twelve to Lagos.

SCIENCE AND MATH TEACHERS

Unlike previous PC-Nigeria groups, half of Nigeria V and VI is prepared to teach science and math. Included in the group are ten engineers, three lawyers, and seven married couples. Oldest PCV is 50 year old Edward H. Brown, a PhD in Education, from Charlotte, North Carolina. Most unusual name and background in Nigeria V: Blue Eagle Wooldridge, an East Indian born in France, now a naturalized American citizen.

Peace Corps Lagos has asked that only those volunteers invited to help with the arrival of the new group show up. Rest House accommodations are nil.

May I wish you a very happy holiday season. This sounds like an unforgivable platitud, but I mean its even though you are far from the places where, and persons with whom you’ve celebrated Christmas in the past, you are probably much closer now to the spirit and meaning of the holiday. May this knowledge bring you—not a joy smothered with pride—but a satisfaction that you would rather be where you are, and doing what you are doing, with the world’s facts being what they are this Christmas.

SAM PROCTOR
PC Philosophy Defined

by Dave Christenson, PCV-Philippines

(Ed. note: Because we suspect this article may find response from Nigeria PCVs, we are reprinting it from Ang Voluntaryo the PC-Phillipines newsletter.)

A Peace Corps Volunteer is an individual who has for any one of many reasons volunteered his services to work in developing nations, participating in this development by offering his own limited skills. He in no way causes or directs development but simply participates, aiding in development to a greater or lesser degree, depending upon his abilities, his job, attitudes, and the environment of those with whom he works.

It is impossible for him to cause major changes. It is possible for him to participate in change by participating fully in the immediate projects generated by the forces of development in his host country.

The volunteer is expected to go beyond this to do any other work for which he has skills, knowledge and time and which support the forces for progress which are already underway. He is not to lead, he is to serve. He is an agent, not a director, of social change.

The Volunteer in the Philippines is committed to the role of educational aide in the public school system. His role is to aid the forces of progress in this country by upgrading education in the schools. This purpose is clearly defined: its implementation is extremely flexible.

Each Volunteer must determine this for himself.

Some Volunteers are successful and feel satisfied with their roles; others have been unsuccessful, dissatisfied, and seek to flee their roles. Some try to escape by becoming totally submerged in the culture; others seek forms of diversion outside of their role and outside of their community. In spite of this, is the Peace Corps successful? Yes.

Several hundred individuals spread throughout the Philippines, aiding in many ways the forces of progress, cannot but help change to come about. If the Volunteers conscientiously seek to aid progress, their work will have a lasting, meaningful effect. But if they escape from their role as agent of social change by becoming a director of social change, they will subvert the Peace Corps and its ideal, perhaps causing great damage; or, by becoming too involved in the society they will negate their critical abilities, which are among the most important tools they can offer to the forces of change.

The New World

Note: On reading a recent issue of TIME which gave a run-down in capsule form on independent African nations, Norman Gary was moved to look up the following excerpt from an old edition. (TIME, July 4, 1780)

Culture:
Pop: 3,575,000 Size: 892,135 sq. miles
Literacy: 55% School attendance: 60%
College Graduates: less than 5%. Universities: 1 (in Boston)
Christians: 70%

Outside of limited area along Eastern coast, the country is still mostly unexplored and unexploited jungle. Literacy is very low outside this area. Natives in the hinterland still are almost 100% illiterate and still practice savage rites, including burning people at the stake. Population outside of sea-board is largely nomadic.

POLITICAL MATURITY:
Political parties: 13 at least Voters: 10%
Direct British rule has helped this backward area to understand the principles of Western Democracy. Revolution three years ago was led largely by a group of radicals advocating no taxation, but left to themselves have been most adept at levying taxes. Most of population remained pro-British even during revolution, and many moderate Westminster-leaning Tories were persecuted and imprisoned.

PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS:
Exports: timber, tobacco, cotton, grains, whaleoil, ground-nuts.
Per capita income: $50.00
Br. aid: $00.00
French aid: $500,000.00

Moderate president George Washington holds together 13 disparate regions that lack a national outlook and are bound politically only by a loose declaration of confederacy. Country could be split up over federalism issue between two young radicals of revolutionary experience. Thomas Jefferson and Alexander Hamilton. Possibility of border dispute with Britain to the North creates a good bit of political tension. Outlook bleak as far as economic viability and strong central government goes.

Congratulations

Newly Weds

Julian Martin and Joyce Carlson were married at Abbott Grammar School in Ihiala, Eastern Region, on September 27. Norman Gary gave reception at Enugu.

On the morning of November 9th, Dan Haines and Brynne Levinson, were married in Kano in a civil ceremony, Carol Newman Mac Watson and Marqui Young attended the ceremony. The couple left on a honeymoon in a vintage jeep to Katsina. They will reside at 719 Gov't. College Compound, Ibadan.
Wilcox Takes Gas

The green and white VW bus pulled off the road into the gas station just outside Ogbomosho. Confidently the driver pulled alongside the gas pump with the lowest price on the meter. “Gas it up,” Wilcox yelled to the station attendant, who was feeding some guinea fowl behind the grease rack. “Yes sir?” replied the Nigerian quizzically. Hebert got out of the bus to stretch his legs, while Wilcox asked no one in particular, “How much gas you suppose the tank holds?” Cranking the fuel pump to electrical life, the attendant began to fill the tank. Tom said, “There’s almost a whole shilling’s difference in price between these two pumps.” “Yeah, there’s a big price difference here between ‘ordinary’ and ‘premium,’ even more than at home,” said Wilcox to Hebert, who, after all, had just arrived in Nigeria, two weeks later than the veterans of the Nigeria IV group.

The attendant had just spilled the usual excess of gas on himself and the rear end of the micro-bus. He shifted on his feet uneasily, “Say . . . I don’t think this car wants gas.” “Of course we want gas . . . ordinary, cause we don’t have much money.” “No,” the Nigerian insisted, “I think master’s car wants petrol.” “Yeah . . . but . . . gas is petrol . . . isn’t it?” said Wilcox with rapidly decreasing conviction, until conviction died with a curse.

The Volunteers stood suffering in the late afternoon sun. “Guess Noval Bone won’t get her baggage after all,” Hebert mused, reflecting on the planned trip to Ilorin for some lost luggage. “Gotta find a siphon tube somewhere in this crate,” muttered Wilcox as he peered grimly into the hot bowels of the VW engine compartment.

Forty-five minutes later, the microbus rolled out southbound onto the highway with a great clatter of knocking pistons, running on a mixture of about 80% petrol, 20% gas. Hebert, Wilcox, and the attendant had all been unexpectedly nourished by a half-pint of gas (alias diesel fuel), swallowed in the process of discovering correct siphoning procedures. “Lucky you found that tube in the engine,” said Hebert, wiping the oily corners of his mouth with a grimy handkerchief, “and wasn’t it funny that Dotty Hassfield’s steward should happen to show up?” “Yeah, and when he tells her, she’ll get a great laugh out of it,” said Wilcox, making designs on the white steering wheel with his greasy hands “Gas is petrol is petrol is petrol.”

Barkas Dubbed Chief

It’s apparently taken PCV Walter Barkas (UCLA I) no time to re-adapt to Nigeria after a few weeks sick-leave in the States. From Ayide, Ekiti, Barkas writes:

For a long time one of my students had been after me to visit his home. When I came back from the States we finally arranged to go. I drove to Ikole, about twenty miles from Ayide, and arrived at my host’s home early on a Sunday morning. After many and varied greetings, we had ‘tea’ (Ovaltine and sweet-bread), then went to church, where the service was in Yoruba and the choir danced to some of the hymns.

After church, a visit to the Oba, the Elekole of Ikole, a well-educated and surprisingly young man. He asked me if he could get a PCV as Principal for a girl’s grammar school he’s anxious to start. I took pictures of the doorposts of his palace, a newly-carved pair., and toured the town co-op’s stocke fish ponds.

We returned to the Arogundade home for lunch, after which I was presented with a native costume and dubbed “Chief Aririwajoye” (the well-mannered) by one of the elders. I sat for pictures with the family, then headed home, loaded up with a mountain of dash, including a live chicken and a pumpkin I used for Hallow’en. The old chief who bestowed my title said that he’d have my red beads for me on my next visit.

Keeping the Bugs out

You live, or take up room
In a single, flatulent
Rather corrupt week—
It passes in a not very spectacular
Train of little things half—
Understood.

Like the Golden Goose it isn’t,
But,
You expect it to leave droppings:
Ah, fertile spheres.

Last week, all you found
Was a hard laugh—
This week a palpable complaint.

Maybe next week, could be
A Pretty Poem.

I wouldn’t wait, cowboy—
Do it this week,
Call it “Payments ’gainst Tomorrow’s Promise.”

Better yet, don’t write it—
Just think it
And love life,
Like mad.

-T.H.-

Lost


2. A page’s worth of books shipped in boxes from UCLA for Nigeria IV. Some Nigeria IV volunteer must have received 17 extra books, including Dubliners and the College Outline English Grammar. If found, Notify Murray Frank, Ibadan.
Letters to the Tilley Lamp

From Jane Meloney, and Fred and Ruth Whiting, Birnin Kebbi

The lamplighters of Birnin Kebbi are honoured by the editors’ solicitation of our contribution. As we are among the few who really do use Tilley Lamps, we feel particularly well-chosen for this exclusive honour.

We would like to nominate ourselves as PCV image-makers of the month. Where else in the world have PCVs so completely acclimated themselves to local conditions? With one married couple and a single woman driving around in a jeep together day in and day out, the latter has been accepted by the populace as Junior Wife. Our accomplishments to date: one hammock, the back of one bamboo chair, and some hanging gardens. Where else are volunteers entirely dependent upon the local market for food? (The one store in town gave up the ghost 2 months ago) Where else have PCVs taught such vital aspects of American Culture as using a yo-yo, the barman’s handshake, and jigsaw puzzles. Yes, come to Birnin Kebbi and watch the Fulani flip frisbies. And where else has a teacher so successfully conveyed his lesson that his boys go screaming in stark terror out of the room (at the end of a ghost story)?

We’re learning a great deal from our experiences. Did you know that the best way to kill a snake is to run over it with a jeep and then slam on the brakes? And that a person has to be a carpenter before he can go to the moon? (It helps if his first name is Scott.) And did you know that a pelican’s pouch can be used as a first-rate beer mug?

Our appreciation of some things has increased immeasurably. Electricity is such a phenomenon that we forget to turn it on even when we get it. A good Ritz cracker, a pizza, some pork, and a martini would be great. If that’s impossible, we’ll try another plea: if any of you are inventive, PC Birnin Kebbi will beat a path to your door when you come up with an effective “little-red-goat-extterminator.”

(Eds. note: You win, Birnin Kebbi, hands down... and unopposed.)

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From Dorothy and Hersh Herzberg; St Teresa’s College, Nsukka:

Now that classes have started, life is busy and full. Hersh has begun a current events club with speakers from the University. He and another staff member have begun a sickroom which tends to the minor wounds and illnesses of the boys. We moved the library with its new acquisitions to a larger, better-lit empty class room, and we’re now working on putting in the Dewey Decimal system.

Hersh has also begun German classes for the boys; my French classes begin next week at the University. The chorus continues and the octet is developing nicely—they’ll present their second concert next week. I’m hoping to expand the sewing project to another village.

From the States (Manhattan Beach, California), T.W. Hawkins writes:

The “Hawk” has taken the big step. He is now engaged to Miss Judith Zacher, Hershey Hall ’61. We haven’t set a date, but are shooting for the summer of ’63. All PCVs and staff are invited; more personal-type invitations will be sent out after the date’s been set.

At present I’m working for Mattel Toys in Hawthorne, California (anybody who wants toys at 50% off, write now, pay later). I plan to get back into teaching or some related field shortly—wasn’t cut out to be an engineer. I’m driving a new Valiant (it sure beats driving those jeeps) and am living in a bachelor apartment three blocks from the Ocean.

I miss everybody and only wish I could be back on the job, ulcer and all. The new address is: 3410 Crest Drive, Manhattan Beach, California.

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From Bob Whin, Fr. Joseph Memorial Secondary School, Agulehi, via Onitsha:

My current station, Agulehi, might be of interest to any PCVs who have wanderlust. Located on the eastern bank of the Anambara River, Agulehi is only a few minutes by canoe from the only remaining big game grounds in Eastern Nigeria. Elephants, rhino, hippo, crocodile, bush cows, bush lizards (3 foot variety)—you name it, we have it. Any budding Frank Bucks in the group are extended an open invitation.

A minor point of interest to Ibo-oriented anthropologists: I’ve noticed what appear to be soccer goal-posts occasionally spanning bush roads. These are variously called “Ebu” or “Edo.” and they mark the boundaries between villages. The crossbar is wrapped with specific traditional leaves and vines. Originally the bar lay on the earth across the paths between villages. With the advent of the wheel, however, it was raised above the road for longevity purposes.

There will be seven PCVs here during part of the vacation, clearing the bush for athletic fields. So if you feel like roving, rove across the Niger up the Anambara to Agulehi in your row-boat.

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Have you been saving old clothes for bargaining with Hausa traders? Send them instead to Kay Law, Aro Hospital, Abeokuta; the patients will be most grateful.

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ATTENTION: Drivers licenses issued to Nigeria I and II expired in December. Look to your wallets.
CHANSONS ETHNIQUE

BY AL BIELEFELD

1. Ode Prompted by Audition of a Joan Baez Record
   My lover's gone away from me.
   Went and joined a lorry.
   I didn’t quite expect it,
   And now I’m fairly sorry.

   Chorus: Whee hay ooh and eee
   When men go courting
   They’re nothing but grief,
   Usually.

   My lover ran off and left me
   In the middle of the bush.
   A man a girl can always trust
   Is generally a lush.

   Chorus: Whee hay ooh, etc.

   I’m more or less dissatisfied
   With the single life;
   On the other hand I don’t
   Want to get married either.

   Chorus.

   * * * * * * * * * * *

2. The Silver Dagger Song
   My mother keeps a silver dagger
   Cause men are often slackers.
   My father never brought a knife to bed
   To spread his cheese on crackers.

   Chorus: Whup! Whup now!
   Sing the silver dagger song
   * My mother takes, when she goes
   to bed,
   Silver Service for one along.

   Go court another tender maiden,
   I just have had tooth removed
   But in a week, my disposition
   Will be, by then, I think, improved.

   Chorus: Whup! Whup! etc.

   My father was a handsome devil,
   But now he has a double chin.
   Every Thursday he goes bowling,
   And very often he will win.

   Chorus: Whup! Whup! etc.

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On the Track

Zaria, Oct. 28th—With a cloud of dust and a mighty "Dawki sun tashi!" the racing season began here yesterday. The town was besieged by men with money lining their riguna, hoping to gain more, but probably to lose most of it.

Rumors about the horses start circulating a week in advance. In the absence of a form sheet, the “hot tip” becomes important. On the day of the race I was given five “sure things,” all in the same race. (Most players are prejudiced in favor of horses from their provinces.)

Gambles coming early warm up by joining sprouting card games or trying their luck at the wheel of fortune. The true horse player isn’t concerned with these diversions though; his pride and money are at stake. I met a group of players, professional in every way, who follow the races all over the North and “know” what they’re doing.

There are two types of bets: the sweepstakes and the tote. Sweepstakes are for those who are too lazy to dope out their own choices, and leave it to lady luck (which might really be the best method). The tote players got a shock when they discovered the regional government had put a six pence tax on all tote tickets. And to add insult to injury, the Zaria race club was not placing the additional charges in the pool to help determine the odds.

Twenty-four horses started the first race, but the last race on the second day had to be cancelled for lack of entries. (even the owners get discouraged). In this first race of the season, there were many maiden entries which made selection more difficult than usual. Horses from the Emir of Katsina’s stables proved best here, though some of the local Emir’s placed well also.

Outstanding maiden was Musjeen from Maiduguri, who won two races (both as a “maiden” entry!). Best sophomore was Shugaba Kanede, who set a track record for four furlongs. Jockey laurels went to Alhaji Akel and Sani America; both would make good riders if each lost 30 pounds and didn’t foul other jockeys so openly.

When the two-day races ended, our house was mobbed by traders trying to raise lorry money to get to Kaduna, where another race is being held next week. When I go to the track now, I always buy a non-redeemable train ticket, so I won’t have to walk home. One Hausa man won £60 in the sweepstakes and had to be escorted home by the police. Now he’s got more problems than the man who literally loses his riga.

—Stan Field

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Wanted to Buy

A used portable typewriter. Write Jim Garofolo, P.S.S. Dekina, via Lokoja, Northern Region.
In Search of Cosmopolis

We were in Lagos a few week-ends back for the trade fair, Bar Beach and a few phone calls to see if the office really was open. The Rest House was in extremis. PCVs and assorted guests were encamped all about and there was little to eat but 25 loaves of bread that contrite travelers had stuffed in the fridge. We heard many complaints about the service and accommodations. One Volunteer even threatened to complain to AAA and Duncan Hines. We agreed that some action should be taken and it was: three weeks later the lease ran out.

The high spot of the weekend was the arrival of eight Togo Volunteers. They said they were lost. The inn was full, they had to leave.

Goodbye, we said, take care. But we were thinking, where is Togo anyway?

The Okene Plan . . . from page 1

1) Influencing our government to make correct decisions concerning the countries Volunteers have served in. This might be done best by:

a) Assuring that qualified people fill positions in the State Dept and Foreign Service, including the Washington staff, as well as staff in American Government posts abroad.

b) Assuring that money and aid is given in the most effective manner.

c) Encouraging cultural contacts. These contacts, however, must be able to work in reverse. People from foreign nations must be given the opportunity to observe the United States, and then, hopefully, obtain a better understanding of American culture.

2) American Race Relations—Racial equality needs no justification, but Americans must realize that our foreign policy and the image of America abroad reflects, and is reflected by, our domestic policies. (Some African students in Germany were assaulted by American soldiers, which probably did more harm than most of us will be able to overcome in our two years service.)

Questions and comments about this idea would be appreciated.

Eds. note: We'll be glad to publish any response (criticism or elaboration) to the Okene Plan in our next issue.

Notes from the Casebook
Of Nelson Frampton, M.D.

(compiled and edited by C. Corzatt and A. Bielefeld, WHIFF technical assistants.)

Blaisdell Gorfy. Mr. Gorfy, 24, one day early in spring went swimming in the municipal pool of his home-town. He suffered the unpleasant experience of completely dissolving. A subsequent laboratory analysis of the water revealed a high protein content.

Winton Wisselby. Mr. Wisselby, 64, discovered early in childhood that by inserting a flash bulb into his navel, he could ignite the bulb. This first discovery resulted in severe burns about the abdomen. Eventually he fashioned a makeshift cone from aluminum foil, which he fitted about his navel as a shield. Unfortunately, he always had an aversion to photography, so that his unusual ability was of no vocational or avocational value. Later in life it was reported that he was very popular at social gatherings; when it was learned that the same organ, with its extraordinary properties, could also light cigarettes.

Pindar Rhemus. Pindar, age 12, was a caddy at a local country club and the sole support of his aged mother. He was admitted to the hospital with a large tumor which had suddenly developed under his armpit. Exploratory surgery revealed the etiological factor to be a golf ball lodged immediately beneath the dermata. The golfer was penalized one stroke.

Murcellina Phelps. Miss Phelps was born with an unusual skin pigmentation on her right arm. Completely encircling the arm at the elbow and extending one inch above and below the elbow joint was an area of verdant pigmentation which could best be described as a two-inch Kelly green band. When admitted to the clinic at the age of 14, Miss Phelps was suffering severe trauma from prolonged rejection by peers. Eighteen months of highly successful skin grafting resulting in implanting a green band about the left elbow also.

Edra Quallis. Edra, female, age 2, had developed a growth on the bottom of the big toe of the right foot. The growth could best be described as a toenail on the underside of the toe. Home remedy in the form of occasional clipping was at first a-adequate treatment. As the child learned to walk, however, she formed the habit of wandering barefoot into the kitchen of her home. These peregrinations, because of the mislocated toenail, resulted in unsightly nicks in the linoleum. The mother was anxious to correct this condition, thus preserving the natural, lasting beauty of the linoleum. Six months of therapy taught the child to hop on her right foot when moving into, out of, or about the kitchen.