

## **Chapter 8 One Year After**

By the end of 1969, I had run out of money and was back at home in Eugene, Oregon. There were no jobs so I enrolled at the University of Oregon in the Computer Science department to work on a second Masters degree and to be close to the University's Career Placement Office.

The situation in Turkey had continued to deteriorate. Taylan Özgür, my reluctant Calculus student, became one of the first martyrs in the fighting between the right and the left that lead up to the March 12, 1971, military takeover of the Turkish government. He was shot and killed on September 23, 1969, during a demonstration in Beyazıt Square, called by İstanbul University's student union.

The following letters tell the Peace Corps Turkey story:

July, 1969

TO: All Volunteers

FROM: Jack Corey, Director

Here's a short report on some things that have been happening.

Most important, we have a new group of enthusiastic Trainees who arrived in Santa Fe, New Mexico to begin their intensive language on June 20. I was with them for the first week of their training and they all seemed raring to go. Seventy-three showed up for training. The program got off to a fine start. Most of the staff are the Turkish teachers, about half of whom came from Turkey and will be returning with the Trainees on the charter flight. These Turkish teachers will be supplemented by one or two here in Ankara and will continue with the language instruction to the end of training. It is working out very well. Aside from the director, Dale Kinsley, three assessment officers, and Jerry Leach and Steve Clark, who are working on the cross-cultural studies, the staff is Turkish. Mixing began right away. The Turkish staff is staying on the site and living with the Trainees. Cross-cultural understanding began the first day. They got a big lift when two of the instructors prepared a dinner of patlican, dolma, cacik and a modified baklava. Language is going 9 hours a day and not much else will be done except for evening cross-cultural studies sessions until they arrive in Turkey on July 31.

A word about the program for next year--the original request from the Turkish government was for 112 volunteers. This represents a reduction of about 15 from the Ministry of Education and a big increase in requests for people at the universities. We reached an agreement to bring over 78 and this spring, after the Completion of Service Conference with its suggestions, we reduced the number to 68. The effect of all this when we consider the drop in trainees along the way will be a very drastic reduction in the number of replacements for the Ministry of Education program. This will probably effect the orta and lise sites the most, but will also cause a reduction in the number of volunteers next year at the Maarif Koleji and Teacher Training sites.

In the meantime we are conducting negotiations with the Ministry of Education to get an early commitment on sites so that trainees will know early in August where they are going and their training can be directed appropriately. It will also give the trainees who will be staying in Ankara a chance to tackle the housing problem faster than in earlier years.

We have been having some very interesting discussions about new programs with State Planning Office. The office has assigned one of their best men as Liaison Officer with the Peace Corps. This is the first time this has happened. We are getting a good deal of help from him in working out procedures for discussion with the various ministries who may have potential programs. The State Planning Office has impressed upon us that they are interested in development programs with volunteers who have special skills and this ties in directly with PC Director Blatchford's idea of increasing the proportion of technical people in the Peace Corps program world-wide.

When I was in Washington I had an interesting discussion with the new Deputy, Tom Hauser. He is interested in the development of new programs in PC and encouraged us to try it in Turkey. He said to shoot for the moon with any kind of project that meets Peace Corps objectives and the Peace Corps recruiting staff in Washington would do all they could to help find Volunteers. He clarified the change toward more skilled volunteers. Right now the percentage of college graduates with relatively little work experience is about 90%. They would like to see it at about 70%. The other 30% will be a different kind of volunteer--perhaps families, older married couples with children. I was impressed with Tom Hauser. He was formerly the Public Relations manager in Senator Percy's campaign in Illinois in 1966. It looks as though he will be in charge of most phases of Peace Corps and the staff in Washington all feel that he will give us outstanding leadership.

Our new staff doctor, Dave Iszard, arrived with the family in early June. He is settling in and you will be getting to know him as the year goes along. The new Deputy Director, Bill Berry, arrived a little earlier and has already started in with enthusiasm. He has taken special interest in the development of new programs. He is looking forward to seeing you in Ankara later in the summer.

All for now.

Included here is a translation of the interview with the [REDACTED]. This will help you be well-informed in case anyone hits you with this story.

### I redacted the PCV names above and deleted the body of the interview below leaving only the title.

The following is a direct translation of an article which appeared in ULUS on June 24, 1969:

ARE YOU SPIES? WE RECEIVED SPECIAL TRAINING IN TEXAS...WE ARE PREPARING A REPORT ON TURKEY...(Interview with a PCV) by Dayhan Conkçi...

MEMORANDUM

March 9, 1970

TO: All Volunteers  
FROM: Jack Corey  
SUBJECT: Threats Against Peace Corps

The following is a direct translation of a letter received Saturday, March 7:

"Mr. John Corey  
Director  
Peace Corps Turkey Office  
Ankara

The opposition of revolutionist forces against the Peace Corps Volunteers, who are the agents of American imperialism among us, will continue until all Peace Corps Volunteers leave our country. As the director of the American agents, you must well learn that our answer to Volunteers and their administrators, who might insist on not complying with our below mentioned wishes as soon as possible, will be quite severe and definite.

ALL PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEERS SHOULD IMMEDIATELY LEAVE OUR COUNTRY.

YOU SHOULD IMMEDIATELY CEASE ALL ACTIVITIES AND PROGRAMS.

THE PC/TURKEY OFFICE SHOULD BE CLOSED WITHIN THE SHORTEST PERIOD.

We would like to state that you have no other alternate than complying with these wishes within the shortest period. You will learn that cooperating with the Turkish Government in order to stay here, is not a solution, WHEN THE FISTS OF THE REVOLUTIONISTS BANG ON THE PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEERS' HEADS. You will be the only persons responsible for the incidents which might follow, should you not take immediate action upon this warning and delay to comply with our wishes. Neither the U. S., nor the cooperating American servants in our country have or will have the power to hinder or prevent our resistance.

LONG LIVE THE COMPLETELY FREE AND REALLY DEMOCRATIC TURKEY

MAY AMERICAN IMPERIALISM AND HER AGENTS PERISH

MAY THE PEACE CORPS PERISH

REVOLUTIONARY OPPOSITION COMMITTEE  
AGAINST THE PEACE CORPS"

I have brought this letter to the attention of the External Relations Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. I will be communicating further with you on the subject very shortly.

We have also received a rumor of threatened action against the Peace Corps office. We are treating this rumor very seriously, in view of recent developments--including the foregoing letter, last week's attack on the USIS building, and the posting of a Turkish police guard on this office over the weekend.

Until further notice, you are requested to stay away from the office except on essential business. When you visit the office, please proceed directly to the person you wish to see and do not linger around the porch or front hallway. The Volunteer lounge will be closed temporarily. Mail will be sent to home addresses, to avoid pick-up at the office.

I deeply appreciate the spirit of patience and coolness with which you are meeting this crisis period. It goes without saying that good communication is crucial to our success in dealing with the situation. I encourage each of you to be alert to new developments, rumored or otherwise, and to pass them on to us as promptly as possible.

4 July 1970  
ÖDTÜ  
Hesap Bilimleri Bölümü

Dear Dick,

I'm back at Orta Doğu for two whole months (15 June - 15 Sept less August when I'll be in Germany). The government crisis I wrote you about was resolved about 1 month after it occurred. Demirel managed to get a vote of confidence from the same parliament for exactly the same government.

In April 1970 some Turk teaching at Gazi Eğitim published a book saying all PCV's were CIA agents. There followed boycotts at Gazi and Hacettepe. Some volunteers were threatened; none were beaten. About 3 weeks after the book was published the Peace Corps decided to pull out.

Ankara has a whole new collection of street lights. It is now possible to cross Atatürk Bulvarı in relative safety. The Obası Pikiği has disappeared much to my dismay. I know almost no americans here. I'm working for Ercan on the student record system. Turnaround (twice a day) is atrocious.

Sincerely Yours

Dave