

MEMORANDUM

May 24, 1971

TO : All PCV's and Staff (Bolivian and USA)

FROM : Baumann
Carloe

SUBJECT: The End of the Peace Corps Operation in Bolivia

On Friday night May 21 the US Chargé d'Affairs was handed a note from the Bolivian Foreign Ministry that asked for the abrogation of the 1962 agreement between the government of the US and Bolivia.

You all know of the intense campaign against us that went on for the last few weeks. It was a classic example of the application of the philosophy that the ends justify the means, of a lie repeated long enough in print..... The press charges included: Mac Namarism, sterilization of campesino woman, dope addiction and peddling, long hair dirty PCV's, lack of cultural empathy, cultural imperialism, introduction of chewing gum coca cola alcoholism and other sundry sins.

The government's statement did not endorse any of the calumnious accusations, it was rather a philosophical statement to the effect that for Bolivia's national liberation our approaches, our "fragmented and disperse help" was not in accord with the socio economic realities of Bolivia. Additionally that V's not always understood the Bolivian concepts of national development and at times acted in a incoherent and even opposit manner to the desires of the revolutionary government.

Pursuant to the Agreement, its provisions remain in force for until 90 days after the date of this Notice. This means that all Peace Corps/Bolivia activities must be concluded, by August 21, 1971. I am confident that the GOB will assure an orderly and safe withdrawal throughout that 90-day period.

Every one of you, volunteers, Bolivian and U.S. staff alike, has every reason to be proud of your presence here. In every sense of the word, you represent the very best our country has to offer other nations which request our assistance. According to international law, we must and will respect the right of the Government of Bolivia

to terminate this agreement, whatever our personal reactions may be. I am sure all of us regret this necessity because we know, first-hand, the work we do and the campesinos we work with. Many close friendships will have to be terminated; many projects and relationships of great significance to Bolivians and to us will also have to be cancelled. We all entered Peace Corps with the understanding that things such as this might happen.

We write this letter with a certain sadness in our hearts, however as Gunnar Myrdal says for countries to develop they must break the status-quo equilibrium. Perhaps out of the upheaval, the near anarchy that our host country is going through something new and viable will emerge. Many of us want to do our own thing, why should not Bolivia, at least let them try. In a new era the assertion that the world is one, that we all are-Bolivians, North Americans - our brothers keepers united in a world fraternity might get the hearing and understanding it is due.

Some 20 Bolivian employees at every level have lost their jobs. Let's try to help them get relocated. Any ideas, suggestions would be appreciated.

At least we did not get nationalized.

On behalf of PC in general and PC/Bolivia in particular both of us want to say thank you for having been the good people that you have and for having maintained the faith that Volunteers in development can and do make a difference.

The following telegram was sent to PC/W on 5/24/71:

- "1. After PC/B's evacuation plan had been made known to you (PC/Washington) by telephone, i.e. orderly withdrawal over 90 days, terminating all volunteers by August 1, we have been instructed by the Ambassador to speed up the process. This based on Ambassador's understanding with PC and State Department in Washington that withdrawal be accomplished soon as as possible and his own assessment that volunteers should depart to avoid as much as possible exposure to incidents and personal danger following GOB's unilateral terminations of agreement under extremists pressure.
2. The following withdrawal plans calling for all PCV's to be out of Bolivia by June 11 are now in force:
 - (a) Those whose tours scheduled end in 1971 will be terminated unless extension of full year requested. Imperative that one-third readjustment checks be processed immediately for terminees. Checks should arrive here in first week of June.