

Office of Economic
Opportunity-Job Corps
Mr. W.P. Kelly, Director
Executive Office of the President
Washington, D.C. 20506

March 14, 1967

Dear Mr. Kelly:

Thank you very much for your letter of March 8, 1967 in which you ask for my reactions to our local Job Corp Center. It is my feeling that straight to the shoulder comments will be the most beneficial and what you desire. I'm afraid I must make a confession at the offset and that is, if you desire criticism, my letter will not be overly productive because I find very little to complain about.

Because I represent a Building Trades Union it is probably understandable that I should especially appreciate the significance of the construction of the physical facilities of course the additions. The construction work at the Fort Vannoy Center has been of great benefit to our community, both employing of local Building Tradesmen and supplying of materials by local Building Supply Companies. To cover all the points I would like to raise I'm afraid I shall not be able to elaborate to the extent I would like to, but I'm certain you will understand. The boys at the Center have given Grants Pass, Oregon citizens an opportunity to learn something of the colored race and I believe on the whole, they have learned.

I happen to play softball for one of the town teams and so I've had a first-hand view of the participation of the Job Corps Boys in our community and it has been gratifying to see the enjoyment and response on the part of both the boys and the towns people. I understand the Job Corpsmen participate by having a team involved in all sports with which the town has an organized league.

I'm aware of the practice of putting the boys in good physical condition when they arrive at the center, especially working on their teeth and I submit to you that this is the best money spent in the program because if the trainees don't feel well I don't see how you can expect them to progress satisfactorily.

I am aware of several good deeds that the Corpsmen have been involved in, one being the renovation of toys for the needy children at Christmas. The boys even donated some of their own money to purchase needed materials to repair the toys for the children in town. The boys have also done a great deal of work for the Girl Scout Camps and this is a direct benefit to the citizens of our community.

I don't think there is any question but what, considering the acrimony of a certain number of the citizens of Grants Pass at the beginning, the Job Corps Center has been an excellent neighbor. The boys have given the people in Grants Pass an opportunity to enjoy the true meaning of the holidays by being available to their homes. We had the pleasure of the company of two boys from the Center over Thanksgiving and by their being with us, it gave us the nicest feeling and I'm sure that the true test of being a good neighbor is to make people feel better than they possibly are.

In closing, I think the kindest wish I can make in your behalf is that all the many many people who work in the Job Corps Program are as dedicated, effective and just plain nice as Mr. James Stoop of the Fort Vannoy Job Corps Center.

Without his virtues, which I have partially attempted to enumerate above all, the good things I've been able to report to you would not be true.

Hoping this letter serves the purpose intended and congratulations on your appointment, I remain,

Sincerely,

Jerry Christeen
Jerry Christeen

CC:James Stoop
JC:dg