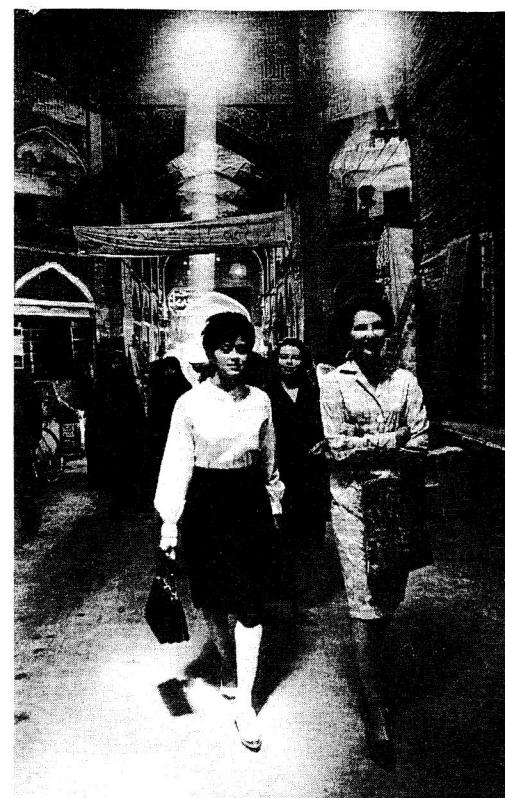




For want of a woodworking lathe, Volunteer Chuck Warsing (Saxton, Pa.) teaches woodworking on a metalworking lathe to young inmates of Isfahan work camp.



Doris Witriol (New York City), Dorothy Davidson (Gainesville, Ga.), Carol Posey (Jackson, Miss.) visit Isfahan bazaar.

IRAN

'We Are Glad You Have Come—We Need You'

By Jay Crook

When the latest two groups of Peace Corps Volunteers arrived at Mehrabad, Tehran's sleek, air-conditioned airport, and were whisked into the city on a well-lit divided highway, there were many expressions of astonishment and dismay. "Just what are we doing here?" was a question asked more than once.

The next morning, faced with 20th-century traffic snarls caused by Tehran's 200,000 motor vehicles, and seeing new buildings, supermarkets, and other evidences of prosperity, the Volunteer began to go through a different kind of culture shock: if Iran is like this, who needs us?

The answer might be given in Ardebil, 475 miles northwest of Tehran. When Volunteer English teachers Frank and Pat Vergata (New York City) first met one of their counterparts, Mr. Mohajeri, the Iranian said simply, "We are glad you have come. We need you very much."

Unfortunately, the oil-born wealth of Iran's economy has not spread to the vast majority of her people. For the villagers, who comprise two-thirds of Iran's 23 million people, 20th-century life has brought many discomfitures and dislocation but few amenities.

The answer to "who needs the Peace Corps?" could be found in wealthy

Tehran itself, even though it consumes half the country's electric power and contains half the literate population. Leslie Miller (New Rochelle, N.Y.), assigned to work in Tehran, was disappointed that she wouldn't be out in the field, where she felt she would be needed more. Then she went to South Tehran and visited the little school where she would be working. After a morning's look at the narrow alleys, mud walls, tattered clothes, poor health, and seeing the eager expectancy of the school children, she rushed into the Peace Corps office and demanded to know why everyone hadn't been assigned to work in Tehran.

Iran, like many other developing nations, has one foot planted squarely in the 20th century and the other somewhere back near the 13th. Leaders in and out of government are trying hard to bring Iran technologically into the present with a reworking of past social, moral, and aesthetic values. The physical remains of 3000 years and more of history confront the modern Iranian from the empty gateways of Persepolis, the grotto sculptures at Taq-i-Bustan, the gleaming tiles of Safavid Isfahan. They are reminders of a proud imperial past. Persians organized the first world-empire in history, five centuries before the birth of Christ. They worked out an admin-

istrative and communications system that forms the basis for many Western institutions.

The country was submerged by Arab conquest in the seventh century, and with the Arabs came Islam with its all-pervasive code of life. But a century later, Persians were dominating the intellectual and philosophical life of Islam. The Persians accepted Islam gradually and with increasing enthusiasm, adding to it something of the Persian historical experience. Reflecting the unique character of her people even today, Persian Islam differs in many points of faith and ritual from the bulk of other Muslims throughout the world.

During the 16th and 17th centuries, splendor and glory once again returned to Iran. Isfahan, the magnificently-adorned capital of the Safavid Dynasty, proudly took her name from "nesf-e-jahan"—half the world.

Today's Iran, after the vicissitudes of 19th-century colonial machination, is still a formidable land. Her area of 628,000 square miles is nearly as large as Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, and California combined. Her diverse geography contains the highest mountain between the Himalayas and the Atlantic Ocean (Mt. Demavend at 18,000 feet in the Elburz range) as well as a national breadbasket on the edge of the Caspian Sea at 75 feet below sea level. There are still immense deserts through which journeys are calculated by days instead of kilometers, yet the Caspian Sea coast gets more rain than any other area in the



By portrait of Shah, Director Sargent Shriver (right) talks to Parviz N. Khanlari, former Iran Minister of Education.

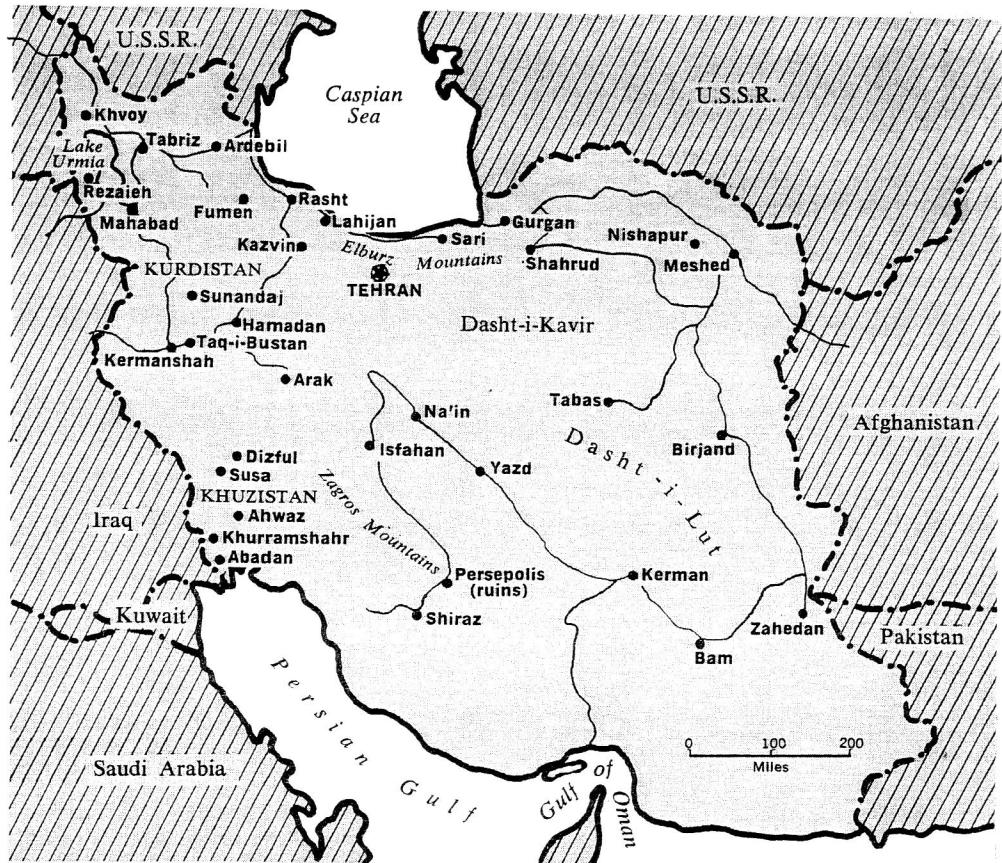
Near East. Although rivers and water are normally scarce, the Khuzistan plain is crucially water-logged.

Tremendous mineral wealth, in addition to oil, lies locked in the mountains, but a poor hinterland road system makes exploitation difficult. Oil, of course, is the lifeblood of modern Iran and earns most of its foreign exchange. Other exports include the famous Persian rugs, caviar, dried fruits, gums, hides, wool, and marble. Not as well-known are Iran's pistachio-nut exports, which are a top exchange earner. But for most Iranians the economy is subsistence, not commercial.

Communication Difficult

Iran's diverse geography has made communication difficult between different sections of the country. Under Reza Shah Pahlavi, the present ruler's father, a national transportation system of roads and railroads was started, emanating from Tehran. Since World War II this system has been greatly expanded under Reza Shah's son, Mohammed Reza Shah Pahlavi. But the task of welding Iran's peoples into one is a formidable one. Many Azerbaijani Turks, Lurs, Kurds, Qashquais, and Baluchis think of themselves as members of their own ethnic group first and Iranian citizens second. However, the unifying forces of education, economics, and growing international awareness are rapidly changing this.

Life in Iran today is exciting for those



of us who still possess a spark of the pioneering instincts of our American forefathers. Despite her great age, Iran's face is surprisingly young. With all her ancient monuments, the great majority of Iran's permanent structures have been built within the last two generations. Dams are harnessing and evening out her feast-or-famine water supply. Land is being returned to the men who till it. And Iran's own "Peace Corps," the *Sepah-e-Danesh* (Army of Knowledge) is bringing primary education to villages which cannot even yet be reached by letter sent through the postal system. The members of the Peace Corps working in Iran are also a factor in Iran's 20th-century pioneering.

Peace Corps efforts began in Iran when the first 44 Volunteers arrived in September, 1962. After orientation they went to several parts of Iran to work in agriculture, physical education, and English teaching. As was the case in most other first projects, there was hard experience to be gained—both by staff and Volunteers. This group finished in June of this year with a sense of general satisfaction—in spite of frustrations inherent in Peace Corps experience. There were the spectacular successes—Jack Huxtable's swimming pool at the Agricultural School at Rezaieh, for example. The pool is used by the public in addi-

tion to the school, mostly village boys who have had little opportunity for swimming in the scanty streams of western Azarbaijan. Jack designed and supervised the pool's construction. Today it is known as "Mr. Jack's pool."

In another area—the hot, once-fertile saline plains of Khuzistan—Iran I Volunteer John McKee (Mt. Pleasant, Mich.), oversaw the drainage and desalinization of 1250 acres of land belonging to the new Agricultural College at Ahwaz. At times he had 500 laborers working under his direction.

Achievements in the fields of English teaching and physical education are naturally less tangible, although one Volunteer, John Mullins (Griffin, Ga.), assigned to Isfahan's Agricultural Training School, so impressed Isfahan city officials that he was asked to coach what became a highly successful track team, defeating opponents in most of Iran's principal cities. But for most Volunteers teaching, then as now, the spectacular is the exception, and everyday routine the rule. And there were temporary setbacks and disappointments in plenty.

Leonard Passwater (Waynoka, Okla.) in Kerman was assigned to an agricultural-training school as a farm-mechanics teacher and was in charge of maintaining the school's equipment. It took him a full year of argument and struggle to

ON THE COVER—Near Shiraz in southwestern Iran are the ruins of Persepolis, summer capital of the ancient Persian Empire under Darius I, who ruled from 521-486 B.C. Persepolis flourished until destroyed by Greeks in about 330 B.C. Below, Volunteer Ann Menter (Roseville, Calif.) works with deaf children in Isfahan.

convince school authorities that his sparse shop equipment simply couldn't do the job in instruction or repair. The money had been budgeted but the supervisory staff didn't realize the need. But after a year of waiting and cajoling, the staff did become convinced. The equipment was bought; the Kerman shop became workable. But it took a year of Leonard's Peace Corps time just to get started.

These first Volunteers laid the foundations for the program's present expansion in the fields of agriculture and vocational education, just as teachers like Rene Smith (Annapolis, Md.), Dave Wangler (Buffalo, N.Y.), and Jerry Clinton (San Jose, Calif.) did in English.

A year after the arrival of Iran I came the seven members of Iran II. They have been assigned to teach in vocational schools in Tehran and Isfahan. Dick Mentzer (Costa Mesa, Calif.), in

About the Rep

Cleo Shook has been Peace Corps Representative in Iran since July of this year. He served from 1961 to 1963 as Programs Operations Officer for the Far East Regional Office of the Peace Corps, then left the agency to join the Ken R. White firm of consulting engineers in Denver, as vice president in charge of international operations.

A native of Glendale, Calif., he attended the California Institute of Technology in Pasadena from 1942-1945 in a war program sponsored by the Army Signal Corps. After service in the Far East as a communications officer, he was assigned in 1946 to Yenching University in Peiping to study Mandarin Chinese and economics; he also served as a part-time physics instructor at the university.

In 1948 he returned to the U.S. and worked as a communication engineer for the Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Company in Los Angeles. From 1953 to 1956 he served as director of the Afghan Institute of Technology in Kabul. (During former President Eisenhower's trip to Afghanistan, India, and Iran in 1959, Shook was the chief executive's personal consultant and interpreter.) In 1957, he became associate professor of industrial arts at New York State University College of Education at Oswego, then returned to Kabul in 1958 as deputy chief of the engineering division of the U.S. Agency for International Development program there, a position he held until joining the Peace Corps staff in 1961. He is married and has two children.



Isfahan, was responsible for developing the liaison to get surplus and discarded World War II Iranian army trucks for use in instruction at the vocational school. During the past summer he has also, with the help of Volunteers Charles Gilmore (Anderson, Ind.) and John Costello (Chelsea, Mass.), set up a shop at a new school for orphans sponsored by the Red Lion and Sun Society (Iran's equivalent of the Red Cross). As part of their work they also prepared the curriculum for the new school.

Iran III, 27 strong, followed in April of this year. Four are working in community development, five in agriculture, and eighteen teaching English.

Most of the 18 English teachers had summer programs in their schools, usually vacant during the vacation. In co-operation with the Ministry of Education and through the efforts of Gertrude Nye Dorry, English-program consultant to the Peace Corps in Iran, a summer schedule was organized in 11 cities.

Day camps featured spoken English instruction, handicrafts, and sports. More than 2000 boys and girls participated. The normal pattern was three three-week sessions at each site with a new set of students for each session. Many students, never having had such an opportunity before in their home towns, elected to repeat for a second and even a third session.

In September two more groups of Volunteers arrived—Iran IV, consisting of 72 English teachers plus a Volunteer secretary, and Iran V, with 53 men to work in agriculture, community development, and vocational education.

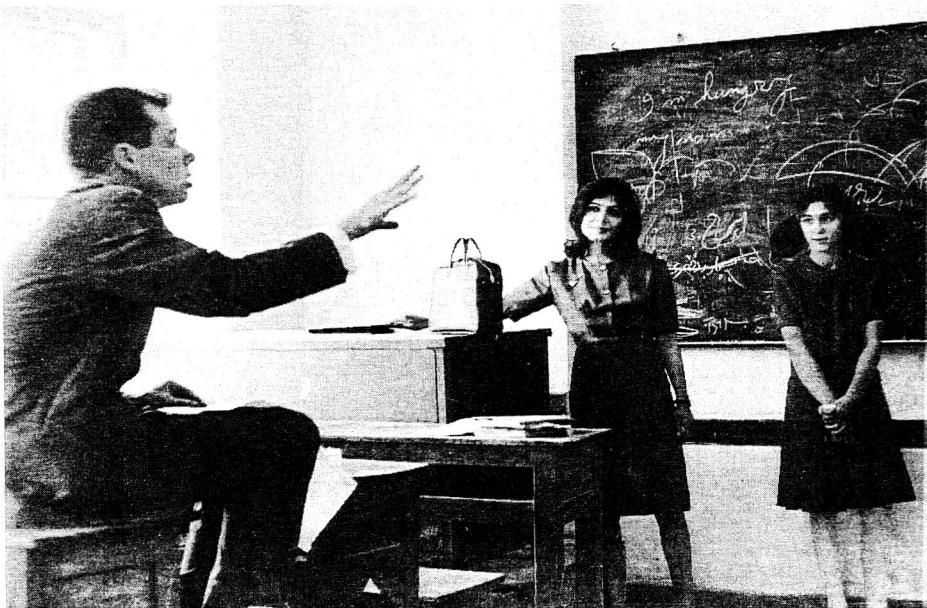
Iran's modernization has yet to go deep below the surface in most areas, even in most of Tehran itself. Outside of the modern sections of the largest cities, almost all women still wear the cloaklike *chador* when going outside

their home compound. The Iranian is still a fierce individualist and the levelling effects of Westernization have, perhaps unfortunately, done very little to curb this. As in other countries, women Volunteers find their social lives much restricted, especially outside Tehran. The average Iranian has a structure of ideas and beliefs about Americans built up by tabloids, films, literature, and unfortunate incidents which is difficult to shake. When an American Volunteer is accepted, his Iranian friends are likely to think he is exceptional and will confound all argument by saying, "But you are not like other Americans." Perhaps what he is saying, though for the wrong reasons, is valid.

Volunteers in Iran have to have fair to good linguistic ability in native tongues. English is little understood even by educated classes. In the past here, French predominated as the international language, and only since World War II has English come to supplant it. To further complicate matters, many Volunteers are assigned to areas where instead of Farsi (Persian) the native language is Turki, Kurdi, Luri, or Arabic; or to areas where the Farsi spoken is a widely-diverging dialect.

There are many rewards for the Volunteer in Iran; some of them articulated, some of them not. Iran I Volunteers departed amid a torrent of Iranian farewells, presents, and tears. And recently an Iranian English teacher submitted a report about his work on the summer program. He wrote: "I believe this is a good lesson to many teachers, that a young American . . . is always ready to live anywhere in the world in order to keep the peace . . . Many of these people (referring to Iranian friends) think it is impossible to leave their families and go out to serve the people . . . I have heard a lot of people remark, 'Now I have come

John Williams, a Volunteer teacher from New York City, directs a rehearsal of secondary-school students preparing an English playlet, which was presented at ceremonies marking the end of a Volunteer-sponsored summer-school camp in Hamadan.



to understand why the United States is such a progressive and rich country; and why it is the leader of peace in the world and why it is the pioneer in so many things.' They say that they have seen the reason with their eyes . . ."

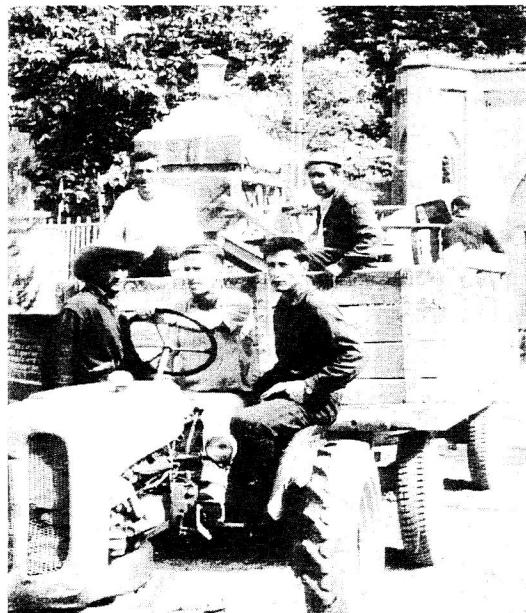
The Peace Corps in Iran isn't geared for the sensational and in spite of what we ourselves think we are doing, we probably aren't very unusual. But for each Volunteer and member of the staff alike, being a part of it is a unique personal adventure in living which few of us will ever have the opportunity to repeat.



Jay Crook has been a Field Officer in Iran since last April. He served a year as Associate Representative in East Pakistan, from September, 1962, until September, 1963, and was a staff officer in Washington before

going to Iran in April of this year. He is from Freeport N.Y., and worked there after high school for the Columbian Bronze Co., from 1949 to 1952. He saw two years of military duty, then went to work for a New York firm as a bookkeeper. He became interested in Islamic studies, and went to East Pakistan in 1956 to enroll in the University of Dacca. He studied classical Arabic and philosophy, and was granted a B.A. degree in 1960. He returned to his former New York employer, then participated in the training program for Pakistan Volunteers in 1961 at the University of Minnesota. He joined the Peace Corps staff the following year and went abroad with the Pakistan project. He is single.

Jack Huxtable (Richfield Springs, N.Y.), at wheel, oversaw building of "Mr. Jack's pool" at Rezaieh Agricultural School.



A Bridge for Makhlavan

By Jim Anderson

"But I can't tell the farmers to cut down their trees without a written slip from the forestry office in Fumen," protested the head of the Makhlavan village council. Volunteer Jim Whitaker (Naches, Wash.) and I looked at each other stoically and thought. "Well, we were warned in training that there would be some obstacles, weren't we? Time now, if ever, to be flexible."

The whole episode had started two weeks before when Volunteer John Seligman (Los Angeles) a community-development worker in Makhlavan, had asked Jim and me to help him with a bridge-building project in his village.

After many delays and a few false starts, using mostly village labor and many words of encouragement, the foundation for one of the supporting piers was finally dug. We were then ready to begin laying log cribbing in the hole to support the rocks that we eventually intended to use as stabilizing material. Here we ran into our first major difficulty. In Iran, in order to cut down a tree (besides poplars, which are a cash crop), a person must first have permission from the forestry office.

After a week of delay, John finally exacted a promise from a forestry official to come to Makhlavan and approve the cutting of the trees which the village farmers were donating. He gave us permission, and then added we could pick up the written approval the following morning at the forestry office.

So it was decided that John would go to Resht to get a bulldozer and materials, such as creosote and iron spikes, while

Jim and I would go to Makhlavan to help with the felling of the trees.

The following morning, hoping for the best, Jim and I walked to the stop where jeeps and busses left for Makhlavan. Jim planned to run over to the forestry office to pick up the permission slip. I was to delay the jeep momentarily and then we'd be on our way.

Twenty minutes elapsed. I became curious and the jeep driver became impatient since Jim had not yet returned. I decided to go to the forestry office to see what was wrong. The jeep driver promised not to leave without us. When I arrived at the office, Jim was talking with a staff assistant. He said the boss wouldn't be in the office until the following morning, and without his signature on the permission slip, it was invalid. We told the exasperated assistant that we had been promised the slip today. Finally, in an act of self-defense, the man told us that we could cut the trees that day, and get the permission slip the next morning.

To our dismay, when we returned to the jitney stand, the driver who had promised to wait for us had gone, and there wasn't another vehicle in sight.

By this time, we were showing signs of poor cultural adjustment. We should have calmly sat down and had a cup of tea, and perhaps a watermelon, meditating all the while on the lofty thoughts of the great Persian poets, Hafiz, Saadi, Omar Khayyam, and shortly a jeep would have appeared.

Instead we reacted in a less enlightened manner. We rushed back to our house to get our bicycles, forgetting the 12 kilometers of uphill, muddy road and the

Volunteer Teacher Kathleen Conroy (Allston, Mass.), a June, 1964, Boston University graduate in English literature who went abroad this September, conducts a class for students learning English at the Jorjani Nursing School in Meshed.

