By the time he was inaugurated as president, Kennedy’s Peace Corps had become one of the most talked-about aspects of his platform. University students circulated petitions and pledges to serve, and more than 25,000 letters arrived from prospective volunteers. Faced with such an overwhelming response, Kennedy placed his brother-in-law, Sargent Shriver, in charge of a special task force to create the new organization. Shriver and a brain trust of academics issued a report on the program in just a few weeks, and Kennedy officially established the Peace Corps by executive order on March 1, 1961. Work