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AMERICA IN THAILAND: END OF THE 60'S

BY MICHAEL SCHMUECKER

January 1st of this year marks a new decade as well as a new year for Thailand. The 60's are over now and the new decade may bring happiness or sadness to Thailand, but whatever it brings, it will certainly bring significant changes.

America's influence in Thailand grew tremendously during the 60's. At the same time that America became involved in Vietnam, she also became increasingly "visible" in Thailand.

As allies in the Vietnam war, and fellow members of SEATO, Thailand and the U.S. joined together in the 60's to fight the common enemy—communism. A few American soldiers and airmen came first, then as the war intensified and America plunged into it deeper and deeper, more Americans came to Thailand. Businessmen, government officials, professors and a host of others came into Thailand as economic, cultural and educational treaties were signed between the two allies. The "American presence" began to appear everywhere and 1969 might prove to be the high water mark for "America in Thailand".

The 70's will undoubtedly be a post-Vietnam decade and it is hard to predict whether American influence in Thailand will continue to be as strong in the 70's as it was in the 60's.

How did America appear in Thailand at the turn of the decade?

Esso's tiger is a good symbol of America's growing business presence here and it's got a lot to grin about. In 1968 the U.S. topped the list of foreign investors in Thailand for the first time in this field by pushing Japan into second place. There's still plenty of Hondas; it's just that they've got a tiger in their tank and they know it.

But America in Thailand at the beginning of the 70's is more than businessmen and dollars. Foundations like Rockefeller and Ford are here supporting projects in Education and other fields. Peace Corps volunteers are spread throughout Thailand in primary and secondary education; colleges and universities; malaria and leprosy work; poultry and swine production; community development; and other fields. USIS is in the counterinsurgency propaganda field in rural areas, and runs the modern AUA cultural and language center in Bangkok. American tourists are coming in increasing numbers. Fulbright and AFS programs exchange professors and students between Thailand and the U.S. American movies, like "To Sir With Love" and "Sound of Music", are extremely popular. Petchburi Street in Bangkok is filled with American GI's on R&R. USOM money equipment and personnel is flowing into the sensitive border areas of Thailand, such as the northeast which already has giant American army and air bases in towns like Korat and Udorn. The 46th US Special Forces (Green Berets) has a base in Lopburi. American hippies travel through Thailand on their way to Laos or Cambodia. American TV programs are broadcast over Thai TV channels. English is taught in all schools from the elementary level up. Protestant and Catholic missionaries from America are engaged in education and convert-making. Thai young people in Bangkok listen to the Beatles and Elvis Presley.

The American Presence in Thailand is a fantastic, multi-dimensional "happening", that is changing Thai society—for better or worse.

What are the effects of this American presence on Thailand? How does it help or hurt Thailand? What are its short and long term effects on Thai society?

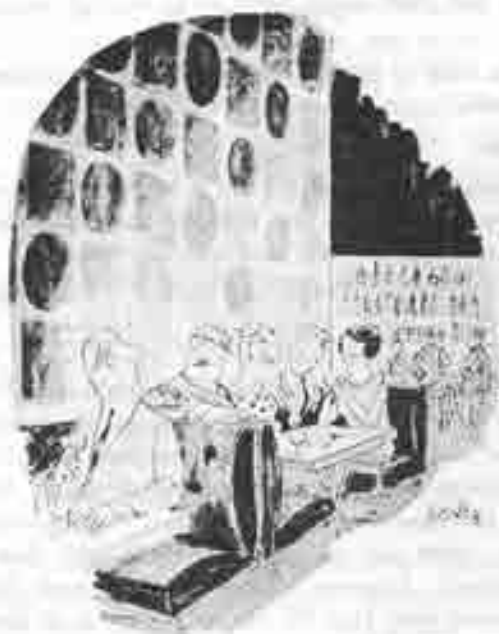
There are no easy answers to these questions but as 1969 gives way to the 70's, it might be interesting to pause and take a picture of "America in Thailand" as she appears to us at the turn of the decade.





AMERICA IN THAILAND

BUSINESS

IS THIS THAILAND,
OR AMERICA?

Colgate, Tampax, Max Factor, Revlon, Helen Curtis, Old Spice, Prell, V05. Familiar products Americans in New York and Akron, Ohio. They're also familiar products to many Thais. You can buy most of these in Prachinburi and Nong Khai as well as in Korat and Bangkok. From Doi Suthep in Chiangmai to Yala all over Thailand people drink Pepsi, 7Up, RC, Coke and Biraleys. The familiar red and yellow Kodak sign hangs above hundreds of doors in camera shops everywhere.

If you drive to Nakorn Pathom or Kanchanaburi you can fill up at the gasoline station of your choice. And if you prefer to "buy American", you can get your Esso, Caltex, or Shell.

In Bangkok you can sleep in the Dusit Thani (Western International Hotels), the Rama (Hilton), or the Siam (Intercontinental) if you want that American touch. In its "yellow pages" ad the Montien Hotel offers imported Simmons "beauty rest" mattresses and central air conditioning with individual "Honeywell Thermostat" controls. The cover photo on the Bangkok directory is courtesy of Kodak (Far East) Co. Ltd.

There's Eveready batteries for your flashlight, Rayovac batteries for your radio, Chiclets to chew, Kleenex for your nose, IBM computers for your business, Carnation for your baby, and all sorts of American air conditioning to help you beat the heat - Amana, Hot Point, Philco, RCA, Whirlpool, Westinghouse, Emerson, Crane. Remember you're still in Thailand. Then, there's Alcoa aluminum windows, Dutch Boy Paints, Johns-Manville building materials, Monsanto Agricultural Chemicals, Case, Michigan and Massey Ferguson construction equipment, Phelps Dodge cables and wires, Kohler gas engines, Singer refrigerators and sewing machines, Brunswick bowling balls, Ronson lighters, Winchester rifles, Sylvan flashbulbs, Timex watches, pills from Merck, Sharp or Dohme, and—if this is driving you crazy (We're only M in the Yellow Pages) you can be sure you have a friend in Bangkok at Chase Manhattan who will help you escape to Nepal. It's easy—grab a bite to eat at your Diner's Club Café, let Hertz put you in the driver's seat (or Avis), whip out to the airport with your Firestone tires singing away, and wing up, up and away on TWA. There's no Coke in Kathmandu.

However, America's main business rival in Asia—Japan—is also competing for the Thai baht and the presence is even more visible in many ways. The Japanese

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AMERICA IN THAILAND

U.S. Department of State. It is also the first one (there are six throughout the world) in a developing country. Look out, Japan!

Here Thailand and other Asian countries can get a look at American products on exhibit—Polaroid cameras, English textbooks, Burroughs business machines, John Deere tractors, etc.

The Trade Center has a commercial library, a motion picture theater, conference halls, indoor outdoor exhibit areas, and a complete workshop and warehouse floor. Offices of the commercial attache of the U.S. Embassy occupy the whole third floor.



American companies are beginning to invest heavily in Thailand. In 1968, America took the lead from Japan to top the list of foreign investors in Thailand for the first time, and more dollars are coming, according to the "Far Eastern Economic Review."

In their annual survey of "America in Asia" (July 3, 1969) they noted, "that Thailand's economic growth coupled with political stability is beginning to gain the confidence of many American investors because evident in the recent seminar in Bangkok jointly organized by American Management Association and the Board of Investment in Thailand. The main purpose of the seminar was to help a group of top American business and industrial leaders to take a new look at this country. The discussion....helped them to adjust their thinking to a set of new investment objectives in Thailand, now that the prospect of ending the war in Vietnam has become more encouraging. As a direct result of the seminar, a number of U.S. companies are already said to have decided to come to Thailand."

But since 1961 Thailand has suffered from a chronic trade deficit with the United States. Last year Thailand exported goods valued at U.S. \$89 million to the U.S. but imported about U.S. \$225 million. That left an unfavorable balance of U.S. \$135 million.

Thailand's major exports to the U.S. are tin, rubber, teak, kenaf and tapioca, but these are falling further and further behind mounting U.S. imports.

have virtually cornered the market in the sale of motorcycles, cars, trucks, buses and electrical and electronic gear like TV's, radios, tape recorders, fans and cameras.

If Esso signs are everywhere, so are Hondas. For every Singer icebox, there's a Sharp fan. For every Firestone tire, there's a Toyota Corona. In 1968 the United States only supplied 19 per cent of the one billion dollar plus Thai import market. Thailand's major imports from the United States (1968) were machinery and equipment for industry; tobacco; and air conditioners. Children and bowling balls make America "visible", but aren't a major factor in the Thai economy.

Unlike many countries in Latin America, where Peace Corps volunteers are embarrassed by a blatant U.S. "economic imperialism", Thailand is not a colony of American big business. Perhaps that is due more to dynamic Japanese competition than a reluctance on the part of General Motors to take over.

Not that the push isn't on. American business abroad has a friend in the American government abroad. Protecting, developing and expanding American business is the business of the American government.

In foreign countries, this is done through the local United States Embassy which has a commercial attache to support, protect and defend American business interests there.



A five story symbol of America's economic interest in Thailand is the U.S. Trade Center in Bangkok on New Road. It was opened seven years ago, about the time when America saw the need to protect Southeast Asia from Communist domination and for the free world (and free enterprise).

It is operated by the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of International Commerce, together with the



AMERICA IN THAILAND

But how do you get the Thai people to give up Pepsi, Fab, Revlon lipstick, and Carnation milk? Or Thai businesses to stick to the abacus and reject the temptation to buy a Burroughs adding machine? Or Thai construction companies to use more men in place of a Michigan grader? Especially when American business, American advertising techniques, and the American government are against you.



So American dollars and products continue to flow into Thailand at a greater and greater pace.

Several questions arise from the above discussion. I) The question of "culture"—or—"Pepsi-Cola might not be good for the teeth, but does it destroy Thai "culture"? II) The question of "economic imperialism"—or—"Is American business going to make a colony, a la Latin America, out of Thailand with its dollars some day?"

CULTURAL IMPERIALISM

The answer to the first question would seem to be a special type of "no". Whether Thais drink Coke or coconut milk out of a shell should only bother an anthropologist. One doesn't make you less of a Thai than the other. Likewise, a little Revlon lipstick looks good on any girl. Lipstick isn't particularly American, it started with the Egyptians. A Singer Sewing machine might be American but that doesn't mean it's un-Thai. Most American products aren't particularly "American". Rather, they're neutral, modern, functional, technical, international. (Though some critics claim this is the American culture). But like the rest of the world, Thailand is losing her culture not to America but to

that great international common-denominator grey culture called "modern" which stands out only in its revolting fat, ugly sameness. It's the psychologically barren landscape of cars, chrome, pretty packaging, artificial reality that has cut all modern men off from anything but a mediated, vicarious experience of life.

Chickens in plastic packages, drained of blood, artificial bloated and colored oranges, jumbo jets that destroy insulation of time and distance and the possibility of discovery, 24 hour cities that destroy stars and the beauty of night, machines that replace pain and sweat with effort, air conditioners that make Bangkok weather the same as New York or Tokyo or Paris or any other modern city anywhere else in the world—they are helping to eliminate the vital spark of uniqueness that makes Thailand something different from America, Japan, Australia or Germany. Thai culture isn't being destroyed, it's being slowly modified to death.

But while American products are changing the physical appearance of Thailand, the major threat to Thai "culture" comes from another direction. It's not what you're drinking, but it's what you're thinking. If you begin to think what Americans think.

The American threat to Thai culture comes not from products but from people—Americans in Thailand. Culture is an outlook on life, a set of social values, a frame of mind. Much of Thai uniqueness in relation to America comes from her different attitude towards

Bangkok stock exchange

Wednesday, December 10, 1969

High	Low	Name of Company	Par Value	Bid Price	Asked Price	Last Sale	Dividend
		Bangkaa Drying & Silo Co., Ltd.	1000	500	1000	803	
		Bangkok Investment Co., Ltd.	100	115	130	135	
140	120	Beri Jucker Co., Ltd.	100	105	120	120	
140	135	Commercial Credit Corp. (Thailand) Ltd.	100	140	150	140	
200	180	Construction Mater Mktg. Co., Ltd.	100	174	178	180	
115	114	"50% "	100	113	116	114	
200	174	Concrete Prod. & Aggr. Ltd.	100	173	173	174	

In this matter American soldiers, hippies, visitors, professors, P.C. Volunteers, USOM personnel and driving businessmen constitute the real threat to Thai culture, not Coke.

They are the ones who perform or omit the traditional acts of culture contrary to Thai custom such as girls in public, wearing long hair, encouraging Western



AMERICA IN THAILAND

"The picture is by no means perfect—Americans will inevitably be targets, sometimes deservedly, for national leftists and communists. There is still a lot of "tokenism" in training local personnel for real management responsibility. American businessmen are often grossly misinformed about local political and social conditions. The businessmen and their families also tend toward the 'compound' life, associating with one another and the elite of the country in which they live. Learning local languages and developing a 'feel' for the country is still too rare among the Americans. U.S. businessmen in Asia are often tolerated for what they bring rather than liked. No one objects to a mutually beneficial if exploitative relationship, but it would be better if it were expanded beyond the purely commercial."

But if American business (and other foreign companies) move in too heavily or too fast, there is a final factor they must consider—the possibility of a wave of Thai nationalistic feeling.

Recently the United Thai People's Party representative of Parliament from Nakhon Ratchasima broke away to start a Nationalist Party.



electricism and intellectual debate, concentrating on "getting the job done," extolling competition over co-operation, confrontation over compromise, immediate change over "gradualism", the individual over society, the new over the traditional.

ECONOMIC IMPERIALISM

Yet if American business is not the major threat to Thai culture, is it a major threat to Thai economic independence? Again, the answer would seem to be "no", for several reasons.

Unlike Latin America which historically grew up with American big business at the controls of many of their economies, Thailand has been skillful at controlling foreign economic influence. Free-wheeling American industrialists and "robber barons", such as the Rockefellers and others, set up great economic empires all over Latin America at the turn of the century. They took control of copper mines in Chile, banana plantations in Guatemala, sugar cane in Cuba, pineapples in Hawaii, steamship lines and businesses and with the support of U.S. troops and the U.S. government established themselves as a permanent historical fact. Not until recently has a wave of nationalism and discontent arisen to challenge American economic control of Latin America.

But American business didn't seriously turn its eyes to Thailand till after the Second World War. The great surge in American interest in Thailand came with the Vietnam War, in the beginning of the 60's. As Thailand's economy boomed with the war, the market expanded for American goods.

But luckily for Thailand, America didn't come into the field as declared winner. Japan was already here and she intends to stay. So American big business has strong competition and Thailand can only benefit by it.

If General Motors is against you, who can be with you? Toyota and Honda can. If RCA and General Electric want the market, who can stop them? Mitsubishi and Matsushita can. If Kodak attacks, Fuji fights back. American "free enterprise", which in Latin America wasn't exactly "free", has a chance to be tested in Thailand today. If America gets a market here, chances are they deserve it—it didn't come by default.

Also, American business abroad has been forced to change a lot since the "robber baron" days. It's now good business to have a conscience and a sense of responsibility. As The "Far Eastern Economic Review" noted recently, "American international companies are not quite so heavy handed as they used to be, perhaps having learned something from Latin America and Cuba in particular. They now start joint ventures with local businessmen, local capital, and local personnel for top management positions."

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Among the twelve points in his platform were these: (No. 3) "All occupations are reserved first for Thais who have earned the privilege by sacrificing their lives and belongings since the time their ancestors for protection of the realm. Foreigners will be permitted to conduct business only if their doing so does not supersede Thai preferred status, and only if those businesses conducted promote the welfare and progress of the country." (No. 4) "Thais shall have equal rights to participation in businesses conducted by foreigners." (Bangkok World)

The Liberal Party has also 'drafted' a bill to protect Thailand by seeing to it that the national economy remains under the control of the Thais. The bill restricts the types of employment open to foreigners and specify that in all joint business ventures between foreign companies and Thais the Thais must own 51% of the stock of the company.

These three factors, Japanese competition, a greater sense of responsibility on the part of American businesses here, and the possibility of stricter legislative controls on foreign economic muscle-flexing—should keep Thailand from becoming a colony of American big business in the future.

But even now someone at Ideal Toy Co. back in America is working up a master plan to introduce Santa Claus into Thailand in a big way. And when the Thais finally discern Christmas, they're doomed. Ask any American parent.

Rudolph the Red-nosed Reindeer



Santa comes to Thailand

REGIONAL REPORTS



CHIENGMAI

Hugh Leong

If you happen to stay at the comfortable Pree-watchee Hotel on your next stay in Chiangmai you may think it is an R&B town but the twenty-odd soldiers staying there are the only U.S. troops you'll see in the whole town area except for a very small contingent of Air Force men stationed at the Chiangmai Airport a few miles outside of the city. Their presence is hardly felt at all. The American presence that is felt comes from another source: teachers, doctors, and missionaries.

Mission schools have been established in Chiangmai since the 19th Century and are now accounted some of the best schools in Thailand. The missionaries doing the toughest work are up in the nearby hills with different tribes of the North. Even Peace Corps has a dozen Volunteers in Chiangmai.

The visitor to Chiangmai may find something very pleasant and surprising. The "Hey you, one-horned person" or "Farang, Farang" that resounds from almost everywhere in Bangkok will not be heard here. If the American population here continues at its present rate, that sound will probably never will be heard in Chiangmai.

UTTARADIT

Skip Mynar

"What we need," said the editor, "is a good story on the American presence in Uttaradit." "Right," said I, "I'll put a man right on that very day." We'll go through that city with a fine-tooth comb by God, we'll get your story. We'll uncover all the U.S. military-industrial complex ploys to make Uttaradit into a client-state. Why just the other day I saw a Ford motor car drive right through the middle of the town. Now you probably won't believe this, but the driver was drinking a bottle of Coca Cola. That's all I said, a bottle of American Coke! The only difference



AMERICA IN THAILAND

was that this one had some kind of funny writing on the bottle to make it look like it came from somewhere else.

"And there are other things, too. Like I saw a whole bunch of those Peace Corps darlings up there extolling the virtues of life in the U.S. and eating sandwiches, for crying out loud! They've got lots of other Americans up there, too. They try to hide behind funny names like USOM, ARD, and JUSMAG. But they were Americans, all right, there's just no mistaking them.

"I guess the people in Uttaradit haven't sold out completely yet, though. More people up there wear Seiko watches than Timex, and almost everyone has a Sony or a Sanyo radio. But I'll bet any day now RCA or Westinghouse will be bidding for the market. It's the same for motorcycles, too. There are a hell of a lot of Hondas and Suzukis and Yamahas but you hardly see any Harley Davidsons at all. Hey, couldn't we do a story on the Japanese presence in Uttaradit instead?"

LOEI

Terrall Otis

Among Volunteers there is a constant dialogue concerning our involvement in Thailand. A diverse bunch, we are here for a great variety of reasons, and not all of them are by any means altruistic. Still there is on the part of most Volunteers a desire to help the Thai

as well as to get to know him. Generally it is agreed that this takes place in two main areas: the "cross cultural experience" in which each national gets to know the other's way of life and thinking, and the actual job, work and skills which the PCV brings to contribute to Thailand's physical growth and development. Peace Corps slang reduces these areas to the "people or culture-oriented" and "job-oriented" aspects of the Volunteer's interest. Presumably a good PC "experience" will include two years in Thailand where these factors are well

balanced. The Volunteer will contribute his small share to the changes in Thailand, and both the Thai he meets and he himself, will learn and grow. It is possible to attain, but the average Volunteer confronts a number of difficulties.

Most Volunteers arrive in Thailand with no work experience. They are college educated, briefly

trained by a three-month PC program, and they arrive in Thailand babbling like a first-grade illiterate. Both wise Thai and wise PCVs will recognize the immediate limitations inherent in this situation. In a sense the next two years represent various efforts to overcome these initial liabilities. The intent on both sides is good; the challenge is to make good use of what is actually available. Most Volunteers report that they have benefited much more from their time in the country than the Thais have, and I suspect this is true. On the other hand there is a good possibility that the PCV's new knowledge may repay the Thai at some time in the future, perhaps when he begins to explain his experiences to friends in the States, or enters government service with a better understanding of both countries' needs.

I've been in the Peace Corps for a year now: three months in training and nine on the job. I am acting as a Thai government official in a large highly bureaucratic organization attempting to eradicate malaria in Thailand. Well, let's get something straight here; we all know that eradication has failed and the odds are against it. The present program is one of malaria control and will remain a control program in the foreseeable future. This is tacitly, if not officially, recognized. This was one of my first big disappointments. I found

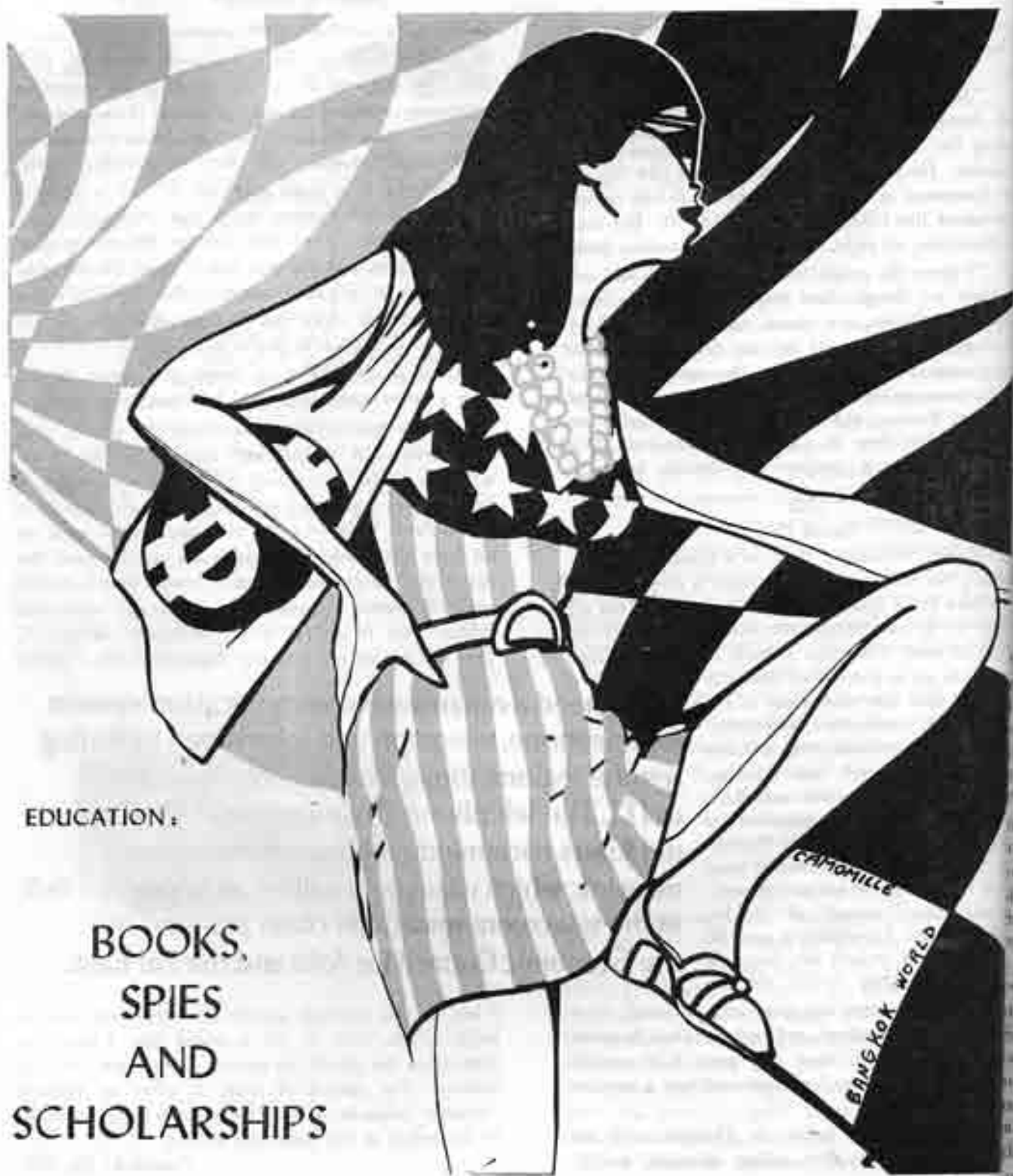
If you need a microwave communication system for telephone, telegraph and television—including remote regions throughout a country—come to ITT. The Telephone Organization of Thailand did for its nationwide telecommunications network, which ultimately will be an important link in the telecommunications chain planned by the Economic Council for Asia and the Far East.

I was to pile sandbags against the flood, and not to build a dam. Still, it was a needed job. I began to learn about the job of the malaria worker, and I'm still learning. The amount of time it takes to train a Volunteer before he becomes useful is in poor proportion to the length of his productive service.

(Continued Pg. 109)



AMERICA IN THAILAND



EDUCATION:

BOOKS,
SPIES
AND
SCHOLARSHIPS



AMERICA IN THAILAND

boxes with fire and sparks crackling like an electrical storm.

Just then the mad scientist races into the room, dragging behind him Presidents Eisenhower, Kennedy, Johnson, and Nixon. As they burst through the door the monster slowly raises its right hand up to the ceiling. Then, in a deep, rumbling voice, they hear the monster say:

"I pledge allegiance to the United States of America..."

The mad scientist turns and smiles at the presidents. "See, he loves us."

With that I wake up with a start in my bed and realize it was all just a bad nightmare.

Of all the influences on Thailand due to the "American Presence", perhaps none is more important than the US influence on the Thai educational system. Through the Peace Corps, Fulbright foundation grants, East-West Center and SEATO Scholarships, cooperative programs between schools like Indiana U. and Pansamut College, American Field Service Exchanges, and USIS run AUA libraries, America has a chance to influence the minds of many Thai people.

Ideally, education in the American conception should be apolitical, value-free, and devoid of propaganda. But in fact, both in the US and in US education programs exported abroad, both political and cultural propaganda is inevitably mixed in with the education. The presence or absence of books in a USIS-run library, the choice of words in a textbook, the set of qualifications on a scholarship, the choice of teachers for an exchange program, USIA's choice of cultural temples to represent the US abroad—all of these factors have political and cultural bias in them.

The amount of bias in any component might run a scale from a USIS "educational packet" of propaganda posters and comic book to a Fulbright grant.



From Dave Conkett...

"DC" or "DZ." Current hums out of the machine near the monster's head and flows through the black wires that snake along the floor and up to the close-cropped scalp. Each sensor, plugged into the brain, has a name on it. The monster continues to hum—"DZ, I'm so DZ." One electrode says "Fulbright", another, "Ford", a third, "Rockefeller". Some are just labeled with mysterious initials, USIS, AMA, AFS, VOA. Over his right ear is an electrode with no letters on it—it has what looks like two hands shaking each other. Back at the base of his skull is one with Indiana U. and one with Wayne State U. and another with P.C. on it. The scalp is covered with them.

A boom of thunder shakes the house. The rain falls even harder on the roof and windows. The monster sees, the scientist frowns and adjusts the current. Suddenly the monster jerks upright. The scientist shrinks back against the wall as the figure rises on one elbow and slowly opens his mouth to speak. The scientist bolts and flies across the room and down the stone stairs, the tails of his long white coat trailing behind like a ghost. The monster shakes off the last restraining bonds and rises up on the table ripping wires out of their



...an Apollo 11



AMERICA IN THAILAND

American involvement in the Thai educational and cultural scene probably resembles a Dr. Jeckyl-Mr. Hyde scenario to many Thais. Americans are torn between a Puritan sense of honesty and a desire to make America a fairy tale land of peace, progress and prosperity.

In some programs, such as those involving AUA exchange students, and Fulbright grantees, the Thai student can see America as she really is and make his own judgment of her. He can read U.S. newspapers that criticize aspects of American life as well as extoll the good. He can see slums and riots, if he is at all aware, as well as big cars, tall buildings, and neat green lawns.

His stay-at-home counterpart is in a different situation. Other than personal acquaintance with an American—Peace Corps, visiting professor, GI, or AID—he has few avenues of information if he is interested in knowing more about America. He has magazines like "Newsweek" and "Time", relatively biased, and expensive, even if he has reached the level of English proficiency needed to read it. He has the Thai press—newspapers and magazines—which, except for a few specialist journals, do not cover America and American problems in any great depth because of certain problems. He has American movies, which are censored for their political and social content if they are too controversial. He has American TV shows such as "The Monkees", "Beverly Hillbillies", "Mother-in-Law", and "The Flying Nun". Finally, he has USIS, whose job is "Telling America's Story to the World".

USIS Thailand offers him, in English and Thai, slick, lowkey magazines such as "Horizons", and exhibits, lectures and films at its impressive multi-story AUA Center in Bangkok. It also shows free films in the *changwads*—mixing entertainment and propaganda. Its libraries are stocked with American magazines and a careful selection of books dealing with America.

It does a good job of telling "America's Story to Thailand"—or better yet, part of America's story to Thailand. Its prime job is to compete against communists and like any other propaganda agency it tends to gloss the good and whitewash or ignore completely the bad about America. As a result, it works not for an accurate picture of America but an appealing one.

It would be interesting for someone to make a comparative study of USIS coverage of two "American incidents"—the Apollo 11 moon shot and the "Pineapple massacre".

In most instances, USIS does not publish or disseminate falsehoods. But the "propaganda" element in its refusal to tell all the truth. If USIS were a witness in a court room, she would be perjured if she had to swear to tell "the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth". Like a modern Orwell Ministry of Information, and her opponents such as TASS, Radio Hanoi and Voice of Peking, deal in mismanagement, slanting and troling of the truth. They don't lie—they just don't tell the truth.

Recently, USIS' method of selecting and censoring books for overseas use in such as Thailand was exposed. "Time", and "Newsweek" had a list of some 100 banned books and USIS' explanation of why they were proscribed. Some of the whose books were on the blacklist were: John S.

Stewart Alsop, Henry Miller, James Baldwin, Harrington, J. K. Galbraith, Edwin Reischauer, books by the Editors of *Fortune Magazine*, Editors of the Foreign Policy Association.

The new head of USIS, Frank Shakespeare, Nixon's successful television campaign in 1968, the process became the villain of the satirical "The Selling of the President, 1968".



Americans welcome Vice-President Agnew

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AMERICA IN THAILAND

Recently, the Foreign Relations Committee of the US Senate published a "Diary of a Trip to Asia: the Peace Corps and the Fulbright Program", written by one of its staff members who traveled through Southeast Asia on Fulbright business. In it were some interesting comments on the relationship of the Fulbright and other educational exchange programs to USIS, and some thoughts on education and propaganda.

"I am thinking, more and more, that it might be desirable to reconstruct educational exchange by separating it from information and propaganda, from cultural exchanges, leadership visits, and commercial ventures such as expositions. This might conceivably be accomplished by removing the program, (Fulbright) entirely, or in some degree, from USIS and State Department control, perhaps putting it under the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, or under some kind of autonomous administering corporation. The problem is to create a hospitable environment for educational exchange, an environment in which it will be separated from political purposes and conducted as a significant and autonomous foreign activity.

By whatever means it might be accomplished, it is of great importance to separate educational from propaganda activities." Later on, he writes.

"Anyone with the slightest acquaintance with USIA knows that the word 'information' in its title, in so far as the word implies a disinterested concern for truth, is inaccurately used. Without going into the question of the value or necessity of having a propaganda arm of American foreign policy, I think there should be no great difficulty—although there obviously is—in differentiating 'information,' which connotes an attempt to learn the truth about something regardless of whether that truth is politically convenient, with 'propaganda,' which aims not at accurate but at favorable perceptions from the viewpoint of the propagandist. Propaganda aims not at truth but

at a political objective, the cultivation of certain attitudes which may or may not reflect truth.

Propaganda is not only different from education, it is antithetical to it. When the two are identified, it is at the cost of corrupting education. In the context of American foreign policy, propaganda is one of the means by which the traditional game of power politics is played. Education, if it is to be education, purports to "change the nature of that game," "to civilize and humanize it." Like the Peace Corps, it absolutely cannot be treated as an operating tool of foreign policy without being corrupted and destroyed."



School girls turn out for the Apollo astronaut

With the reduction of the budget for the Fulbright program overseas, the Fulbright Commission in Iran, as in other places, was reluctantly considering moving its offices out of its own separate building into free space in USIS or the Embassy. The writer viewed this possibility with great alarm:

"This would be most unfortunate, in the view of those concerned and in my view, too, amounting as it would to the taking of the educational program into the information program's camp. This of course is appealing to USIS, whose propaganda activities might be expected to gain something resembling credibility through as-



AMERICA IN THAILAND

sociation with educational and cultural exchange programs. For the latter, of course, the association, as I have already noted several times, is pure poison.

The Fulbright program ought, really, like the Peace Corps, to be separated entirely from USIS and the entire political establishment. As things stand, the Cultural Affairs Officer in each country is a USIA officer, subordinate to the Public Affairs Officer. The CAO's salary is paid partly by the Department of State and he acts as the field executor of CU-Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs--policy. His responsibility, however, is to USIS and, immediately, to the PAO. His supervision and opportunities for advancement depend, therefore, not on the agency which makes educational and cultural policy but on the propaganda agency.

This, of course, reduces the educational and cultural programs to a subordinate role in which the exceedingly important distinction between education and propaganda is at the mercy of the propagandists, whose attitude, so far as I have seen it, was summarily expressed by the USIS officer I met in India who commented to the effect: "What's the difference? Those Fulbright people don't seem to realize that the money all comes from the same place".

Yet the danger is not only one of education being linked with propaganda, but there is a further danger, which though remote, must be considered: groups such as the Fulbright Commission and the Peace Corps which have contacts with USIS in Thailand.

(Continued Pg. 11)



Two Gilda students take a ceremonial oath at the ceremony before the arrival of Gilda-Thompson. The student carrying the US flag and the student holding the Thai flag are both wearing a traditional Thai garment. The student holding the Thai flag is wearing a traditional Thai garment. The student holding the Thai flag is wearing a traditional Thai garment.

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FOREIGN AID:



In September 1950 Thailand and the U.S. signed a joint Economic and Technical cooperation agreement, and in the 16 years since then, Thailand has received almost a half billion dollars in U.S. economic assistance.

Where does the money go? In what form is the money given to Thailand? Most of the money is given in the form of grants, a "gift" with strings attached. The rest is in loans which must be paid back some day.

U.S. ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO THAILAND - 1949 THROUGH 1968

	(millions of \$ U.S.)						
Fiscal years:	1949-52	1953-57	1958	1959	1960	1961	1962
Grants:	16.1	109.1	24.0	24.1	23.8	24.2	24.7
Loans:	-	20.0	1.8	20.8	-	-	11.1
Total:	16.1	129.1	25.8	44.9	23.8	24.2	35.8
Fiscal years:	1963	1964	1965	1966	1967	1968	
Grants:	15.5	12.7	19.0	43.3	49.8	46.7	
Loans:	-	-	-	-	3.5	-	
Total:	15.5	12.7	19.0	42.3	53.3	47.7	

TOTAL GRANTS: \$433.0 TOTAL LOANS: \$57.2 OVERALL TOTAL, 1949-68: \$490.2

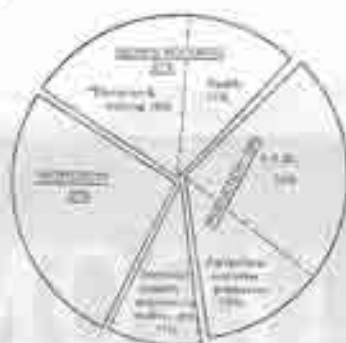
BANGKOK WORLD SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT 4 JULY 1969.

In 1969, according to the Bangkok Post (4 February, 1970), Thailand received \$35.5 million in U.S. economic assistance. In 1970, according to the same report, Thailand is expected to receive approximately \$40 million more in U.S. economic assistance.

During the 60's, the "Vietnam War Decade" Thailand and Vietnam became locked together like two jigsaw puzzle pieces. In the eyes of American diplomats and military brass, Thailand could help the U.S. in its war in Vietnam, and the U.S. could help Thailand in its fight with the growing communist insurgency in the North East. As our ally during the past decade, Thailand received \$309 million in U.S. economic assistance. The U.S. received political and military support in her fight in South East Asia and the use of Thailand as a base for carrying on the bombing of North Vietnam. Both Thailand and the U.S. benefited greatly from the alliance.

American aid administered through USOM has, in the last half of the 60's, focused heavily on the North East, and mainly in the areas of rural security, i.e. the fight against communist terrorists and raising rural incomes and production. In fiscal 1968, for example, the money was spent like this:

Education and training includes personnel training in other projects



FROM THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE, ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO THAILAND, 1968. ALLOCATED IN 1968-1969: 10.7, 10.7, 13, 13, 15, 23.

But what does "protection" mean? or the term "Human Resources" or "Production"? Where did \$46 million go?

"Protection"

Protection means 2000 radio sets for rapid communication between villages and police stations. It means construction and manning of rural police stations. It means money to train new recruits for the Thai National Police Department. It also means jeeps and even helicopters. U.S. aid here: \$13 million U.S. (1968)

"Production"

Production means over 1000 kilometres of all-weather roads since 1965. It means more than 200 village projects: small dams, ponds, village streets, land clearings for temples and schools. It means projects to raise incentives, incomes and improve security by providing better access—police to villages and villages to police. It means credit marketing organisations for farmers. It means heavy construction equipment and schools, like the training centre Sakol Nakorn to give on the job training to maintenance technicians. The name of the programme: Accelerated Rural Development (A.R.D.). U.S. aid here: \$10.7 million U.S. (1968)

U.S. aid and technical assistance also is involved in other programmes: the National Security Command's 9th Development Units, the Ministry of Agriculture's programmes for livestock and fisheries, the Ministry of Development Soil, Water and Irrigation projects and the North East Economic Development Committee's (NEED) Systematic Plan of Economic Requirements in the North East.

"Human Resources"

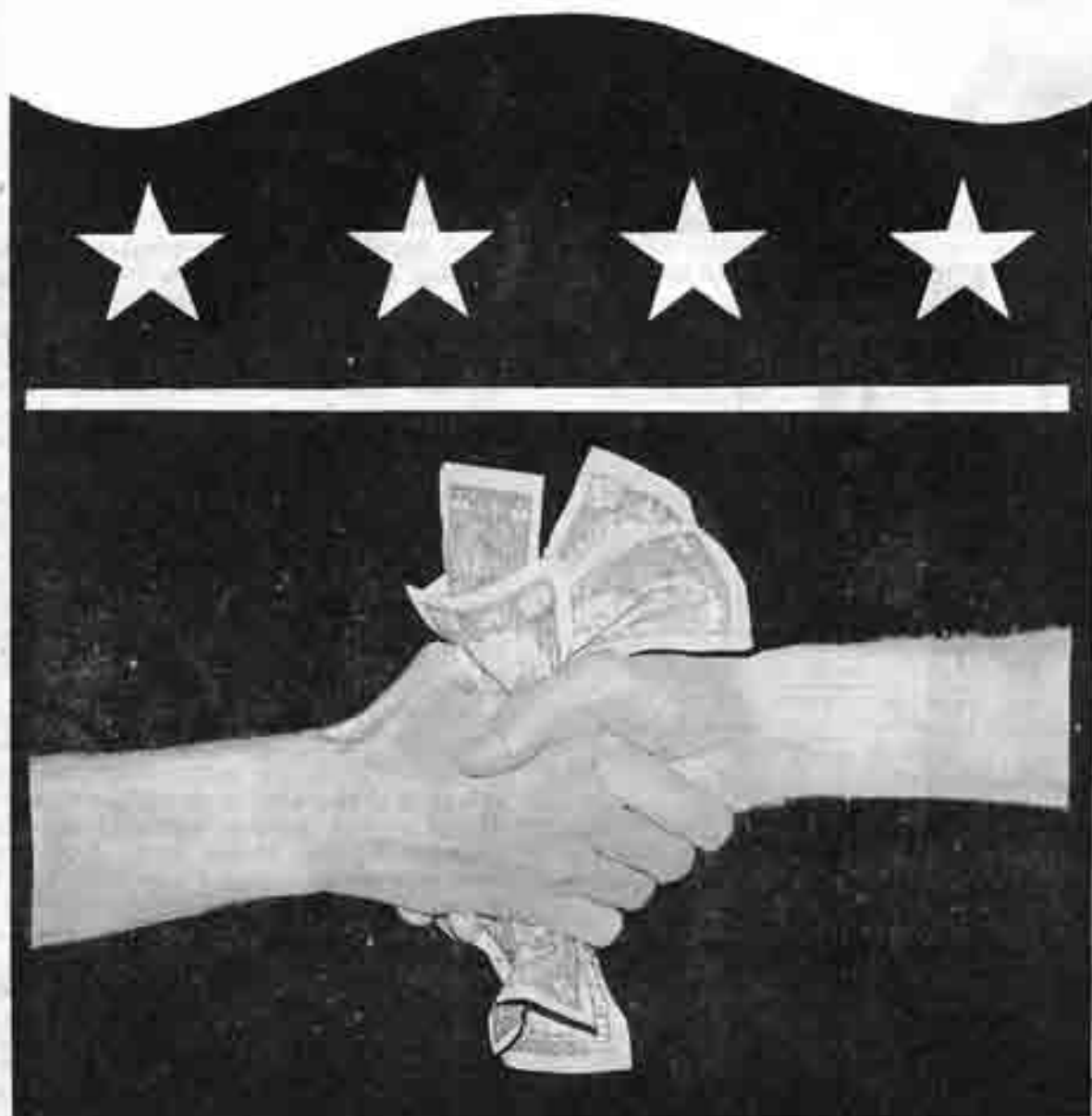
Human resources means rural education and rural health. The U.S. is supplying equipment and training aids for Ministry of Education's Mobile Trades—Training Units (MTTU). In 1968, eighteen units trained over 11,000 people. They offer courses in radio repair, auto mechanics, welding, accounting, hairdressing and other basic skills. USOM also helps the ministry programme to provide more textbooks to rural schools and improve effectiveness secondary schools in the provinces.

USOM supports the Ministry of Public Health's malaria eradication programme; it assists village leader training for the Ministry of Interior's community development programme. It supports mobile medical teams through ARD projects to train rural health workers.

But in all of these areas, U.S. assistance represents only a small portion of the total effort being carried forward by the Royal Thai Government.

The new decade, at the start, promises to be a continuation of the last one. In 1970, according to the Bangkok despatch mentioned above, ARD will again get the lion's share of the estimated 40 million; while the public programme of the Police Department will have to do with only 3 million dollars.

But over the last ten years U.S. foreign aid has steadily decreased, and as the Vietnam war grinds to a hopefully sometime in this decade, the U.S. pattern and level of aid to Thailand could change rapidly in the 70s.



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AMERICA IN THAILAND

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WORLD OF FASHION



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MOVIES:

HOLLYWOOD EAST

By Monn Melanson
Susie Becker

LIDO



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Source: *U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Reports, 1990*.

© 2004 Blackwell Publishing Ltd, *Journal of Internal Medicine* 255: 103–110

Year	Number of cases	Rate per 100,000	Rate per 100,000 (95% CI)
1990	1,000	1.0	0.8-1.2
1991	1,100	1.1	0.9-1.3
1992	1,200	1.2	1.0-1.4
1993	1,300	1.3	1.1-1.5
1994	1,400	1.4	1.2-1.6
1995	1,500	1.5	1.3-1.7
1996	1,600	1.6	1.4-1.8
1997	1,700	1.7	1.5-1.9
1998	1,800	1.8	1.6-2.0
1999	1,900	1.9	1.7-2.1
2000	2,000	2.0	1.8-2.2
2001	2,100	2.1	1.9-2.3
2002	2,200	2.2	2.0-2.4
2003	2,300	2.3	2.1-2.5
2004	2,400	2.4	2.2-2.6
2005	2,500	2.5	2.3-2.7
2006	2,600	2.6	2.4-2.8
2007	2,700	2.7	2.5-2.9
2008	2,800	2.8	2.6-3.0
2009	2,900	2.9	2.7-3.1
2010	3,000	3.0	2.8-3.2
2011	3,100	3.1	2.9-3.3
2012	3,200	3.2	3.0-3.4
2013	3,300	3.3	3.1-3.5
2014	3,400	3.4	3.2-3.6
2015	3,500	3.5	3.3-3.7
2016	3,600	3.6	3.4-3.8
2017	3,700	3.7	3.5-3.9
2018	3,800	3.8	3.6-4.0
2019	3,900	3.9	3.7-4.1
2020	4,000	4.0	3.8-4.2

It's the weekend in Bangkok and Thais are enjoying one of their favorite "thlows"—going to the movies. What movies do Thais like? What do they think of American films? What effects do films have on Thai culture and society? These are some of the questions we recently asked a Thai government official in the Department of Public Welfare, a Thai newspaper reporter, and 176 M.S. students from ten suburban Bangkok schools.

The government official felt that different kinds of films appealed to different age groups. Seven- and thirteen-year-olds, he thought, liked cowboy movies. Thirteen to fifteen-year-olds like musicals, and those from the ages of fifteen to thirty like real-life stories and adventure films. After thirty, he concluded, they like detective, true-life and war films. He said such films are good because, "The violence is real life and they excite people to do good things for their country."

The M.S. students generally supported official's opinions. The twelve and thirteen-year M.S. 1 students, liked cowboy and war movies. M.S. 5 student, however, expressed opinion that "The bad is about cowboy movies because they shoot with the other (to be) free." She also felt sex and murder should be censored.

M.S. 2 students voted overwhelmingly in favor of musicals. Students of all ages replied that "To Sir With Love," "The Sound of Music," or "West Side Story" was their favorite film. "Oliver" also received many votes. Many female volunteers probably wish "To Sir With Love" had been banned from Thailand because when students give their volunteer teacher anything they usually say "To sir with love." Many waitress waitresses often also call foreign women "Sir," as in film the word was translated as "achurn." The official noted that musicals rarely have to be censored.

The older male students, those in M.S. 4 and above, showed a preference for spy and detective material, though most still liked love stories and romances.

Some students thought American movies especially useful because they were able to pick up language, customs and history of America by straight instruction. A few of the boys thought scientific films were particularly helpful.

Although a few students unconditionally reject American films are good, most of the students hold a middle point of view. Some felt that American movies also have a bad influence on Thais, the young, uneducated in particular. The Thai official had a similar opinion, with which the reporter could agree. The People often might try to imitate what they see in American movies.



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ngly in favor but "To Sir West Side also received hly wish "To and because her anything y writers and Sir, as in the rn. The Thai to be censored. M.S. 4 and 5 ective movies, nicals the best movies were le to pick up America that boys though helpful

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Quite a few expressed the fear that the uneducated get ideas to steal, rob and kill from movies. As one M.S. 5 student wrote about American films, "It is good for thief but it is bad for good people."

The students and Thai official were concerned with Thai girls and boys copying the clothes they saw in the movies. Most thought mini-skirts and long hair are impolite, and anti-hippie attitudes prevailed. They also were negative in general concerning American dancing.

The Thai official used Japan as an example of what can happen to an Asian nation that becomes Westernized. He thinks traditional Japanese culture is dying rapidly because the youth have adopted too much too fast from the West, particularly America. Young Japanese get bad ideas like "wearing tight pants and long hair" from the movies and he does not want Thai youth to look like hippies. He cited the student riots in Japan to illustrate how Asian youth are affected by American ideals. The official does not want to see Thai students rioting. One student summed up his views by saying, "Thais (stupid) try to make themselves like the foreigners. That I think is not a good thing to do."

Harry Roinelek,

Bangkok Post Movie Critic:
(Interview-December 1969)

"I am completely against all censorship but I can understand a certain amount of censorship on political grounds. Whether censorship is valid isn't the point. The fact is that Thailand is in a sensitive political position in Southeast Asia now. She can't allow pro-communist films to be shown here."

Sex in movies was another topic Thais liked to pick out on. "Many boys when they saw American movies, they remembered a bad thing," wrote one M.S. 3 student. "Love should be censored." "Sex should be censored," were typical comments. One girl wrote that talking love-making in a movies is "a risk for children Thai."

"Reviewing cannot be an objective process."

When the picture "Justine," played a few weeks ago, the film had been censored. In Thailand, films are either banned entirely and are not rated for a particular audience as in the American. The students who expressed their feelings about censorship said it was necessary and good. One student stated that "It is good to be movie and people who see it, that the movie is been censored already." Only one student wrote

that she didn't know what should be censored, and another wrote, "I think it is not necessary to censor when we paid money for it we should see everything in it."

The Thai newspaper reporter discussed how movie censorship is handled in Thailand. Before a movie comes into Thailand an entry permit must be obtained. After the tax has been paid on the film it is impounded at the censorship department section of the Department of Police. From there it is sent to the Bangkok Theatre where it will be shown in a special viewing room to the Censorship Board. The Censorship Board is composed of people from various occupational backgrounds, and the members are selected from the Department of Education, Law, and Religion. Psychologists and persons from journalism are also selected. Both men and women are chosen. These people do not have to see every film personally, but can select aides from their departments or of the same occupation to see the films. Everyone in a group often takes turns seeing the films. Being a member of the Board as either a group-leader or assistant is only a part-time activity.

Concerning the censorship board: "The whole point of the censorship board is that they are so erratic—there are no ground rules. . . They might have a check list but judging from the end results it's hard to tell. The results are so erratic."

After the film is shown in the theatre's small viewing room, the Board discusses it and votes on the film according to a rating system. They can decide to accept the entire film, to cut something from it, or to ban it entirely. The last word lies with a higher committee. A movie distributor or theatre can appeal to this committee if they want to contest the Board's decision if a film is banned. Usually a decision to cut a film is not appealed.

Anyone can see any film shown in Thailand. Although some theatres exhibit posters stating a film is not suitable for children under seventeen years, they never make anyone prove his age. For this reason the Board tends to be strict. The reporter felt the censors "Must see the film as kids."

The censors use various criteria to judge a film. If a film has a nude scene it may or may not be cut. It is harmful to young people if too much sex is shown, if drugs are used, and the Board may well censor it. There are many shades of nudity. If the person is still and is partially covered it does not have to be cut. If the person moves, it may get cut. If two nudes are



AMERICA IN THAILAND

shown together it is cut. A female nude alone from the front or the back is not too bad. In the film "MacKenna's Gold," Omar Sharif was nude and this was approved as he was assuming "a classic pose." The reporter said that "Irm La Dancer" was seen as a comedy and was not lanned but only cut.

Bernard Trink, the entertainment editor of the **Bangkok World** dismissed the cuts made in the picture "Justine" in his review. He wrote that there were three cuts which took only a total of a minute out of the film. As he had seen the movie uncut in Hawaii, he was able to identify what the Thai censors had disliked. In one of the banned scenes, Anna Karina's breasts were shown for a moment. In another she turns towards the audience "wearing only a smile" and the third scene was cut as it showed a carnival celebration with "masked guests engaged in orgiastic acts." Trink wrote, however, that the sixty seconds cut "are insignificant in terms of the total movie."

"Hollywood has more influence in the Changwad than the diplomats. The U.S. Army and western films are the only pictures they have of the West."

"They don't like Doris Day films. She has freckles."

The Board is strict with political and religious films. If the King of Thailand is shown in a critical light, the movie is banned entirely. For this reason "The King and I" was never shown in Thailand. "The Chairman" was lanned because they thought it would be bad to show a film about Mao Tse-Tung, despite the fact that the **Bangkok Post** declared the film to be anti-communist. Films from communist countries are automatically denied entry into Thailand. "Dr. Zhivago" was shown here but there were questions raised about it. Some members feel that if a picture shows the Russian flag, it should be cut. In "The Eiger" only the objectionable sex scenes were cut and none of the political or philosophical discussions were left out. The "Ugly American" was also shown. A movie concerned with race problems may well get the Board's approval, as that is a problem "over there", they think, and not here in Thailand.

Although many Americans are becoming concerned with the amount of violence shown in films, this is not the case in Thailand. The Thai reporter felt it was

(Continued Pg. 11)

NOW SHOWING!!



GUNS!



...AND THE GLORY OF WAR!

Peace



AMERICA IN THAILAND

Peace Corps:

If you told these people The Peace Corps is the hypocritical extension of an imperialistic establishment's military industrial complex, they would think you were crazy.

And you would be.?





AMIDEA IN THAILAND

"YANKEE, COME HOME!"

Believe it or not, not everyone is crazy about the Peace Corps. Your mom and dad may be, perhaps even you are, but plenty of people aren't so sure your presence in Thailand is a good thing.

A partial list of those who would like to see you leave are: 1) The Voice of the People of Thailand; 2) Louis Lomax, author of Thailand, the War That Is, and the War That Will Be; 3) the Committee of Returned Volunteers (CRV) and 4) Bruce Nussbaum, ex-PCV turned writer for the "Far Eastern Economic Review".

The first two see the Peace Corps in Thailand as an integral part of the counter-insurgency effort mounted by Thailand and the United States in the sensitive North, Northeast and South.

The second two see Peace Corps Volunteers in Thailand as cultural and economic imperialists of the overseas American Empire.

The accusation that Peace Corps is being used primarily as a counter-insurgency weapon here in Thailand is a serious charge. It implies that Peace Corps/Thailand is just another tool of the United States government's foreign policy strategy in Southeast Asia. Since many volunteers here disagree with their government's actions in Southeast Asia, such a use of the Peace Corps would be abhorrent to them. It would also contradict the assurances given by President Nixon and Under Secretary of State Elliot Richardson that Peace Corps cannot be used as an instrument of U.S. foreign policy.

A tremendous wave of cynicism has appeared on college campuses recently in regards to the Peace Corps and its ability to function as a humanitarian effort independent of Washington's political and military strategy in the "Third World".

Potential Peace Corps applicants doubt the word of recruiters who claim that Peace Corps is truly free to seek real change and improvement for the people they serve, especially if American political, military or economic objectives are endangered in the process.

A single incident such as the Peace Corps-Pentagon confrontation in Micronesia (New Republic, Aug. 30, 1969) can destroy the confidence of many people in the Peace Corps as a viable form of service to the "Third World".

Unfortunately for the Peace Corps, Richard Nixon became the head of the US government just at a moment when this "crisis of confidence" became acute. The Peace Corps, like the rest of the US government, became subject to his control. He could do with what he would. But what was his will?

Nixon evokes a stereotyped reaction from many young people in the US. He stands for anti-communism, large corporations, Joseph McCarthy, John Foster Dulles and center dead weight. Yet the Peace Corps



"... a stereotyped reaction ..."

conceived, delivered and nurtured in the liberal atmosphere of the Democratic party. If Robert Kennedy had been President, perhaps the majority of students would have believed him if he said the Peace Corps is not a tool of the US government's global anti-communism strategy. Perhaps not. But when Richard Nixon says the Peace Corps Volunteers should not be, and he, used as an instrument of US foreign policy, people will believe him.

His choice of Joseph Blatchford was a mistake if viewed against this "crisis of confidence". He is sincere, politically loyal, efficient, but unimaginative. Viewed against the two former directors, Steve Vaughn, Blatchford's style appears as an imitation of the original, a cosmetic charisma. John Kennedy is dead. Perhaps it is best if trying to maintain "challenges" and "clan" within the Peace Corps is forgotten.



AMERICA IN THAILAND

But Peace Corps/Thailand is a different matter. Volunteers are still free to tell their students and co-workers both the good and the bad about America. Free to be liberal or conservative according to their own conscience. Free to support or condemn the war in Vietnam. Free to give their students Michael Harrington "The Accidental Century" as well as "Six Crises".



A new member of the team: Neil Armstrong, Apollo 11, sponsored as the Peace Corps National Advisory Board's Welcome from Peace Corps Volunteers/Thailand.

Hopefully Peace Corps will be in Thailand, if we are still needed, even after the Communist insurgency dies down. Hopefully, Peace Corps/Thailand's budget will not be a direct function of the Vietnam war and America's need for an ally in SE Asia. Hopefully, the number of trainees accepted for Thailand, and their eventual site placement, will never depend on how many villages need to be secured for the central government in Bangkok.

No one has yet discovered a CIA agent in Peace Corps/Thailand. But the possibility of overtures from the CIA here is not a ridiculous idea. If it ever happened and the news managed to get out, Peace Corps would be finished in Thailand. Borrowing technical experts from AID or USIS to backstop BAG's (B.A. Generalists) could allow an easy route for penetration by intelligence operatives.

Under Nixon and Blatchford the job of convincing young people that the Peace Corps is still "theirs" and that it is not just a tool of Washington politics in such places as Thailand, will be difficult. It will be impossible if Peace Corps, under the "new directions", drifts under the influence of the local American Embassy in Thailand, in Ecuador, or the High Commissioner in Micronesia. This is so especially if these new directions mean "understandings" or even semi-formal hook ups with other government agencies such as AID, USIS, or JUSMAC/THAI.

None of these agencies claim to be non-political, humanitarian, disinterested help. They are not primarily concerned with helping people per se but with establishing and defending American interests overseas. These interests include American overseas investments, the American political philosophy (vs. socialism or communism), and America's global political and military strategy versus Russia, China and their allies. That is their job. It would be a tragic mistake if Peace Corps became identified with AID, USIS, or the American Embassy. Peace Corps desire to "go it alone" is not only legitimate in the past, it is still legitimate, indeed imperative, today in such countries as Thailand which must develop a post-Vietnam policy that will call for more independence from the US.

It is good to "provide PCV's in Thailand with increased technical and logistic support". (Peace Corps Volunteer Nov. '69) but it is debatable whether that should be done by "tapping other overseas agencies", specially if this means USOM, USIS, the military or other US government agencies. There are Japanese, Canadian, Swedish and UN sponsored groups that could be approached to do the same job, thus avoiding Peace Corps dependence on and identification with US government policies in SE Asia.

Thailand is an especially sensitive area today and the danger to the Peace Corps integrity and independence from US foreign policy considerations is great. It's like a bride about to get married—all it takes is a small scandal to destroy her future. And it won't be any good to cry "rape" if she is discovered sleeping with someone of questionable integrity.

No one expects USIS to tell the truth, or USOM to be anywhere but in counter-insurgency areas with ten jeeps and dollars, or the American Embassy to be full of CIA spies, or JUSMAC/THAI to worry about decesses that give birth to revolution in the northeast.



AMERICA IN THAILAND



"Hi! We're Peace Corps volunteers here to help you."



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Volunteers are free to experience and sympathize with the poverty and problems of the people, as long as they remain politically uninvolved. They can get disgusted at lazy people, red tape, and broken promises and if worse comes to worst they can quit and return home to work for Senator Fulbright or the Committee of Returned Volunteers.

The Peace Corps is not the American Embassy, USAID, USIS or the US Army. It is an offer of service to Thailand and the Thai people, regardless of who is President or Prime Minister.

This difference of goals and philosophy between Peace Corps/Thailand and the rest of the "American presence" here (Embassy, USIS, etc.) never existed according to the Voice of the People of Thailand (VPT), a clandestine radio station operated by the Communist insurgents here and Lomax for his part grants that it never existed, but that under the previous US Ambassador to Thailand, Graham Martin (who preceded Leonard Lupton, present US Ambassador), it disappeared.

On July 14 of last year, shortly after Group 28 came into Thailand, VPT broadcast this message in Thai to Thailand:

"To improve the effectiveness of the U.S. Peace Corps spy Volunteers to fit the requirements of the U.S.-Thanom Clique, on 9 July the Peace Corps Director in Thailand signed an agreement with the clique's Community Development Department - an agency which deceives, spies on, and controls the people. The clique stated that this agreement (aims at establishing-Ed.) a pattern and standard for further work. This agreement is the first (aimed at-Ed.) improving the work of the U.S. (Peace Corps-Ed.) Spy Agency in Thailand. The Peace Corps Director in Thailand will sign (more-Ed.) such agreements with other ministries and departments of the Thanom clique in the future. This shows that the Americans have tightened their control and occupation of Thailand, and that the Thanom-Praphat Clique has sold out more of the nation to the Americans.

It is interesting, mainly in that it is almost comical, not to us but to some of the people whom the Peace Corps serves. Communist propaganda, like USIS propaganda, is based on a seed of truth, which is

nurtured and pruned of contradictions, till it spreads into a mighty tree of half-truth. Anything that is plausible is usable. If the VPT accusation sticks in any way or makes sense in the slightest to the people volunteers work with, then the volunteer begins to lose his effectiveness. The more Peace Corps/Thailand integrates itself with USOM, or identifies itself with them or is seen with them, the more broadcasts like that of the VPT gain credibility. And the Peace Corps becomes more and more just another wrench in the American government's Southeast Asian tool kit.

It is hard to conceive of Peace Corps Volunteers working as CD specialists in South Vietnam now. There's a war going on, and CD means "pacification;" it is another way to win the war for Saigon. AID or its financially sponsored IVS volunteer group can work in South Vietnam because there is no question of their being non-political. In the same way, AID and IVS can function in Laos. But the Peace Corps cannot.

Likewise, if the time ever comes when CD or other programs are no longer ordered (priority wise) according to Peace Corps' independent evaluation of the longterm needs and good of the people, but according to the shortterm political and military objectives of the day, or as a smaller function of a greater integrated politico-military strategy, the Peace Corps is of questionable value. Hopefully that point will never be reached. Yet Peace Corps/Thailand will soon have a new country director, appointed by Blatchford, who may or may not be as sensitive to the threat to Peace Corps independence and integrity within Thailand as the present one.

Yet, on the other hand, because Peace Corps/Thailand works to raise the living standard and conditions of the people in the Northeast and other counter-insurgency areas, it does not necessarily mean that Peace Corps/Thailand CD work is counter-insurgency work. This distinction perhaps lies at the root of the disagreement between Lomax and Peace Corps/Thailand or the Committee of Returned Volunteers and Peace Corps in Thailand.

If AID and Peace Corps do the same job in the changwad, and AID's work is classified as counter-insurgency, why isn't Peace Corps work called counter-insurgency too?



AMERICA IN THAILAND



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AMERICA IN THAILAND

Perhaps because of this, Lomax claimed in his book that "the entire operation of the American aid program, as well as the Peace Corps, has been converted to counter-insurgency activity, under the direct control of Ambassador Graham Martin." That was in 1967. Does he still feel that it holds true under Ambassador Leonard Unger? It would be interesting to know what he thinks today. Perhaps he would say that it's still so, for how can AID work be counter-insurgency and the same work done by Peace Corps Volunteers not be?

The answer depends again on the ability of Lomax and others to recognize the existence of two different philosophies towards the work (i.e. Peace Corps) would be there whether there were insurgents or not, whether America needed Thailand desperately as an ally or not; AID would commit itself and its budget in proportion to the areas of usefulness to the US world strategy or the danger of a Communist take-over.)

But this philosophical difference (Peace Corps = disinterested, humanitarian service; AID = qualified, utilitarian objectives) has to be actually and effectively put into action by Peace Corps/Washington and Peace Corps/Thailand directors when they decide such matters as volunteer skills (CD, teaching, malaria), manpower levels, working sites, and such things as volunteer "freedom of speech."

The Peace Corps' independence from the rest of the US government agencies in Thailand must be plainly evident in its policies and planning. That is the only way to answer the accusations of Lomax and the Committee of Returned Volunteers.

Two other charges have been brought against Peace Corps/Thailand as well as Peace Corps throughout the world. They are the charges that Peace Corps Volunteers in Thailand are 1) committed basically to peaceful evolution, not violent revolution, and therefore to be condemned, and 2) are "cultural imperialists".

That the first "charge" could be seen as something to be ashamed of rather than proud of is evidence of how much times have changed in America since Kennedy founded the Peace Corps in March 1961.

Few people would deny that Peace Corps is basically committed to evolutionary change—the question now is, "If we decide that the Third World needs revolution, should we eliminate the Peace Corps or change its philosophy from evolution to revolution?"

In the nine short years of the Peace Corps existence, American youth has gone from Gandhi to Guevara searching for a hero.

Despite the brave words of Joseph Blatchford, (who told Washington newsmen, "Like Mark Twain I am here to say that the reports of the demise of the Peace Corps have been greatly exaggerated. We have found the cures for what ails us. Today marks the beginning of an upswing for the Peace Corps") the whole idea of a Peace Corps is in jeopardy. Activists cry for "revolution" and demand confrontation, not compromise, with the Establishment.

Perhaps Blatchford knows this already and has decided that the cure for what ails the Peace Corps is simply to forget about debating radical students and appeal to the more conservative married man, the blue-collar worker, the technician who is concerned more with "getting the job done." This way, "function," not "philosophy" becomes the topic of trainee and volunteer hall sessions.

This way Peace Corps can avoid dealing with the questions of whether it should be in the "Third World". It would also imply that Peace Corps can't defend her position as advocate of evolutionary change vs those like GRV and activists who say anything short of a blood bath in the "Third World" is a sell-out. In a recent article by an ex-PCV from the Philippines, Bruce Nussbaum, (*Far Eastern Economic Review*) had this to say about Peace Corps in the "Third World":

"Because he is usually an American out of the complacent, 1950's Eisenhower mould, the Peace Corps Volunteer implicitly tries to transpose the middle-aged, self-satisfied American values of slow, constitutional, evolutionary change, non-violence, private, individual initiative and a strong respect for law and order. Unfortunately, these values do not fit into the dynamic Third World, except as a deflector of needed action and as a reinforcer of old colonial habits. One does not cause revolution by increasing the per capita number of water-sealed toilets."

"Spinning out of John F. Kennedy's New Frontier bag of tricks, cousin to both the Alliance for Progress and the Green Berets and part of the package designed to promote "development" in the "less developed countries" of the world, the Peace Corps has evolved a distinctive *modus operandi*."



AMERICA IN THAILAND



"Oh?"

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AMERICA IN THAILAND

"Beginning with the conviction that the process by which a country moves from a traditional to a modern society is essentially "apolitical", the Peace Corps moves to apply technical solutions to social problems on a low-level, personal basis. Hence, it seeks to alleviate deep-rooted suffering while denying the influence of, sometimes the existence of, the larger historic and social context within which such suffering lies. This myopic approach inevitably leads to programmatic contradiction and is the reason for Peace Corps' failure to treat causes rather than symptoms.

"It (the Peace Corps) is a strong support for the status quo factions in the Third World since it works within established bureaucracies with rich or middle-class, pro-American people on conservative, "safe" programmes.

"It deflects and consumes the time and energies of the masses of poor by treating symptoms rather than causes. By denying the structural sources of injustice in the Third World, by denying the historic and political roots of these structural inequalities and by emphasising the technical over the social solution to such problems, the Peace Corps shields the true causes of poverty, exploitation of the people and their land by foreign corporations and domestic family dynasties behind a mask of "cultural-personal" rationalisations.

"It reinforces a dependent colonial psychology and might serve to introduce it (as in Thailand) where none had existed previously. Furthermore, volunteers bring the "American Way of Life" with them in their travels. Thus, they act as conduits for the materialism, emphasis on private property, individual initiative, consumer orientation, technical gimmickery and "scientism" which are parts of that "Way of Life."

"It deflects criticisms from the more distasteful elements of the U.S. overseas presence—the military, business and embassy communities. The youthful idealism and activity of volunteers are an effective counterbalance to the offensive displays of whoring and drinking of soldiers on "R & R".

"It builds institutional and personal ties between Third World "friendlyies" and Americans. Links are set up by volunteers between hometown schools and libraries and those overseas. Volunteers, by and large, also encourage educated people to visit and migrate to the West.

"It serves as a middle-man between AID and "host country nationals" on specific projects. In the Philippines, volunteers have been "loaned out" to AID to help in disposing of surplus military equipment.

"It may, on occasion, have some kind of intelligence function, although not on any programmatic basis. In the Philippines, several volunteers were approached by a Fulbright teacher working, at that time, for the U.S. Embassy. They were questioned about the composition of student leaders at the University of the Philippines. While volunteers refused in this case to give the requested information, others may not be so reticent.

"Its being in the Third World contributes to the physical presence of all Americans abroad, especially in Southeast Asia where hundreds of thousands of soldiers on "R & R" give an "invasion" atmosphere to the area.

"It trains hundreds of people for government service (The February 1969 Green Sheet Following of the Government Career Information Service ran the following: "The U.S. Agency for International Development (AID) is looking for 150 former Peace Corps Volunteers to join its shirt-sleeve operation in Vietnam. The real rewards of these jobs are the same ones the RPCV (Returned PCV) earned as a Volunteer. The personal qualities of former volunteers and the character of their Peace Corps experience makes them one of AID's prime talent sources for its Vietnam programmes. The 106 former PCVs now serving in Vietnam are proving this daily.")

"The AID projects in Vietnam are remarkably similar to the Peace Corps programme throughout the Third World—"self-help" projects, engaging Vietnamese people at the grass roots are emphasised," "...experience in community development or closely related fields is desirable."

"It spreads the Peace Corps "apolitical" approach to development in the U.S. since over a third of the returned volunteers go back to school and most become teachers.

"Finally, it channels a great deal of liberal dissent against American foreign and domestic policy and helps create career expectations of a technical, non-political nature in these potential critics."

Because of such criticism like that of Nussbaum, the danger is that Peace Corps, under Blatchford, will retreat into premature middle age if her campus

(Continued Pg. 112)



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"Oh?"

MILITARY

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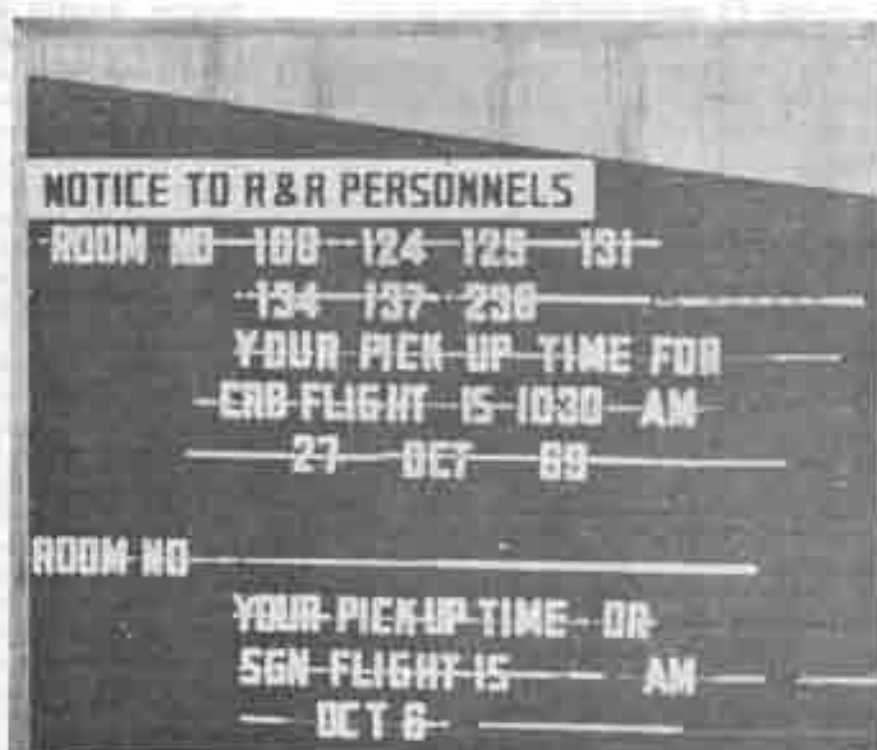
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AMERICA IN THAILAND

MILITARY:



"THE TIMES THEY ARE A CHANGIN"

SKIP MYNAR

Dateline: Bangkok, Oct. 13, 1962

Our C-123 Provider touched the surface of Don Mueang Airport and taxied to the apron. It rolled to a stop near a small metal quonset hut. Over the entrance a noobtrusive sign declared the building to be in the hands of the U.S. Air Force. It was my first glimpse of United States military involvement in Thailand.

As the twin props sputtered and finally stopped the aluminum door under the tail dropped to the pavement and handful of passengers disembarked. We were six; five, a small medical detachment from Vietnam a temporary loan to Joint Task Force 116, an early contribution to the approximately 45,600 American troops currently serving in Thailand (Dec. 15, 1969). Our welcoming committee consisted of a bored staff sergeant who checked our orders against the passenger list and hustled us out to a waiting micro-bus bound for Bangkok.

The contrast between the then klong-lined streets of Bangkok and the sand-bagged compound I had left a few short hours before in Vietnam was the difference between night and day. Driving on the "wrong" side of the road was a new experience to me. And, at first, a little nerve-wracking. The teak houses appeared more permanent and reassuring than the thatched shacks in relative proximity to Saigon. The people I first saw here seemed to convey a feeling of contentment to me as they ambled along the road among the long shadows of late afternoon in their puns and pakamas. A group of school boys broke the circle they had formed for takraw to turn, smile and wave as we streaked by. None of them yelled or stared.

The lobby of the Capital Hotel seemed cavernous and cheerful compared to that tent that had been my home for the previous seven months. I felt like Paladin arriving in San Francisco after weeks on the plains as



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I stood uncomfortably in my dusty, rumpled fatigues trying to figure out what to do with the carbine slung over my shoulder. I'd never fired the damn thing in anger (or fear) up to that time and even in combat zones I'd always felt a little awkward packing it around. Waiting for my room assignment it suddenly gave me the same comfort an albatross around my neck might have.

In the following weeks I came to view the Capitol as a new home and the smiling Thais a welcome respite from the distrustful stares received in Vietnam. My education in Thai culture began with the wai I received innumerable times daily from every member of the hotel staff. My language training was informal and conducted by bellhops, taxi drivers, and anyone who would take the time. It was necessitated by my initial inability to bargain and direct taxis around the city. After weeks I could finally count to a thousand, say turn left, right, and stop. When New Year rolled around I wished everyone I saw a "Sawadi Pee Mai."

The action street in Bangkok (1962) was New Road near Silom and the hot spots were the Oasis and Starlight Clubs. The former has since been razed but then it boasted a Filipino band and hostesses who would dance with you if asked. Few clubs had their own girls. Most were independent and your money was not so much a factor preceeding an "arrangement" as was your personality. The New Petchburi Extension was a swamp and the "Twilight Zone" was a TV show at home. If you asked a Thai about R & R he'd tell you it meant rock and roll.

The U.S. troops in Thailand numbered approximately 5000. Most were posted upcountry in Korat and Mahasarakham. Unless you told the taxi to take you to Nick's #1 it was a certainty you'd never arrive at JUSMAG. There were only about four hundred American military in Bangkok. Most "farangs" were Europeans and I don't recall ever hearing the term. It was certainly never hurled at me like the epithet it has become.

It seemed probable that the U.S. troops would be leaving when the sensitive situation in Laos cooled down. I never in my wildest dreams imagined that the number could swell to nearly fifty thousand. But, then again, at that time there were only 4,000 "advisors" in Vietnam.

"Those were the days my friend,
We thought they'd never end,
We'd sing and dance forever and a day,
We'd live the life we'd choose,
We'd fight and never lose,

Those were the days, oh yes
Those were the days.

Dateline: Bangkok, May 12, 1969

Pan Am Flight # 1 dropped from its normal altitude and began the approach to Bangkok Air Base. Inside, the passengers were still discussing the attack we had witnessed from a safe 28,000 feet. It flew over Vietnam a few moments before. As the plane dropped lower and lower the conversation gradually ceased and the passengers began to gather their belongings. Near the front of the economy class section sixty volunteers in our group peered anxiously out the ports in a vain attempt to catch a first glimpse of Thailand.

The 707 touched the runway and taxied to the terminal building. Jet fighters in neat rows on the apron were illuminated in the bright glare of the landing lights. Air Force planes of many descriptions were in evidence. A great many bore U.S. markings. I recalled my first visit to this airport nearly a year before and the obvious changes that had taken place. Vehicles, aircraft, and supplies, signs of the military presence in Asia were everywhere in abundance. I recalled that this was a commercial airport and to imagine the magnitude of that presence at the time when there were exclusively military in such places as Umuq and Komat.



A new toy in the North-eastern style, 300 lbs. boat on the G.

The greeting we received in the airport lounge could not, of course, be compared to the one performed by the bored staff sergeant years ago. Our necks draped with the garlands presented to us, we boarded buses for our hotel. The darkness was successful in blocking our view of Bangkok and in our efforts to catch sight of Bangkok, the city was a mystery. (Continued) River drink



AMERICA IN THAILAND

THE R&R SCENE



Green leaves from 40 U.S. Aerial Forces, Lophuri, before at position from Hanoi, Bangkok.

"The Good, the Bad and the Ugly"

Little Annie at the Petchburi is really the cutest prostitute I know. She's got these big "Keene-y" black eyes sunk in a pool of Max Factor eyeshadow that could make a mint break out in a cold sweat. Her long black hair hangs down to where her mini-skirts come up to and the GIs just love her—for 400 B a nite, Little Annie is lucky to get half that—some greedy gnome in a massage parlor gets most of it, and he doesn't do anything but stand at the door and blow smoke rings at moon. Little Annie is about the size of a pillow on a Hollywood bed and if she didn't wear so much makeup you'd think she came into the room looking for her drunken father.

But she's not a little girl anymore with magic dragons and little blue slippers with puffs under the bed, and that's sorta sad really. She's the genuine, home-fide, half-cups, see-through, hooker who's had a platoon or may be a whole division of "America's finest" from Chu Lai, Da Nang, Hue and Can Ramh Hay in the last golden years of the R&R boom. She knows more secrets than General Westmoreland and if you ever asked her, she could tell you some scary fairy tales about Jolly Green Giants and Flying Colours and things that go "bump" in the night. She's heard them all. She's paid to. And little girls don't thrive on nightmares. Little Annie is tough, baby.



AMERICA IN THAILAND

Lying in my bed early on October 15, the first light comes in the window without knocking. I make up my mind to catch the show at the Petchburi—there's always a squad or two of GI's tolling around the edge of the pool I can talk to about "our" war. After a blistering cold shower and a scalding cup of coffee as an antidote I head down the soi for the Petchburi Hotel.

On the way over there I find Little Annie eating some rice at a vendor's in front of USOM. She's eeked in make-up, with a bit of chicken grease on her Angel Face, but its cracking around the corners of her mouth which is working over a bone. When she sees me she looks up and grins, "Aacian Maythree! Pay nie man?" With a delicate motion she flies the bone over her shoulder and a mangy dog begins where she left off. The bone is really in for it, cause the dog means business. While I chat with Annie, the dog attacks the middle of the bone which snaps and crackles and crunches under the assault. But up at the point of whatever it was a bone of, the attack grinds to a halt, the dog just about chips a tooth on it but the marrow stays safe inside. The dog half-heartedly drools and slobbers over it for a few minutes, then tries a few desperate licks before collapsing into coexistence. The only thing still left unsettled is the shape of the conference table, just like Vietnam.

I say goodbye out. Across the road, by the shallow end of the pool, I spy Carl, Bob and Art. I don't know their names, but I know they're GI's. Like



to Annie and move up against the wall, of the pool, I spy At this point I still names, but I know Peace Corps people,

they tend to be "groupies" when they first land in Thailand. Hostile hums and strange smells make them stick together like pioneers in Indian country. The pool is definitely held by the "friendlies", as is the Coffee Shop, the TV in the lounge, and every path leading to and from their rooms. Outside this defensive perimeter it's safe only at night. In the day it is controlled by Yango Hotel Alpha India Sierra. The prostitutes come into the compound like deserters under the "Open Arms" program, but the GI's suspect their sympathies lie elsewhere. A lot of Bangkok still isn't pacified.

Carl's got his back to me as I come into camp. He's got a half dozen eggs surrounded on a plate just below his mouth in a narrow valley between a stack of toast and a wall of bacon. As I close in he's slicing up the remnants and by the time I get to the scene he's just mopping up with a sweep of a crust. Carl

is a tall, Germanic, private in the mould of Gomer Ashe. His eyes are covered by Andy Warhol sunglasses, the type that remind you of one way mirrors in a psychology lab. With a positively rude burp he shoves away from the table. There are no survivors.

Around Art's neck is a big pigeon's foot symbol, a pair of dog tags and a miraculous medal, which turns out to be an image of Buddha on closer inspection. His bod is wrapped in a blue short sleeve button down shirt with the tails sticking outside his green pants. He's got a pencil moustache and he's from the black ghetto, a beautiful, dying Gary, Indiana.

Bob is a "cracker". Bob Owenby, 252499, zero eight, North Carolina. Shuffle, drawl and constant grin, at your service, folks. A true American folk hero guaranteed to cheer the heart and resurrect a smile in a dead man. He's smoking a Samit when I sit down, but he handles it like a boy sneaking a smoke behind his daddy's barn who's just been caught redhanded. The smoke comes out of the mouth, not the lungs and for a sweet second I sniff the air for a whiff of "ganche". But no, it turns out to be just plain smoke and as a matter of fact he has just started to smoke. So in a sense I guess I did sort of catch him.

The three of them are clustered around a remains of breakfast and as we start talking I can't stop thinking of Dylan's "John Wesley Hardin" album filled with bad guys and crooks, robbers and too tangled up to who's cheating and who, but there is going on. Between and their five-day friends, only God knows the One thing's for certain. It's not just the prostitutes that are getting taken.

Carl:

"Lots of guys don't know what's happening. You're happy to be out of Vietnam, to be anywhere. You'll do anything. Most of the GI's don't mind spending money here. (He puts his wallet.) Most of them have about \$300. The broads, and the cabbies,—they find out how much money you got so they can make you use it all before you go. But I don't have any feelings about them trying to steal my money. I blame them."

Art:

"The prices are ridiculous. "1.25 for a beer and the beer Whiskey a Go-Go. My girl takes me there "cunnings. When she gets a dollar from the guy if she brings me, I wouldn't

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AMERICA IN THAILAND

they treated me really nice. They didn't show any resentment to me, I think she told them I worked at the Firestone factory. There's a big Firestone factory near their house. When I get out I'm gonna try and get a job here in Thailand with Firestone. I really like it here."

Later, Bob's girl comes flying by in a cab and as she gets out she shouts in Thai to 2 of her friends. Luckily Bob knows no Thai. She's dressed in this Buffy St. Marie Indian-type outfit with a leather headband, fringe on the sleeves and kwai-skin moccasins. I immediately look for the tomahawk. But Bob has a wall to wall grin carpeting his face and I haven't got the heart to tell him what she said. He's a goner. Once again proving that love springs eternal.

A green semi-mini-bus from Tommie's Tourist Agency comes into the fort with some green replacements. Tommie's has a center for in-coming troops out on Pabel Yothin Street. It gets the GI's coming and going.

Bob: "The officers said we don't have to buy a tour but they give you a beer at the door and these girls come in and show you slides of all the different places to go and try to sign you up for one. They've got telephones to all the big hotels so you can make reservations there. That's how I ended up here."

"We got a briefing on Thai customs and thing at the R&R center. They take you up stairs and tell you what to do and what not to do—like never put your arm around a girl in a cab or kiss her in public and that stuff. Also, to stay out of trouble. In Vietnam, they can get you out of trouble, out of jail if the Vietnamese cops get you, but in Thailand they said if you got in trouble, it's your tough luck. They warned us about marijuana. They said there were guys who would try and sell you "pot" then turn you in to the police. They said there was a death penalty for smoking "pot" here."

But I went into the Tailor Shop and the guy asked me if I wanted some pot. He had some. Then he asked me if I wanted any whiskey. God, I didn't want anything but a pair of pants. It's really funny."

There they are--the good, the bad, and the ugly. No better and no worse than the rest of us. It's a shame that they don't all speak Thai, visit temples, drink tea and leave the girls alone. But if we were out of our shoes, and in their boots, would we?

On the way out I wave at little Annie.

Bob:

"The taxi men get a cut too. One day I went in a store and bought some stuff and my driver was really mad. "What you buy?", he asked. "I don't want them to cheat you." He makes like he doesn't want me to go to his friend's shop because he gets a cut."

A lot of GI's rent a cab for the 5 days they're in town on R&R. It's like being in an armored personnel carrier, rolling through the streets, peering out the window slits at the sights from behind a solid sheet of tin.

It feels safe. But it's like that Daffy Duck cartoon where Daffy, chased by a lion, bolts inside the house, locks the door and swallows the key. When he turns around, the lion is inside with him. Likewise, once inside this rolling, squealing, gear-grinding, tin toyota juggernaut, the soldier discovers that the enemy is driving the damn thing. Then it's too late. Inside the rabbi's smiling grip he's hugged to death then turned upside down and shaken till his pockets are empty and he'll be lucky if he makes it back to Saigon with his skivvies.

Some cabbies make Victor Charlie look like a scaphyte in the art of ambushing a retreating column of GI's. On their way back to the city of Vietnam, an R&R patrol was recently hit for 700B to go from the Cao Phya to Don Muang airport. Mas-



rank with Hamburger's Last Stand.

The girls aren't all that guaranteed great either. [Bob] picked up a bad experience. As he told it: "The girls around here are really expensive for a night. At the Whiskey a GO-GO I picked up a girl for \$35 but she had really bad manners. I was ashamed to take her anywhere. She had this loud horse laugh and I took her to a movie. She embarrassed hell out of me."

Bob picked up a good experience. As he told it: "My girl, the girl I picked up, took me 30 miles out to her mom's home. Her mom, she really liked me. I stayed there a couple of days. I got 19 days left 'cause I'm here on a 30 day leave. It was really beautiful. He said I was the only American GI she ever took home. She said her sister—she's about 17—knows me. It, but her mom thinks she just works in Bangkok. So doesn't know. I was just a friend she said. One of the boys climbed up this tree and got a coconut for me. When he cut it open it wasn't ripe or something. I didn't like it but I forced myself to eat it so I wouldn't make them mad. They were really poor but



HIPPIES:

END OF THE ROAD

"First off, let's be downright honest, Brian. You're a hippy. Right here in Thailand. A hippy! And now that the hippy-hunt is on, do you know what that makes me?... a hippy-harbinger. Me, an acaam, a decent, respectable, honest law-abiding individual; a volunteer even! What will the neighbors say if they saw you coming in my door? Did anyone see you? Are you sure? Here, get away from the window and look at this. It was in the newspaper today."

Hippies banned

Hippies have been banned from entering Thailand because they constitute a threat to the well-being of the Thais, especially the teen-agers. This was stated yesterday by the Deputy Director of the Tourist Organization of Thailand, Lt.-Col. Somchai Hirankitch. He said before the institution of the ban by the government earlier this month, hippies had been

coming here and teaching Thai teen-agers to smoke marijuana.

"They indulge in other undesirable activities. It is therefore best that they be banned from coming here," he explained.

Lt.-Col. Somchai said the government had since ordered the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to send directives to all Thai embassies instructing them not to issue visas to hippies.

(Bangkok World, Oct. 9, 1969)

"But Mike, where can I go now? I just made it out of Malaysia on the last train from Kuala Lumpur. I shaved my beard off in Butterworth but the Thai officials were still suspicious said my eyebrows too bushy. But I was lucky. They turned back the guy behind me because the hairs in his nose were too long. And the guy in front of me got caught with a flower in his lapel. I've been wearing this baseball cap to cover my hair ever since I got in Bangkok. I didn't know where to run to. I hid out in the courtyard of Silpakorn U. for three days but 'khuaw pot' for three days it drove me nuts! I had to get out. Have you got any..."

"...marijuana?"

"...No, PEANUT BUTTER! If I see one more grain of rice... Here, look at this—it was all over the Kuala Lumpur papers. I had to get out!"

'Hippism' menaces KL

Watch out hippies. Your flower power and free love is now an enemy of Malaysia and in their view as dangerous as Communism.

Youth, Culture and Sports Minister Tengku Mohsein bin Abdul Kadir warned today that "hippism" may lead to a collapse of the nation, the aim he attributed to Peking-inspired Communists.

"Malaysians are known for their good manner and discipline," he said.

"If we allow ourselves to be influenced by the western hippism with their free love and so-called spiritual freedom, then the whole of our social structure will collapse and we would be going back to the stone age."

"Brian, listen, I can't hide you forever. They're bound to find out you're here sooner or later. Then they'll come and take you away, and God knows what they'll do to me, a hippie-harbinger! We could hide you in the john for a while but the cleaning lady would discover you eventually. Maybe at first you could tell her you have a bad case of 'tong duan' if she knocks. But after two-three days she's gonna be suspicious. You're gonna have to leave Brian."

You aren't gonna let them find me, are you?"

"Look Brian. My father hid Jews in his attic for two years during World War II but this is even more serious! The heat's on, Brian. This is Thailand, 1969! You're a hippy! You can't ask me to do the impossible. Here, look at this headline—"Hippies are a product of a Degenerating Society"—look at it! It was in the paper just last week. Read it, Brian. I'm scared!

"Hippies are the product of a degenerating society, according to M.R. Kukrit Pramoj, Director of the Siam Rath, one of the leading Thai-speaking language newspapers.

He said people became hippies because they were sick with society.

"They decide to drop out of society altogether. They see war and violence all over the world. They are generally unhappy with what their leaders do," he said.

M.R. Kukrit said this during a panel discussion on "Are hippies a social problem?" at Thammasat University auditorium yesterday.

The two-hour discussion, chaired by Prof. Pakorn, was attended by more than 5,000 students.

Mr. Pichai, who spoke next, said parents who were hippies usually had their children join them.

"Some hippies dress better than other hippies. They turn on, tune in and drop out on drugs, all the time looking for an escape," he said.

Mr. Pichai, however, felt that hippies were much better as people compared to hypocrites. Mrs. Vinod talked mainly on the usage of the different mind-bending drugs.

"Hippies go for marijuana and LSD. LSD addicts usually don't bother how they dress, and lose interest for sex," she said.

Another participant, who is well associated with hippies in the U.S. Mr. Pinyo Thongchen, said the hippy movement in the states began three or four years ago.

"Hippies there claim they are searching for the truth. The males wear dirty clothes, while the females usually don't wear their underwears.

A lot of them dress like Red Indians," he said. Mr. Pinyo disclosed that 70 to 80 per cent of US students had tried marijuana or opium."

"Say, Mike, that was nice of Mr. Pichai to say we were much better as people compared to hypocrites. If I get out of this thing alive I'm gonna send a bouquet of flowers to him. But I guess you're right. I can't hide here and endanger your life too."

"Look, Brian. I tried all I could to help you. Really, I did. I want to help you. I really do. But

you can't blame me. I'm just an ordinary citizen. Here, take the peanut butter. Go ahead. It's yours. You'll need it on your trip. Only don't shoot it—it's homogenized... Brian, Where are you gonna go now, Brian?"

"I'm gonna try and find Robin, Mike. Maybe she can help me get to Laos."

"Robin? Who's she?"

"I don't know, Mike. But a friend of mine gave me this. It's a copy of a letter she wrote to the newspaper. She's a brave girl. Here, read it.

Why hippies?

Sir:

I have seen many people begging in Bangkok. But none of these have been foreigners. They have all been Thai. They are dirty and unwashed with shabby clothes. If they wear anything on their feet at all it is sandals. They sit around in the streets without a permanent place of residence. If they could find a pavement they might draw pictures on it but I doubt it. They have so little incentive to do anything, you see. Picture drawing is not one of the folk arts in Thailand. I have yet to see one pavement picture in Bangkok.

So there they sit from morning to night, lacking the basic necessities of human life, undernourished and with no hope for anything better. Of course they should be thrown out of the country. They would if they possessed a passport saying they belonged to somewhere else. But they don't and the government which should take the responsibility doesn't.

I haven't forgotten the hippies. This is where we come back. Find a convenient scapegoat. Pass the buck for the social ills of your country onto someone who can be excluded. Make an Outsider. This game is easy. Far too easy. Dress up your dummy in recognizable garb, point the finger, roll accuser, judge and jury into one, and boo, all's quiet on the home front.

But why hippies? Why not policemen, businessmen, T.V. men? Policemen are needed to protect themselves and their worldly gains, businessmen add to the monetary stockpile, T.V. men can make announcements (provided their hair is regulation length). Hippies and many other people besides, are not too interested in making a mint and pronouncing on the commonweal. They are interested in other things, the range, depth and divergence of which is beyond a government to contemplate.

Robin

(Bangkok World)



AMERICA IN THAILAND

A portfolio of drawings:



INSIDE MY HEAD

Dan Curry



AMERICA IN THAILAND

10¢

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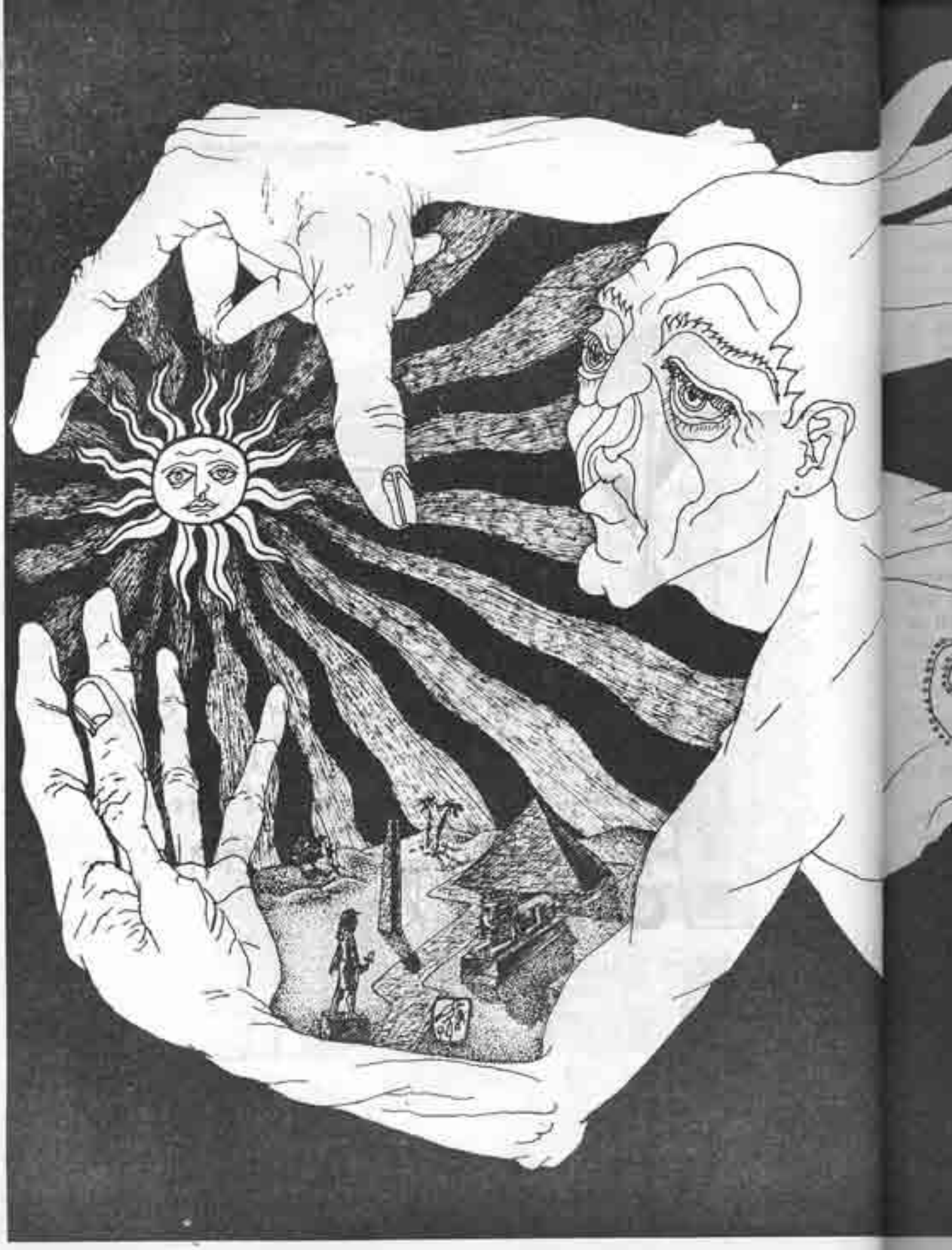
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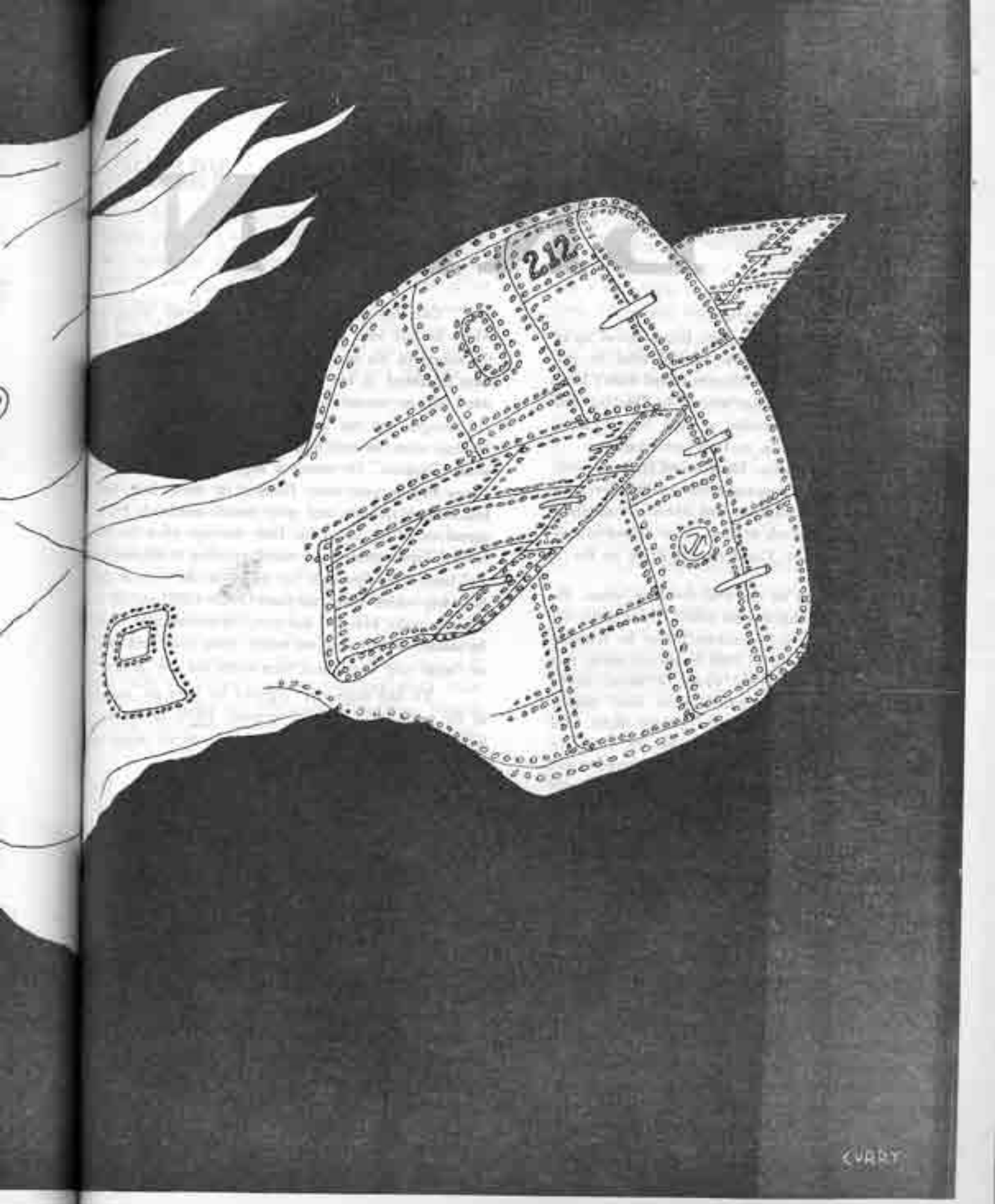




AMERICA IN THAILAND









AMERICA IN THAILAND

Diary of
A "Hippy"

BRIAN

(Introduction)

One night, late in September, Brian showed up at our house with a friend of ours. He had tried to get a job teaching at Silpakorn University and didn't have any place to stay. He had just arrived in Thailand and he was almost broke. He needed to work here a bit to get enough money to go on to Laos and Vietnam.

He was a thin, wiry, black-haired Irishman with curly short hair and a moustache that curled over his top lip into his mouth. He smelled like a pile of dirty socks and didn't say much at first. Our friend didn't have room at his house. Could we put Brian up for a few days?

Brian had been on the road for four years. He was 25 years old and this was his second trip to Asia. On the first, he got as far as Afghanistan before he returned to Dublin, his hometown. In 1968 he set out again, this time making his way to Israel where he drove trucks in the Sinai Desert till the heat and the sand became unbearable and he pushed on. He crossed India, 3rd class train, reaching Nepal in the spring of 1969. In June he took a boat from Calcutta to Singapore and made his way up Malaysia to Thailand and eventually Bangkok.

That night he slept on the sofa in the living room and the next morning we were faced with a dilemma. All of us had to go to school and teach that day. No one would be in the house with Brian. What if he took off in the middle of the day—with my Canon camera or Sam's radio? We finally decided to lock all the valuable stuff up in a trunk and to hell with the rest. When we returned that afternoon we breathed a sigh of relief. Everything was still there.

After a few days Brian began to open up a bit, and in the process revealed to us a great sense of humor that he successfully hid from us the first time we met. But he was basically a loner. He travelled great stretches and rarely had a companion with him. He saw many things and experienced a lot but they remained under that wiry-haired scalp.

One day we sat down and he started telling us where he had been and what he had seen and done in the course of his travels. He seemed surprised that we were interested in his wanderings and couldn't understand why we wanted to know about small details—pears and oranges, and the price of blood in Greece. He laughed when we told him we wanted to write a story about "hippies." He wasn't a hippy he said—everyone knows that hippies wear flowers in their long hair, bell-bottom trousers, and sport beards and beads. But he agreed to tell us about his first journey—when he left Ireland for Australia and ended up going to Afghanistan and back. This "portrait" of Brian is the story of his first trip which took two years (1965–1967) and all he did was make him tell his story chronologically. We agreed he started to drift off we would bring him back with an "after you went there, then where did you go next?"

We had originally planned to have an issue of the second trip (1967–November, 1969) in the next issue but we never got another chance to sit down with him for 6–7 hours and talk.

What influence men like Brian have on Thai customs and society is hard to say. Many "hippies" like Brian have passed through Bangkok in the last few years. They usually stay at the Thai Song Hotel near the railway station where a room for one person is 30 Baht. But 1970 should see fewer and fewer "hippies" in Thailand. They are now officially banned from Thailand and a new alien law will cut down their chances to get short-term jobs here like he tried to land at Thammesart.

Thais dislike people like Brian for a variety of reasons—they are dirty, smelly, need a haircut, and use drugs, and do not hold down a steady job or pay taxes. Any combination of these adds up to a cardinal sin in Thailand. But what they do have is a certain freedom, no matter how lonely it can get, which few of the rest of us have ever experienced.

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AMERICA IN THAILAND

"DIARY: 1965 - 1967"

I left Ireland in 1965. Before I left I was a "pattern grader." I worked in a tailor shop. My father was a supervisor in a factory that made concrete type pipes. A lot of cats emigrated from Ireland in the '50's because of the "closed shops." No one wanted to do what their father did but the only openings were in the trade of your father who could get you in. So I left. I didn't want to work in a factory the rest of my life.

TO LONDON

I got discouraged. Jobs were hard to come by in Ireland so I left home and went to London. There wasn't any work in Dublin. I didn't like living in London. I tried different jobs. I worked with a tailor in London for a while and I got good pay. There were a lot of Irish in England then but they were looked down on. The English have the impression that the Irish are stupid. But most of the Irish in England are laborers and they're all big and drink a lot. They got a lot of money maybe for the first time in their lives and they like to spend it drinking. They come from the rural areas, from the farms in Ireland and they don't know how to dress. They get into pubs with these English men with the fancy clothes and they get a lot of talk. So they'll fight you if they're insulted.

BACK TO DUBLIN

Well, I returned to Dublin after a while and went to work in a factory. You get good money but it's monotonous as hell. They want you to know the machine you're working real well so that you know it backwards and forwards and can fix it in the dark. The foreman likes that because then he can leave you there the rest of your life.

TO FRANCE

In Dublin I met this German chick and some other people—travelers—and I decided to go to Australia. I realized that what I really wanted to do was travel. So I crossed the channel and avoided France as much as I could—it's bad for hitchhiking. They don't give you rides. I came down through Germany, Munich and Vienna instead, and made it to Yugoslavia. There are a lot of hippies in the northern part of Yugoslavia.

YUGOSLAVIAN FLOWERS

I was walking on this road one day and I met this long-haired guy—a Yugoslavian—and this girl who had a broken leg. She had a cast on her leg and it was all decorated with flowers and colors. The girl was a Hungarian. I asked them where to stay for the night. They said stay at our place. They took me to the university to meet their friends. This one cat had just sketched a beautiful flower and when you looked at it close you could see that it was made of print—he had the names of all the flowers in the world on it.

After that I left for the south (of Yugoslavia). When you get to Zagreb, look out. They're Moslems there. Bad people. When you get down south the people are more filthy and squalid and they have these Moslem type minarets or mosques everywhere.

GREECE: THE BLOOD MARKET

After that I got to Greece. It was before the big coup. There's different roads you can take through Greece. It was hard to get to Greece. Hitchhiking is slow in Yugoslavia. A lot of hippies take the train to the border of Greece. On the border, just inside Greece, is a town called Thessaloniki. Most hitch-hikers sell their blood at the hospital there, but the hospital's choosy. A lot of cats smoke "grass" and their blood pressure is low. So the hospital won't take it. So they go to the Red Cross. They pay less, about \$10 a litre, but it's bread.

In Kuwait you get \$30 a litre. A lot of hippies in India hitch to Kuwait and sell their blood two times in one week. That gives them \$60 and that lasts them six or seven months in India. Food's really cheap there. Goa is really cheap to live, they don't spend any bread getting to Kuwait because they hitch. You just have to buy food. So they go down there maybe two times a year and they get enough bread for a year.

HUNGER

A lot of cats get messed up in India though. The food makes them sick. A lot of Scandinavian cats go to India and try to do it without any bread. It's really hard, without begging in the streets. Their bodies get sick. But hunger sharpens you too. The first few days are hell. Then it passes. After a while you



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don't even notice it. You learn to live on one meal a day. You hear it all the time. One cat says "Are you going out to eat?" and the other cat will say, "No. I've already eaten today!"

PORRIDGE AND CHEESE

In Norway, man I had this fantastic food and really cheap. Only three kroners—milk, porridge, and cheese and all you could eat. You got to concentrate on high protein. Try and eat greens and onions. Oranges. If you eat oranges before you go to sleep it will keep you from getting bad colds when you sleep in your bag on the ground. Vitamin C is the key. You can live on peanuts, nuts and raisins. You gotta vary your diet. Maybe eat bananas later in the day. Look for protein food—fish, eggs, meat, stuff like that. But when you get hepatitis you can't eat protein food. I got it in India and you feel like you're dying. You want to go home.

ISTANBUL

I went across northern Greece to Istanbul. It's a one day hitch from the border of Greece to Istanbul. When you get to Istanbul you know you're in the East. It's the gateway to the East. I met some cats there who hitched down E3—it's a highway and goes from Norway to Kuwait. Istanbul is cheap. You stay in an area called Sultanahmed. Something like that. It's near the topkapi and the Blue Mosque. It's a heavy drug type scene. I slept on the roof of this ratty hotel for 25 cents. It's like a terrace and all these cats have their legs spread out on the roof. There's rats and roaches and everything. A few cats died up there from drugs.

"ROMILAS"

There's a cough pill called "Romilas." Roche Co. makes it. It sends you on a really big trip. A lot of cats were using it. They were taking 25 cigs at a time. Some got scared and paranoid up there and started walking on the edge of the roof and saying they were gonna jump. If you take the stuff regularly over one month, even if it's a few cigs you're mind is really messed up. You go to an asylum. If you take it with opium it kills you.

THE INJECTION

This English guy Dave took "Romilas" on opium when I was there one nite. He was asleep in his bed for a long, long time and when we tried to wake him up he was in a coma. We got scared, we got him to a hospital and these doctors would help him. So we said, "man, are you gonna let him die?" So one guy pulls out this needle and gives him an injection. The poor guy (Dave) pulled up off his bed like someone put a spring in him, then he died. He was dead—stone dead. They killed him. I try to avoid getting sick. I don't have any faith in doctors when I'm traveling. They don't give a shit for you.

DRUGS

I tried LSD on the road. But you can't get addicted to LSD. I was addicted to opium for two years and I kicked it. I thought it would be bad, but wasn't too tough. I just stopped it. A cat has to take a lot of opium every day for two or three months before you get hooked. A lot of Laos use opium. I can shoot it, eat it or smoke it like in Laos. Opium users don't like loud noises. They like things to be quiet and peaceful. Opium people don't like to be in the company of speed or drinkers. I tried some opium in Vientiane (Laos) when I was up there. In Pakistan you get dysentery people give you some opium. It's not it. There are different types—there's a clean type for shits. I don't mess with opium now—just grass. I today experiment with drugs because it's something new. It's dangerous but all explorers are involved with element of danger. It's one of the few things left to explore. There aren't any jungles left to explore there used to.

In Istanbul I had some money. I bought some watches in Switzerland at a factory before I got there. I wanted to get a bag full of dollar watches but I didn't have any. So I got eight of these five dollar watches and sold them for nine dollars a piece in Turkey when I needed bread.

PRINCESS ISLANDS

I met some Scandinavian friends that I knew from Frankfurt. They couldn't get out of their country till they paid up and they didn't have any bread. They were supposed to be getting some in the bank but

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AMERICA IN THAILAND

PAKISTANI HASH

I left Istanbul a few months later and made my way to Kabul (Afghanistan). I was broke but I met some cats there who had stayed on the island and they had gotten some money from home in Tehran. So they helped me. I hitched to Pakistan. When I was there I scored eight kilos of hash for them. I knew the stuff. I bought the best grass available at \$10 a kilo. It sells for \$1000 a kilo in Europe if you push it yourself. For scoring they gave me one kilo. So I returned to Europe by hitching. I sold some of the grass in Istanbul and sold my blood again in Tessaaloniki. I spent \$10 from Istanbul to Copenhagen. Copenhagen is a good place to sell hash. It's a good market. I traveled really cheap, mostly eating yoghurt and fruit and raisins. I didn't have to beg.

TEA IN AFGANISTAN

I stayed in Afghanistan on the way back for a while. The people are really nice. The eating places don't have any chairs, just a carpet to sit on. They smoke hash in the tea shops. If you get rapping with them they share the pipe with you. If a man gets a meal, he shares it with you. You eat with your hands. They don't have knives and forks and spoons. But you have to be careful not to keep your left hand in the bowl, your left hand you use to wipe your butt, for dirty work. The right hand is used for delicate work and for eating, you sort of shake the rice in your fingers and throw it into your mouth. You really make a mess of it at first. You throw it all over your shirt.

TROUBLE IN IRAN

Nobody likes Iran. They aren't nice people. Don't get off the track at all. It's really hard to get a lift. The trucks stop and they want money or articles of your clothes, they point to things like your watch and ask for it.

I was scared of every border. I shaved off my beard. Most people going from Afghanistan to Iran are carrying hash. They even ask you point blank at the border: "Do you have any hash?" In Iran it's a five year sentence if you're caught. But if you're an American, the consul will swing you out free but you have to pay a big fine. But the Irish are so poor they don't even have a consul from Italy to India.

(Continued Pg. 114)

your own. So I bailed them out. Soon we met some more cats—an English cat, an American and a South African—and we went out to these island in the sea off coast of Turkey and they're called the Princess Islands. But the police came out in a boat and tried to arrest us. We found another island with some empty houses. The houses had beds and cots. So we managed to get into one room and we found some keys. Then we opened all these houses up and took all the beds and furniture to one building and fixed up the place nice. We cleaned up all the dirt and stuff, and lived there for six weeks. I had been on the road about a year.

RETURN OF THE OWNER

But one day this guy shows up outside. He was the owner. He was really mad but we showed him how we cleaned up the place for him. We gave him 10 Lire and a guy with us who was an artist sketched a picture of the guy to pay for the rent. He was really happy. He brought his wife and some of his kids there the next day and the guy drew a picture of each of the kids and the husband and wife together.

I grew a beard on the island. All sorts of cats came out later. They heard about the place in Istanbul. But we kept things under control and kicked out any cat that didn't fit, that we couldn't get along with, or who messed up things with the Turks. The island was beautiful. It was called "marmara." Finally things went bad with the police and the rest of the people on the island and I left.

STUDENT CARDS

In Istanbul a student card is only 75 "krush." You get a big cut on the railroads and things with a card. There were a lot of cards around and they were cheap. Like in Bangkok you can get one down at the railway station, around the Thai Song-Creet Hotel, for only a dollar-half the price. And you can be 30 years old and get one still. And you don't have to be a student.

In Istanbul they were taking the real cards to a printer who prints up a bunch of blank cards. Then they get a guy to make a rubber stamp like the original and they are ready to sell. In India you get 50% off on trains, and a lot of airlines give you a 55% reduction.



AMERICA IN THAILAND

CONVERSATIONS WITH A BANGKOK CALL-GIRL

(ANONYMOUS VOLUNTEER)

"YOU ARE A STRANGE PEOPLE, YOU FARANGS"

Volunteers have something precious to share with each other. That's why I'm writing this piece. Not because it is good writing or worthwhile literature. In fact, I want to apologize beforehand for asking you to read this, because, having stayed here for over a year my ability to speak and write English has gradually deteriorated. But what we volunteers have to say to each other is important enough to say despite a lack of literary grace. In the past, volunteer magazines have been mainly a forum for people who have nothing to do but to rewrite the philosophy of TEFL (TEFL is important, however, and if there is anything new to say about it, I would be willing to listen). In the future I would like to ask those volunteers who are capable of doing so to take the time to write articles about memorable people they have met. For, after all, most of the volunteer experience is in meeting people. I would like to read something about a volunteer's recollections of his friend the village midwife; the rich Chinese merchant's daughter; the Meo tribesman studying in Bangkok; the village ice cream salesman; the classical Thai ballet dancer; the pimp; the samloy driver; the boatman; the village drunk; the grain miller; the landlord; the minor wife; the governor. Or the Bangkok call-girl. I will not meet or get to know all these people, but I know volunteers who have. We must, of course, disguise and protect the identities of these people, for we must not presume that we can violate their privacy at will. I hope that volunteer magazines in the future will contain this kind of material.

The fragments of conversations I have recorded here are as accurate as I can remember, although perhaps not in order of their occurrence. I wrote them down on the back of a restaurant menu on the train back to my site. Mee, the girl, spoke a central Thai dialect, and since I speak more Lao than Thai, the conversation, especially on my part, was awkward and ungraceful. This is perhaps apparent in the translation. Most of these conversations occurred in a Bangkok hotel room.

— What is your name, little sister? (We had been talking several hours before I thought to ask her).

— Uh— you can call me Ay-Mee (little pussycat, you want. But that's a nickname. I won't tell you my real name.

— Why not. We're going to be lovers tonight. You at least tell me that.

— Because if there's trouble, I don't want you to know it. It's better not to know it.

— Trouble? Why should there be trouble?

— There's always trouble— you know? You people here you can do anything with girls like us. Sometimes we get drunk or smoke pot and then expect us to make love to you. Hell, why should I sleep with a damned opium addict? And then if we don't there's a fight. I've seen two soldiers over the head with beer bottles aimed at the police came, but if it's the Thai police there's a problem—you just pay them off and get out. But it's better if no one knows your name.

— Is that why you had me order a bottle of beer? You could have a bottle to hit me over the head with.

— No. You're a good boy. At first I thought you were because you know what they say about farangs— we speak Thai, they're --- (She used a slang word which I think means gigolo). But then you brought me to the hotel the back way, which was good. The soldiers don't understand. They want us to walk in the street and hold hands. Why the hell should I have to go there that, what when everyone in the street knows? To look you up and down from head to foot and then from foot to head. They look at us like we're common whores and stare and cuss at us. Even in the depot the taxi drivers charge us double fares. They say, "My boyfriend last night had a lot of money. Don't be stingy."

— Couldn't you just wipe off your make-up and be a boy, or pretend you're a secretary?

— Hell, they know— all of them. This is Bangkok, the provinces. Farangs don't know, but Thais do. I like I know you spoke Thai even though you tried to pretend you didn't. They know by the way you walk. They look at your eyebrows and see if they're fake because you put on make-up every night, and they know. They listen to you speak and they know where you



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come from. They see your skirt and they know whose money bought it. You can't hide in Bangkok. Maybe you can in the provinces, but you can't here.

- Do they know, in your village, what you are doing here?

- I don't think so. Not yet. They think I'm with my Thai husband. Whenever my mother comes to visit I tell her that he's out of town. She might know, but she doesn't say anything.

- Where is your husband?

- Who knows? I don't bother with him anymore. We broke up three years ago and I don't bother to be interested anymore. He wasn't a good man, any I don't need him anymore.

- Why did you break up?

- Because he was always chasing after other girls. He had a minor wife somewhere in Bangkok and when I found out I tried to kill him. I had a knife when I came to bed that night and I grabbed him and tried to cut him up. I would have, too, but he promised to give her up and be good again. The police came in and broke it up, and we had to pay them not to put us in jail.

- But why wouldn't you let him have a minor wife? It's a common thing here. You could have her move in your house and help you with the work.

- Hah--you think that if I saw her I wouldn't kill her?

- Why?

- You think 900 baht a month is enough for two wives? And in Bangkok--you speak Thai, but you don't know anything. In Bangkok you have to have money on you all the time. Ten or twenty baht just to walk down the street.

- So did he give her up?

- Sure, but then he got a new one. He was sterile--we lived together five years and I never had a child. The doctor said it was him, but he wouldn't believe it so he got another whore. But he never could have a child. He was sterile.

(Sometime during these dialogues we slept together. Like most prostitutes, she could not be aroused to any great feeling. She was dutiful and passive.)

- When you slept with your husband, were you always so impassive, like that?

- Of course. It's always like that. Why?

- Because maybe he needed something more to satisfy him.

- No, you don't know. Thai men aren't like that. A Thai girl isn't supposed to be like a man. I'm a girl. It's not like that for girls--and I don't like to pretend.

- No, you're wrong. My Thai friends are always talking

about "feeling" in women. They don't like a woman unless she has feeling (I used the English word, which she recognized). You understand?

- Sure. But I do feel. I'm not like those 20 Baht a throw girls in Chiangmai. I only go out when I have to, about two or three times a month. That's enough. And I feel more with you than with most.

- You certainly don't go out of your way to show it.

- What do you want me to do? Do you want me to groan and cry like a man--some men actually cry, you know, real tears. Do you want me to pretend? OK, next time I'll pretend, but you won't like it. (It turned out she was right.)



- It's OK with me. I know Thailand and Thai women. But I bet you make a lot of G.I.'s mad.

- That's true. One of them came to me for a short time (as opposed to all night, for which the price is higher). That was when I was working full time--and did it three times. OK, I didn't say anything--maybe he hadn't seen a woman for a long time. But then he wanted his money back. Told the bar owner there was no feeling. I almost killed him. He was the one I hit with a beer bottle.

- Weren't you scared?

- Sure, but I was mad, too. If he wasn't satisfied he could have told me. But what does he do? He takes my name and tells everyone in the bar that he wants his money back. Damn him, and he was drunk too.

- So why do you work like this, if you can't control yourself. You could always go back to your village.

- No. Not yet. I need money first. Because I have a (singing) baby, and my stepfather won't raise it unless

(Continued Pg. 56)



AMERICA IN THAILAND



"WHEN YOU'RE RICH, IT DOESN'T MATTER IF THEY
TALK ABOUT YOU OR NOT."





AMERICA IN THAILAND





WELCOME TO
CALIFORNIA BAR
PRETTY GIRLS
GOOD DRINK
AND THE BEST BAND
IN THIS TOWN





AMERICA IN THAILAND

1. V.D. CARD IS ISSUED
TO EACH GIRL BY THE
V.D. CONTROL UNIT



2. V.D. CARD SHOULD BE
INSPECTED BY DOOR MAN
BEFORE ENTERING THE
ESTABLISHMENT

3. THE GIRLS IN THIS PLACE WHO HAVE BEEN
INSPECTED TO EXCLUDE V.D. ARE AS FOLLOWS:

☐ MONTH OF NUMBER

EPIDEMIOLOGICAL UNIT
V.D. & F. CONTROL DIVISION
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH





AMERICA IN THAILAND

I give him a present first to pacify him. I need about 2,000 baht. I'll stock a village store and live there afterwards. But I'm in no hurry. I don't want to work every day. What I need is a G.I. boyfriend. About 1,000 baht a month. Before you could get one for two or three thousand, but now you're lucky if you can get one for 1,000. I'll find one of those first and then I'll go home. Now I only work when I need money.

— But what if the soldiers go home first?

— Good. Then the communists will get all of Vietnam and then they'll come to Thailand—they won't get as far as Bangkok because the farangs will send in soldiers first, and the soldiers don't know how to spend baht. All they know is how to spend dollars, and then I can get rich and go home—and when you're rich it doesn't matter if they talk about you or not.

— Why would they talk about you?

— Because my baby has blue eyes and a long pointed nose like yours. My mother would raise it, but my stepfather won't. He's the reason I came to Bangkok. We didn't get along.

— What did you do when you came here?

— I worked as a maid for a while. And then I got married. Which was fine before we broke up—and then I worked in the bars with the G.I.'s. My husband came back and said he was sorry for me because I had to work with G.I.s. But he just wanted money. I loved him then because I was lonely and he was the man who loved me when I was still a virgin. But he really wouldn't have taken me back. He'd gotten into a car accident and needed money, but I wouldn't give it to him. Besides, I already had a farang boyfriend.

— So, where is this farang now?

— He went home already. At first he told me that he'd take me back, but then he said he already had a wife and had to go home. If I had known that I wouldn't have had the child. He sent me money for a few months—1,000 baht a month—but then I got a letter saying "Because of increased responsibilities," he had to save his money. But I don't blame him. Except that I have to work to support my baby. And I can't go home yet.

— What if you have another one?

— I won't. I take medicine now—20 baht a month for pills. All the girls take medicine now. But one baby is enough. It's sick now, my baby. I have to buy it bottled milk—because what would happen if someone hugged me and milk came out. I couldn't make a

living. When I get through here I'm going to take your money and go to the doctor and then buy a chicken and some whiskey for the spirits.

— The doctor would be enough, I think.

— That's because you don't believe and I do. The doctor wants to give my baby a shot but I won't let him. It's only six months old and it would cry. And besides if you give it too many shots then the medicine loses effectiveness. I'll leave the chicken and the whiskey at the spirit house.

— Who do you think really eats the chicken and drinks the whiskey?

— I don't know. I guess whoever owns the spirit house. But what if he comes to get my baby?

— Who? The ghost?

— Yes, what then? You don't believe in ghosts, do you? I know. Go to room—in—hotel and you'll see. There once was a farang who was addicted to marijuana and couldn't get any, and didn't have any money. He went crazy and cut his wrists. If you stay in that room, you'll hear knocking on the floor and if you open it there's no one there.

— Have you ever been there?

— No. But everyone in the coffee house (where one picks up call-girls in Bangkok) knows about it. But you don't know because you don't believe. What's your religion? Christian?

— No. I don't have one.

— What? What kind of answer is that? What do your parents believe in?

— They don't have a religion either.

— You're talking crazy. Everyone has a religion. What do you do when someone dies? Don't you have the priests come? It's impossible. No one can do without a religion. Why won't you tell me?

— Because I can't explain it. In America some people have a religion. Some don't. Mainly, people say they have a religion, but don't really believe.

— You are strange people, you farangs.

I will stop here. The conversations we had were far longer than I can transcribe. And the longer I write the more indistinct my memories of Meo's words become. Meo has since left Bangkok, and will not return for many months. I know neither her name nor her whereabouts, which is fortunate because I would probably try to find her. I hope she will forgive me for sharing her with so many others.



AMERICA IN THAILAND

"FARANGS DON'T KNOW, BUT THAIS DO. THEY SEE
YOUR SKIRT AND THEY KNOW WHOSE MONEY
BOUGHT IT, YOU CAN'T HIDE IN BANGKOK."







THE WALK

I believe it was Yeats who wrote "A Refusal to Mourn the Death of a Child, by Fire, in London." For some reason, Yeat's work came to mind a few days ago as I saw a child run down by a fuel-truck.

A Refusal to Forgive the Death of a Child, by Steel,
on Friendship Highway

I saw a Thai-child killed today,
By a fuel-truck on its way
To feed a jet to fly away
To bomb a child another day.

On hot asphalt there he lay,
The child's brain was crushed away,
A policeman came to chase away
The flies, the dogs, and those who prayed.

Blood puddled, scorched and seeped away,
Child's eyes, wide open, not brown, but grey.
A twisted leg torn away,
He'd never had a Christmas Day.

The fuel-truck, fast, it sped away,
Reached Korat that very day.
"Damn you're late," a farang did say.
"Sorry, sir, but I hit a dog today."

A Volunteer



AMERICA IN THAILAND

THE WALK

BILL STRAWN, UTTARADIT

It was a cloudy morning, looking very much like rain, when we arrived. The others were ready, and as soon as the medical supplies and food provisions had been loaded into the jeep we drove to the drop-off.

At the drop-off the men unloaded the jeep and strapped the supply bags to a short bamboo pole. The carrier secured the heavy pole across his shoulder and we began to walk.

Nine men strung-out single-file moved quickly across the flat rai of rice land, balancing themselves on the narrow ridges which separated one rai from another. Reaching the footpath that led into the forest, we wormed our way through the crowded green of vines and high grass until the river broke the trail's continuity.

The man in the lead, Nithat, was three-quarters of the way across the waist-deep copper-colored water when an unseen rock spilled him. He went in and under, emerging like some unknown river monster. Still, he continued to lead. It was his first time in this area, but the others understood that status and not familiarity was the standard for leadership.

Beyond this crossing the land sloped-up steeply, curled around thick foliage and large rocks, then slid down, splashing again and again into meandering streams. The cigarettes and liquor and years of plunging only through mountains of paper began to take their toll, and the pace slowed to an easy walk.

I guess we were well into the third hour when we passed the soldier. He was coming out of the thick brush, his rifle slung snugly around his muscled shoulder. His right hand rested near the trigger.

"Where are you going?" he asked, directing the question at Nithat.

"To Huay That. You know it?"

"Yeah, I'm just coming from there. You got business?"

"We're going in to take some blood slides. Now that the rains are here there's a lot more malaria. We want to see how the situation looks in Huay That."

The soldier had been staring at me during the exchange. Nithat quickly added, "The farang is a volunteer. He has been working with us and wanted to come along. The man in charge of this area, Mani, said it was safe enough. What do you think?"

"I guess it's alright. We haven't had much trouble there. Better watch yourselves, though. It's only two hours walking from the Lao border and you could run into a terrorist patrol. Are you armed?"

"Only with needles," I replied, and moved away from him to catch-up with the others.

By the time I had caught-up a heated argument was going on between Nithat and Mani. "Why didn't you tell me this was a sensitive area?" Nithat asked sharply. "Because I didn't know it. Do you think I would have invited the farang along if I thought there was any danger?" "No, but there would be hell to pay if that kid got shot." "Who's going to shoot me?" I broke in, smiling. "This is no laughing matter," Nithat barked out. "From here on you walk in the center." "Okay, okay," I answered, but thought to myself that here was the stuff of drama, probably over-played.

We moved on, even slower than before. The terrain was more difficult now, and we found ourselves staircasing up and around the face of the mountain. It was late in the afternoon and the last of the day's sun bounced off the sheer out-croppings of rock, and the white light lingering over the floor of the valley far below us. A whole range of mountains, bearded green with forests of bamboo and teak, elbowed in on each other. Splashes had been cleared to grow rice and peppers, and to provide wood for houses and tools. Tops of trees outlined the ridges of distant woods, broken occasionally by clearings with indistinguishable objects stuck amidst them. "Those are Meo and Ye hill tribes," the carrier offered. "I've been told that they're the ones causing the trouble around the border."

At the end of the fifth hour, the footpath came itself down, spreading out into an oxcart road, leading in to the village of Huay That. Children and barking dogs, the companions and ushers of strangers everywhere, showed us the house of the village head-man.

After the introductions had been made, Nithat broke into his stock speech.

"The Phu Yai Baan is our most important contact in the villages. He knows how his people feel and what they are thinking about. He is their leader, elected by them, and they are strongly influenced by his actions. Whenever someone from the Government comes into a village, whether it be the army, police, or the malaria workers, they always talk to Phu Yai first."



AMERICA IN THAILAND

Then, he began the malaria dialogue, carefully explaining to the head-man the reasons for spraying DDT, the importance of taking the medicine, and why the malaria people take blood slides from apparently healthy people who live deep in forest areas. The head-man agreed that much progress had been made, and that thanks to the Government's efforts and expenses that they now had no problems with malaria.

To me Nithat offered in English, "It is important to explain this way to him because he is an ignorant man. The villagers are all rice farmers and they do not understand. If the head-man understands, the others will cooperate with us. Do you believe that?" "Yes, sure," I nodded. Turning back to the head-man, he asked, "Can you call a meeting tomorrow and explain to your people that we want to take blood slides from all of them?" "Yes," he replied, "But let us eat now."

While the other men removed the food from the heavy packs, Nithat and I put on Phakhamas and walked to the stream. The water was stomach-deep and cold. Wading up to a place where it rushed over the bed-rock, I sat down beneath the flow and let the stream's thousand liquid fingers gently massage me. As the bulk of the already climbed mountain gathered in the shadows of night, I pondered the profound peace which had settled over me.

The four village men arrived just as we began to eat. All of them were armed with a heavy caliber rifle, the same kind as the one carried by the soldier. Excusing themselves for their interruption, the spokesman said, "Phu Yai, we have just come from the stream. There are three of them. They came out of the mountains to bathe in the stream."

"Did they see you?" the head-man asked.

"No, I do not think so. We stayed only until they had undressed and entered the water. They were all dressed alike, in black pajamas, and they had rifles."

Even in the poor light of the kerosene lamp I could see Nithat's face blanch white. "Who are these men, Phu Yai?" "They are from the mountains. They come here often to get food, blankets, and cloth. Do not worry. They will not come into the village."

The head-man rose from the meal and walked over to his sleeping room. The others, the news carriers, went with him. He doled out five of the big cartridges to each of them, and they slipped off into the night.

We finished the meal quickly. The carrier and some of the others in our group were looking at me, obviously deeply troubled by this turn of events. Together with Nithat they decided that I should be tucked away into the furthest corner, the others lined-up beside me for the night's sleep. I started to say something, but Nithat snapped out that he was responsible for me and that I was to lie still and deep quiet. "If they don't know about you," he said, "they will probably go on their way. Otherwise, I do not know..."

Sometime before morning I heard someone rummaging through the house. It woke the others too, and they said later that it was the head-man gathering some things together and leaving the house. What he did or where he went remains a mystery, but the talk was that he had taken supplies out to the three men to keep them away from the village.

At first light the men were up and the head-man began banging on the meeting gong. He banged for nearly twenty minutes; the metallic vibrations setting the morning air on edge. Everybody left for the meeting except the head-man's wife and children. I was left with them.

By mid-morning the work was finished. Nithat and the others returned to the house and we all breakfasted on a hot chicken curry. Nithat then asked directions to the next village. Getting the information, we thanked our host for his hospitality, packed our things, and started up the same road we had come down on. "Is this the way to the next village," I asked. "No. We're going back to town. I asked for the directions so that anyone unfriendly would think we were going there, but we're really not. You understand?"

I understood. All the talk about terrorists had begun to seep in, and I even found myself looking over my shoulder to see if anyone was following us. After about an hour, though, I decided that if someone wanted to take a shot at me or anyone else in this terrain there was nothing I could do about it. Besides, I still believed that the events were played out as much for drama as for safety. I saw myself becoming the gist for an intriguing account, an "adventure," as Nithat framed it.

It was nearly evening when we reached the jeep. I climbed into it mechanically, the muscles in my legs and thighs throbbing and my chest aching from the walk. The motor droned away into oncoming night and I listened quietly as Nithat told the story to the driver.



AMERICA IN THAILAND

LIFE

IN
THIS
ISSUE:

"THE WHITE LIBERAL VISITS HOME"

BORIS BACZYNSKYJ

(After two and a half years of building privies, guzzling countless "bans" of Maekong, punctuating his every sentence with a smile, and being chagrined by an instrument which plunged deeper and deeper into the venereal swamps of S.E. Asia, PCV Boris Baczynskyj went home for a month. Below is his account of what he saw and heard.)

You might kid yourself, and think that you are really getting into Southeast Asia and Thailand, but you cannot escape from McLuhan's tribal world village.

After all, you can get the latest Beatles records at the stores on Phetburi; Hello Dolly had its royal premiere here before it came to Philadelphia; and it's possible to buy Newsweek here on Tuesday—the same date as in Washington.

After two and a half years away from the U.S. of A. you can reclaim your place back in the society which you are supposed to belong to. Of course, you know that ecology and women are big now if you have read your Time diligently ("OH! WOW! Ecology!" the long-haired comparative literature graduate student at

Columbia told me.) Crime....youth culture....the Black you can read all about it in the N.Y. Times Weekly Review.

There is a difference though—by going back you feel the torture that is America. It hits you during the TWA two-hour stop at Honolulu Airport, where after downing your 6 paper cups of free Dole pineapple juice (the greedy Peace Corps mentality) you make a run to the john because you're tired of the airlines' inefficient chemical toilets. And on the faintly blood metal partition there it is scratched out in three different tints of ballpoint ink: "Fuck you nigger-lover;" (below): "This was written by a California bigot;" (below): "California has no bigots;" (below): "Fuck California ofays".

And you're not a "Hey, You!" anymore—you're a White Liberal again.

The White Liberal hung around the airport at Honolulu and saw the soldiers all around—it is very easy to tell from their expressions whether they are coming or going. It's the same thing as at the LA and SF airports

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If you stop and talk with the guys in the green they'll tell you how they flunked out from the small mid-Western college and that they're going, but they don't really agree with the war, and they don't know why we're still there.

But further east, away from America's arsenals in California and Hawaii, among the Agnewcastigated "establishment", the war is not an issue, not even a subject of conversation anymore. The White Liberal visited his friends—many of whom were active in 1967—marching, protesting, and signing the petitions thought up byillard Lowenstein and his friends. These people do not talk about the war anymore—, to the surprise of the White Liberal they were not even interested whether Thailand will become another Vietnam (one question for which the White Liberal prepared himself by giving it two hours of solid thought between Honolulu and L.A. collecting pseudonecdotes, and forming luke-warm opinions, as befits a "Southeast Asia man".)

But the people back home made up their minds in '67, and the real slow ones sometime in '68, and although those of the White Liberal's persuasion maybe perked up again and marched in October, and possibly even sent to Washington in November, now they don't do anything about the war. It's not that they don't care—they do, but they're tired of it all, bored by it all. It seems that America's Dreyfus Affair is over now, and you can sit down to lunch with somebody without any idea of how he feels about the War, because the nightmare is just a war right now.

Yes, Amphorn and Arunee, America is bored with the war now, and it's bored with Southeast Asia, and there are very few interested in Thailand.

In the tumultuous 1968 (which from afar, seemed to the White Liberal as an apocalyptic year with many Apocalypses) America elected itself a boring president, who formulated a boring Vietnam policy, which if nothing else defused America (although 85% of the maximum 1967 ceiling of the defenders of "Peace and Freedom" are still big-striding around small Vietnamese villages demanding in Georgia accents "Any VC here?", while the computers in Pentagon East still purr away, recording the latest changes in the body count and the number of pacified villages.)

The White Liberal thought that Richard Milhous must be a good president after all, since in '68, he was so much out of it that the White Liberal wouldn't mention his name without a sneer or a joke about used cars. But now he's not criticised (one part of the population says, "After all, he's first Hershey", while the other half, "He's doing something about crime", and the kids who used to yell, "Hey! hey! LBJ! how many kids did you kill today!?" just don't give a fuck anymore now (the four-letter word is much more accepted now as the White Liberal discovered after uttering it in mixed company in New York, promptly apologising to the ladies and then being reminded by a friend, "Don't worry about it; times have changed since you're been here, Boris").

After two terms of a contentious Presidency, which culminated with the "President of all the People" painting himself into a smaller and smaller but noisier corner, America wants a breather. The Johnson years just now seem so overwhelming, so loud—a President who was a kind of Lincoln in reverse confined to troop carriers and service academies for his speech-making. Even the radicals are tired of all the marching except for the tiny "weatherman" fringe, which is a bunch of kids that are not a political movement but a religion trying to expiate their middle-class sins by having their heads bashed in by the Chicago police. But the Johnson years are history now, and when in January Johnson appeared on the CBS screens to explicate his resignation from the office most of America was little interested in its fallen leader, but tuned in a bowl football game.

The Kennedy Administration is being forgotten now too. It exists not even as history, but as a warm glow to people when they muse about the Sixties and their beginning—what America might have been.

It was surprising about Nixon for the White Liberal—a man so vulnerable—who holds Sunday services in the White House, voices more concern over the Norm. Dame-Texas battle on New Years, than over the status of the battles in the II Corps area, and practices put-shots in the Oval Office. But people are not harping about this now—what flack there is, is absorbed by Agnew.

So it was neither Vietnam nor Nixon which fulfilled the White Liberal's masochistic desire for self-flagellation. No, this time around it was "crime by them".



AMERICA IN THAILAND

In 1964, the issue first surfaced (at that time it was "crime in the streets"), and the White Liberal knew what stance to take toward it and learned the proper responses, considering the sources of the accusation. The statistics of crime in the big cities were rising but somehow this didn't even touch on the White Liberal in those retrospectively halcyon days of the civil rights movement, in which he played his small part.

This time round, though, wherever the White Liberal went, his friends were telling him stories about their pocketbooks being snatched, or their houses being broken into, or about being robbed at gunpoint. On the radio talk shows in Philadelphia half of the people called in to talk about "crime by them" while the other half was making the usual liberal sounds, "No, I don't agree about carrying guns for protection on the Philadelphia subways. This is not a jungle". But the White Liberal's acquaintances—even those who 3 years ago wouldn't be caught dead on an opposite side of an issue with the Blacks—told him that Philadelphia is a jungle.

In all of the cities the White Liberal visited, one had to have exact change to get on the trolleys or the buses and the central districts rapidly became semi-deserted of pedestrians as the evening changed into night. There is a fear among the friends of the White Liberal—from the one who lived near the Columbia campus and had three locks on his door and hundred-or-so beer cans on his fire escape as "a poor man's burglar alarm" to two Yale graduates in Washington, who thought of him as nuts since he decided to replenish his nicotine habit in the middle of one of D.C.'s slums ("You're nuts, Boris. You can't just go and buy cigarettes at a black bar".)

The Presidential commissions on crime, cities, and, most recently, violence have met, and have presented their recommendations (it's always the same things—education, housing, police etc.). In the meantime the cities are becoming worse and worse places to live in. And nobody does anything about it, and the "Oh, Wow" issues now are environment and women's rights.

The young seem to be less into politics now (according to one rumor, Columbia took special care in selecting its class of '73 to take unpolitical types). If the young

are still participating into revolution now, it is not of a cultural Abbie Hoffman "revolution, for the love of it", rather than a political one.

The White Liberal was struck by the spirit of the community among the young around universities. They share a common language of "being into things" as "rapping" all the time and, of course, "Oh, Wow". The hair is long for everybody—even on the heads of the pizza shop vendors, newspaper sellers, and Republicans. (The White Liberal thought that in the future the successors of the Hippies would start shaving the hair like Buddhist monks to distinguish themselves from the crowd, but now the real cultural revolutionaries at places like Columbia and Berkeley wear long Afro-Guthrie hair-cuts so there was more than one situation where he was fooled by a boy masquerading as a girl.) The Berkeley campus is especially free, and if Governor Reagan does not eliminate it, it has a future as a tourist attraction for middle America, wanting to find out about its alienated youth, just as Bangkok visitors go to the floating market, to see "real" Thai life. Around Sproul Hall one can see "fire and brimstone" fundamentalist preachers, vying for attention with those dressed as Buddhist monks (except for long Casual hair tails on the back of the head), who are not too far from the recruiters for the California Socialist Party. Recently the women have demonstrated for admission to karate classes, and the California Daily published a letter in which it was pointed out that the University has "responsibility" to provide day-care centres for dogs since their owners cannot take them to the classes. Incidentally the Berkeley campus was the only place the White Liberal visited where he didn't notice the hostility between whites and blacks.

Everywhere else in his rambles around America, the White Liberal saw the angry, sullen, but strangely sophisticated Blacks (sophisticated means that they seem to know many things that the White Liberal did not know.) The exploding hair-cuts themselves distinguished the White Liberal who often felt, passing them in the streets, sitting next to them on subways that he was a clumsy farang in his own adopted country, felt tired of this perpetual American wound, and wanted to escape it. When the White Liberal graduated:

(Continued Page 65)

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AMERICA IN THAILAND

TERMINATION FROM PEACE CORPS;

BACK TO AMERICA

A Volunteer returns to the United States

* * *

by Joseph H. Johnston

Joseph H. Johnston
Wat Wiwekasom
Cholburi, Thailand
November 10, 1969

Dear Bruce, Sandie, et. al.,

I guess you're wondering what I've been doing here in seclusion at Wat Wiwekasom, Cholburi for the last three months. As you already know, I became very interested in Buddhism and especially the practice of meditation during my last few months as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Chumphon. Well, now that I'm through with the course here (I didn't finish the course), I can tell you something about it.

Last spring my being a humorous iconoclast and prophet of doom, together with my capacity to empathize with the world's suffering millions and my innate tendency towards self-flagellation, began to depress me more and more as the giant void looming up just beyond my July termination kept rushing toward me. Also there was my ever-present draft board, an ugly legghoo, lurking around the corner wringing its collective hands while waiting for my II-A to expire, also adding to my anxiety.

I consider myself most fortunate to have as my friend in Chumphon, one Dr. Permsombat, with whom I discussed my anxiety and depression about the general state of the world. He often related to me how by his ability to practice Vepassana Meditation that not only could he allay his own fears and anxieties but actually gain insight by being able to see things more clearly in a perspective devoid of emotion. That sounded great, but at the time I was a little skeptical.

Having stimulated my interest somewhat, he then recommended that before I leave Thailand I should visit the Meditation Center here in Cholburi where he himself had learned to practice while in the Monkhhood. He

wrote a short letter of introduction for me before I left Chumphon. Though I was interested in the idea of studying meditation, I wasn't particularly serious about it.

TERMINATION

Then came termination in July and money, lots of it by PCV standards. All the lures and enticements of Babylon East hit me at once, and with a rush and a roar I was off. Attaching myself to one old friend whose philosophy of life was to "eat, drink and make Mary" in the Hemingway tradition (Mary being anyone of the feminine gender within a radius of 50 miles), I followed his example, leaving a trail of Wetex wrappers and empty shot glasses all around Bangkok for about three weeks. Although there were some good moments during that time, the over-all result was that I became even more anxious and depressed than before. I smoked more and could consume three beers and six shots of bourbon in an evening and not even feel high. That, I found to be scary. So after getting my 30-day tourist visa in Viengtiem, I decided that the shoes of Bacchus didn't fit, so I split and started on a different tact on my own that led me to Wat Wiwekasom, Cholburi.

I won't go into detail about how I found this place, but it was by a stroke of luck because when I first came to Cholburi, I had forgotten the name, Wiwekasom, and the name of the Abbot. Now I find that even most of the samlaw drivers in town don't know where Wat Wiwekasom is located. When I did enter Wiwekasom I wasn't sure it was the same place Dr. Permsombat had studied until I spoke with the Abbot, Venerable Asabha Thera, and Mr. Tannanon Singara Varnit, the main co-founder and patron of the meditation center.

At the time of my arrival here, I had no real idea what a meditation course was, actually, nor exactly how Vepassana was practiced, nor the self-discipline involved. It turned out to be a radical cure. I thought three weeks should be more than sufficient time to learn what I wanted to know.

ABBOT THERA

The Abbot, Venerable Asabha Thera, who immigrated to Thailand from Burma sixteen years ago at the invitation of the Thai Buddhist Society, told me frankly that if I was to receive any benefit from Vepassana and have any hope for results, that I should take a formal three month course; otherwise a few weeks practice would not be worth the time and I could learn what facts I wanted to know from books and pamphlets.

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Pg. 116)



AMERICA IN THAILAND

Well, at the time I had envisioned spending the months of September, October, touring thru a dozen or so countries on my way home from Thailand. I explained this to the Abbot, but then I agreed to try a formal course for about six weeks. He smiled slightly, I think. So, the next day I officially began as a yogi under the personal instruction of Ven. Asabha Thera, Abbot and head instructor at Wiwekasom.

What I want to write about next is something to give you a general idea concerning the routine of Vipassana meditation and the strict discipline involved in taking a formal intensive course. This is to stimulate your interest and curiosity. If you want to read more on the subject please note the references listed at the end of this letter.

THE WANDERING MIND

First, however, some things need to be said about the source of most of all our problems, the wandering mind. Here I will quote the English Monk, Mangalo Bhikkhu, to save time and for the sake of clarity:

"Let us take a look at the mind of an ordinary worldly person. What we find is a grasshopper mind,.....chasing its own fancies and impulses of the moment, the prey of stimuli and its own emotional reaction to them—a reaction that is largely a purely conditioned and blind one. A chain of linked associations, hopes, fears, memories, fantasies/and/regrets, stream constantly through the mind, triggered off by momentary contact with the outside world through the senses. It is a blind, never-ceasing, never-satisfied search for satisfaction, bewildered, aimless,/and/suffering. This is not reality, but a waking dream, a sequence of concepts and fantasies. The world is split up into recognizable identified forms; each of which has its name, and on the basis of these names conceptual images of the reality around/it—the mind spins its web of thought in which/it/entangles itself. Objects change, but their "name" remains the same, and the mind, left clinging to empty names and images, loses touch with reality, trying to find in the products of its own imagination the satisfaction and security for which it thirsts. No wonder the mind has been called an "idol-factory,"....The futility, unreality and frustration inherent in such a mode of existence is startlingly self-apparent once one begins to see it clearly.

"That modern man allows his mind to continue this blind, tormented rat-race in undisciplined confusion is perhaps the wonder of all wonders of an age that likes to consider itself "scientific." Man has amassed a phenomenal amount of information—concepts, all of it—about the forms and names that inhabit the universe, and he has harnessed and disciplined the forces of nature that would have staggered his forefathers. To gain electrical power he will build structures of enormous size and cost both in money and labour, damming back great rivers in mid-stream, yet still his knowledge of reality fails him, and his own nature escapes him, while he,.....omits to expend the slightest labour to stem and discipline his own thoughts, even when he half perceives/that/they delude and torment him.

"Taking our own thoughts, mere images of reality, we allow the emotions to be aroused by them. These emotions produce more thoughts in the desire to satisfy this disturbance, and the vicious circle is complete. Without ignorance of reality one would not think about it, without the stream of thoughts there would be no distressing emotions, the mind would be at peace, and then there would be no need to think."

WHERE MY MIND WAS AT

Well, I think that pretty well sums up my mental state for the past twenty-four years, and, I suspect, just about everyone else's, too. Thus the source has been defined. Rather obvious, wouldn't you say?

Now, what to do about this situation. The next quote from Buddha points the way. To stop conceptual though one must focus the mind on the "here and now," on what is. Buddha expressed it in a famous verse:

Don't chase after the past,
Don't seek the future;
The past is gone
The future hasn't come
But see clearly on the spot
That object which is now.

While finding and living in
A still, unmoving state of mind.

The means of achieving the mental discipline required to hold the attention on the "here and now" is through meditation. Needless to say, there are many methods of meditation; however, one which tends to produce results quickly in stopping the stream of



thought and at the same time leading to Enlightenment is that of Vepassana Kammattahana.

In order to learn and understand the practice of meditation, one should take a formal course under a competent instructor at a meditation center, if at all possible, in order to avoid making mistakes, wasting time and effort.

COMMITMENT

Now, if one really wants to practice meditation and derive any benefit, he must be sincere in committing himself completely to the discipline involved in undertaking such a course. For example, in Chobhari, one must promise not to leave the meditation center unless some urgent business arises that makes it necessary, and then one must request permission from the Abbot before leaving. There is no reading, writing or receiving mail. Idle conversation is not allowed with anyone. One should only speak to his instructor during his daily interview with his instructor, if at all possible. No alcohol, no cigarettes, no social contact with the opposite sex is permitted. These rules, if strictly adhered to, will produce surroundings most conducive to successful meditation. To break these rules only slows down the process by creating diversions and distractions.

Sleep is reduced to a little more than four hours per night. The remaining time, all of it, is spent practicing. Most Thai laymen taking the course forgo eating an evening meal as do the Buddhist monks. This is not required of Burangs unless they want to do so.

This withdrawal from the secular world, if complete, shuts off most outside stimuli that would normally cause the mind to wander or that would give rise to emotional feelings.

You're saying to yourselves that such mental isolation would be unbearable. Well, if one had nothing to do to occupy one's mind, I'm sure it would be. However, while practicing Vepassana with determination such is not the case.

THE HERE AND NOW

With Vepassana the mind is constantly being focused on the immediate present, the "here and now". It is always occupied.

With all this in mind you are better prepared to understand the routine of the practice of Vepassana meditation which I will now try to explain.

The best way to practice Vepassana meditation according to Ven. Asubha Thera is to sit down and to concentrate on one's most visible constant function of

the body, the rising and falling of the abdomen while breathing. Sitting in a relaxed cross-legged position on the floor, one should try to keep an alert, upright, perfectly straight-backed posture which can be held without too much trouble for about one hour of the time. One must try to sit still without fidgeting, relaxed and yet alert with the hands lying lightly cupped one inside the other, right on left. The head is held upright, the eyes closed, and all muscles should be relaxed and easy.

The attention is fixed on the rising and falling of the abdomen as one breathes. Breathing is natural and not deliberately regulated. At first it is easy to confuse pure attention with control but practice soon corrects this. As one's abdomen rises, one should report to himself "rising"; as it falls one should report to himself "falling". This is a check to see clearly if the mind is doing the practice or wandering.

One soon discovers after attempting to practice for a few hours that the mind of the beginner has a continual tendency to wander, to be distracted from the noting of his breathing. "Thoughts and memories of the past, hopes and fears for the future, doubts and worries about one's meditation, illusions and mental pictures in addition to the external stimuli of noises, pains, itches..." wanting to move, etc., all tend to draw the attention away from the rising and falling of the abdomen. There is nothing unusual in this and it should not discourage the new yogi.

In order to handle these distractions and bring the mind back to the breathing, one should note the distraction as soon as possible and then identify it by repeating to himself the appropriate word such as "Thinking," "Seeing," "Hearing," "Hurtling," "Itching," "Wanting," etc. Then as the distraction loses its intensity, the mind should return to noting the movement of the breathing until the next distraction. In the same manner emotions should be noted and identified as for example "Feeling happy," "Feeling angry," "Feeling bored," "Feeling frustrated," etc. Thus the yogi's concentration during the practice of Vepassana may go something like this:

Rising, Falling, Rising, Falling, Rising, Falling, Itching, Itching, Wanting to scratch, Wanting to scratch, Rising, Falling, Rising, Falling, Itching, Wanting to scratch, Lifting, Lifting, Lifting, Touching, Scratching, Scratching, Scratching, Lowering, Lowering, Lowering,



AMERICA IN THAILAND

Lowering, Replacing, Rising, Falling, Rising, Falling, Rising, Falling, Feeling peaceful, Feeling happy, Feeling happy, Rising, Falling, Rising, Falling, Jerking, Feeling surprised, Hearing, Hearing, Rising, Falling, Humm, What should I get the old nun for Christmas? THINKING, THINKING, THINKING, RISING, FALLING, RISING, FALLING, etc.

CONSTANT PRACTICE

As I have mentioned above, once one has begun a course, the yogi must try to practice during every waking moment of the day and night in order not to break the concentration. Every time one becomes lazy or relaxes, not noting the here and now the progress of this mental conditioning stops. If the yogi stops for for several hours or more, the mind begins to regress back to its former grasshopper-self.

Though the best subject for Vepassana meditation is the breathing, one does not, of course, sit for twenty-four hours straight noting one's abdominal movement. Thus Ven. Asaliha Thera has his yogis sit for about one hour, and then walk for about one hour, alternating every hour. There are various methods of noting the walking which focus the attention on the feet. While walking the yogi does not note the breathing. One example is when one step is broken into three motions, "Lifting", "Moving", "Placing". The motions of turning are also noted in a like manner.

In addition to the sitting and walking exercises there are the standing and reclining positions. While standing, the yogi notes the act of standing or perhaps some distraction occurring during his walking exercise. If reclining the yogi notes mainly the breathing in the same manner as when sitting.

Now you are asking yourself, what about eating, bathing, dressing, etc.? Well, each of these actions is noted in as many separate movements as is necessary (in order to concentrate the mind's attention on the immediate present).

To sum it up, Buddha noted how the practice should be maintained in all the smallest actions of life in one short paragraph of his "Discourse on the Practice of Recollection" or Vepassana.

"Whether going out or returning, bhikkhu acts with full awareness; whether looking ahead or looking

around he acts with full awareness. Whether bending (his arm) or straightening it, he acts with full awareness; in taking his under-robe, bowl and spare under-robe, he acts with full awareness; whether defecating or urinating, he acts with full awareness; whether walking, standing or sitting, whether resting or awake, Whether talking or silent, he acts with full awareness."

THE RESULT

So what's the point? Why all the sweat? What's the result of all this effort supposed to be? Again quote from the Mangalo Bhikkhu:

"If practiced properly,.....Vepassana leads to stillness of mind (samadhi).....; not, moreover, momentary samadhi, to be achieved only in immobile, trance-like meditation, but stillness of mind as a state of mind-preserved and maintained throughout the activities of life."

Thus by practicing Vepassana the flow of conceptual thought has stopped. The grasshopper mind has landed.

Buddhism teaches that there is only Duccion (suffering), Anichang (impermanence), and Anatta (no-self). Through meditation the yogi gains an understanding of these three facts by experiencing them rather than just an intellectual understanding of them.

Through Vepassana one can reduce one's psychosomatic and physical processes into two things: mental events (nama) and corporeality (rupa), which include the five senses: seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting and touching. When practiced successfully, Vepassana shows that there is no Ego, no Self, only the mind (nama) and the body (rupa). The mind commands, the body reacts—thus, reality.

Just imagine for a moment, with no Ego there is no anxiety, no insecurity, etc. One's position in the secular world could then be appreciated from an entirely new perspective, devoid of emotion. Problems could be viewed dispassionately. If they affect one directly, then a way to solve them could be seen more easily and quickly. Well, all this is possible through practicing Vepassana in addition to achieving a stillness of the mind as a state of mind.

(Continued Pg. 111)



THE END

The preceding 60 minute program special, "AMERICA IN THAILAND" has been brought to you through the courtesy of you neighborhood Coca-Cola bottler who reminds you:

"Things don't go better with Maekong!"

Thank You.



THE END

NOTICE:

To encourage communication between Peace Corps Volunteers, and to avoid a communications gap between staff and volunteers in the field, we present the following Greeting Cards for your use.

Simply cut the cards on the dotted line and send one to your loved one today.

The Editors

ARTIST: Joyce Wagner

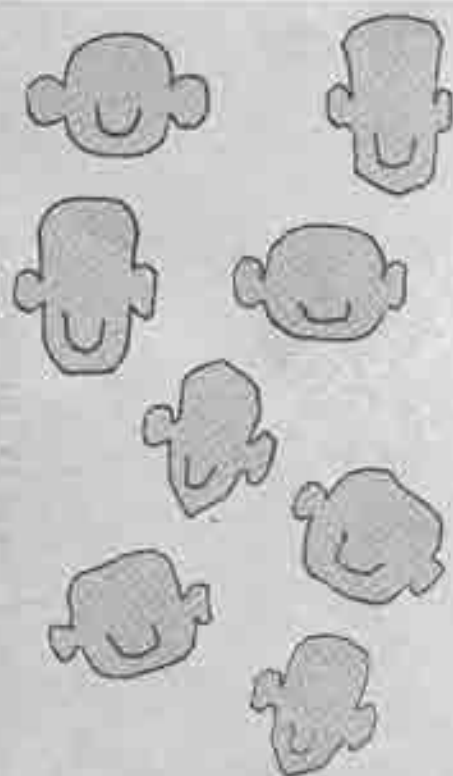


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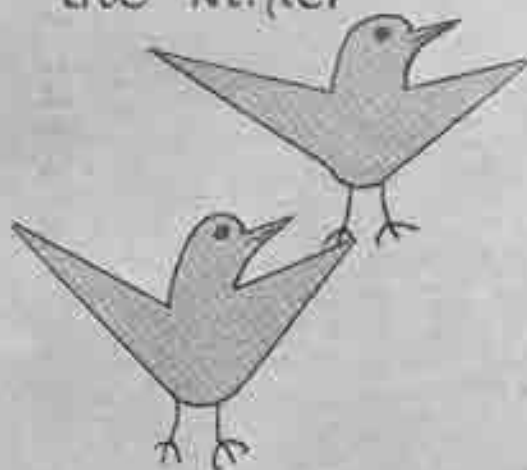
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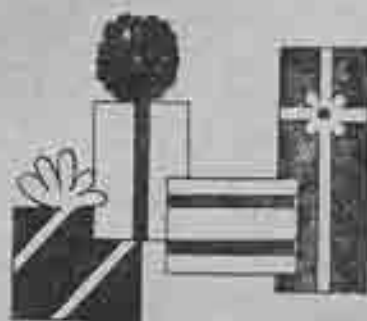
DEAR

BOB FORD....

4. DON'T FORGET!

3. MONEY PROBLEMS?

ONLY 7 MORE SHOPPING
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**A COLLECT
TELEGRAM
WILL FOLLOW.**

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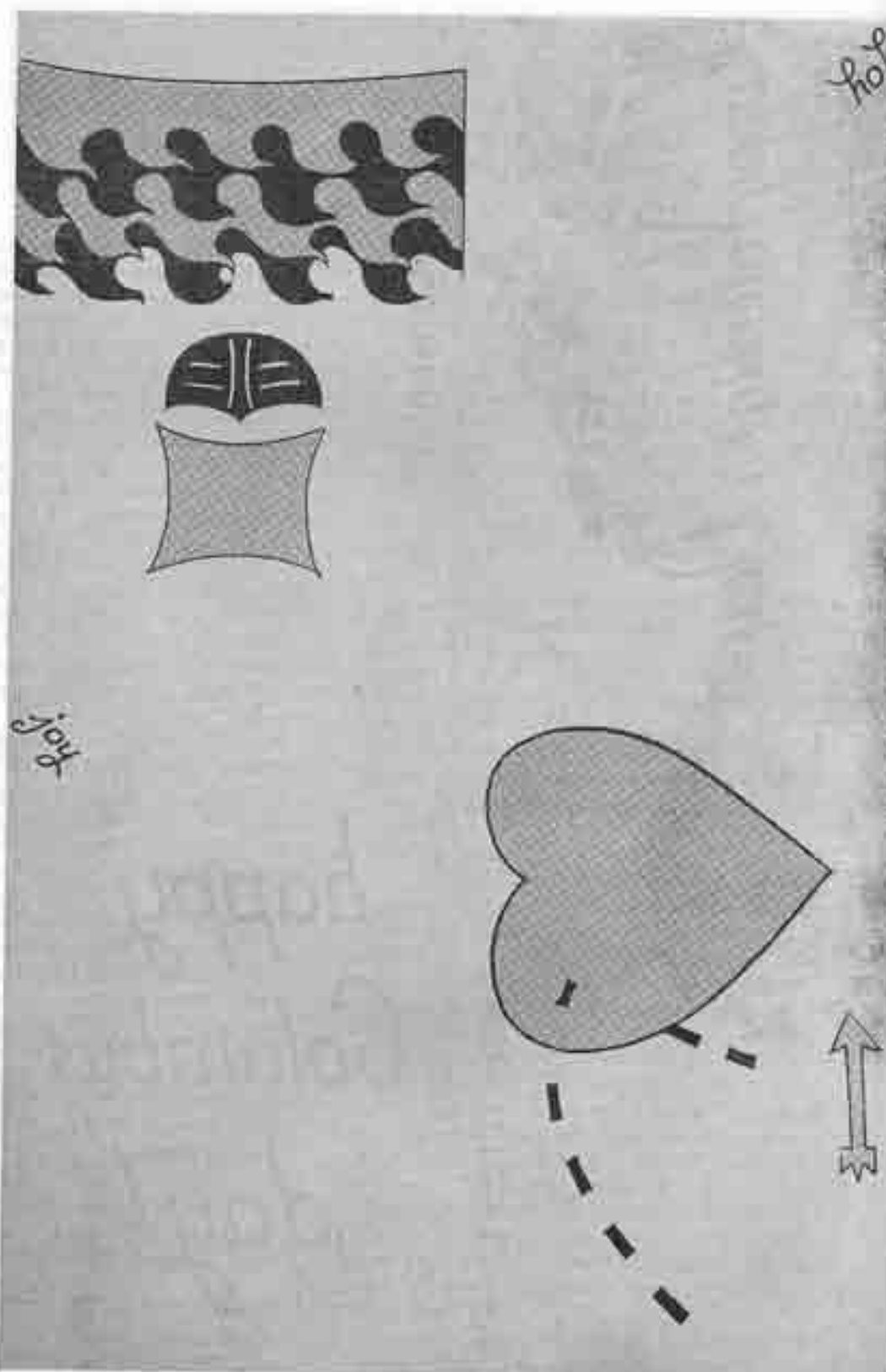
UNTIL MY BIRTHDAY..

6. GOODBYE COLUMBUS

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5. HELLO LOVE!



Happy Valentine's Day

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THE GUNS OF THAILAND

PETER COOMESKOH SAMU

What is the cause of the Thai males pre-occupation with carrying small cannons in their back pockets all over the place? About a month ago, I was visiting a Thai acquaintance on the mainland. This particular individual runs a printing shop and has a small corner of the shop set off for the sale of guns and accessories. Everything seemed pretty well covered with dust and I didn't even notice it until seven or eight disreputable looking characters walked in and went over to the gun counter. One of them was interested in purchasing a new holster. He said he had a five-incher and it was too short. Hmmm, I thought, a small automatic. This should be interesting. But instead, he pulls out a Colt revolver with a six inch barrel! Wyatt Earp would have been proud to have had such a monster, I'm sure. He (the holster-purchaser) needed something to cover the barrel and safely encase his weapon. After a great deal of searching about, the proper case was finally found and the whole gang tramped out of the shop. When they left, I breathed a sigh of relief to myself—they looked like they wouldn't have batted an eyelash if they had to shoot everybody in the store to get what they wanted.

About four weeks later, I was on my way to the mainland once again. I was sharing the upper deck of a sparsely populated ferry with three other Thai men and a nice looking girl—I throw that last in to show that being way off here on a tiny little island hasn't completely warped my sense of values or judgement. About three hours into our voyage, I happened to turn my head on the pillow and found myself staring right into the nozzle of a vicious-looking Smith and Wesson .38. It was tucked between two pillows of one of my fellow travelers and he was quite amused by my insistence that he at least point it out the window or at himself—anywhere but at my head. If it is surmised by now that I do not particularly care for firearms, I would classify the assumption as one of the biggest understatements of the year.

We sat around for the better part of an hour discussing the pros and cons of guns (all three of the men were carrying fully-loaded weapons) and I heard some pretty wild comments.

They were genuinely surprised to hear that all Americans didn't carry weapons a la Gary Cooper or a la Clint Eastwood. If the above mentioned Wyatt Earp were to turn up in Surat Thani province, I doubt that more than two or three people would even bat an eyelash. Perhaps I

exaggerate a wee tad but I think the point is made. Another excuse for carrying guns is the fact that everybody else does and it is foolish to leave yourself unprotected in the face of such awesome firepower. Since we have had a small number of shooting incidents here on the island, I would find it hard to argue with that logic. I think a lot of the countries in the world should take a good look at the gun laws in France and copy them exactly. I simply can't see any use for guns at all under any circumstances.

Perhaps a couple of incidents will serve to point out what might happen at any given time where the populace walks around as if they expected an invasion at any time.

Sometime before my arrival on the island, there was an oil-prospecting team here. They had a radio station in a small village on the north side of the island. They also had a Thai assistant whose duty it was to keep the generator going when there wasn't anyone around to check on it.

One evening he kicked a dog that was eating some scraps of garbage and just happened to be in our friend's way. The dog, being a self-respecting animal, naturally took a chunk out of his tormenter. This infuriated the latter so much that he went home, picked up his gun, and went after the offending animal. When he returned about fifteen minutes later, he said he had finished the beast off down on the beach. It later turned out that he had instead followed it into town and emptied his gun at it in the half-light of early evening. He had missed the animal completely and one of the bullets ricocheted into a little girl. Fortunately, it wasn't too serious but a foot higher and she would have been very dead.

Incident number two involves the manager of one of the small factories here on the island. He is a Dane who has been in this part of the world for more than 25 years (nonetheless, he speaks no Thai). He fired a worker without real cause and the man or his friends came back at night and put four shots through the front door. It was a warning to rehire the man just dismissed. The next time, according to custom, they don't miss.

We have a SEATO lab on the island which was doing research into the breeding habits of the mosquito that causes dengue. They are supervised by an American Army Sergeant who puts in an appearance every once

in a while to make sure the boys are actually collecting samples and not drinking twenty-four hours a day. His workers are not from the Island and they have made some enemies among the local folks. One night, as he was driving the SEATO Bronco home, a rifle shot of the .30 caliber variety went whistling past his ear and out through the windshield. He was certain that it was not intended for him but wouldn't be surprised if one of his co-workers was lucky not to have been driving that night.

I met a UNESCO rep on the mainland soon after I arrived and he treated me to supper. That night he had to drive across the peninsula to Phuket. He and his two assistants had the following in their Landrover: two .25 cal. automatic pistols, a .45. also automatic, and a sawed-off shotgun. This just for their protection on a seven hour drive to one of Thailand's more popular resort areas.

An Australian wanderer stopped off at the island about two months ago and one of the first things he did was to lose a bag in which he had a book, a journal, some traveler's checks, and a portable radio. He spread the word about the loss and was soon directed to a person who had seen the bag being picked up. One person sent him on to another until he was quite away off the beaten trail. The last man told him to wait

while he went to get the stuff. When he returned he demanded a reward. Doug (the Australian) was so happy to get the stuff back that he offered a 50 baht reward. But our local hero demanded Doug's wristwatch instead and when it was refused, pulled a gun and asked again. This time Doug complied. If there is an amusing side to this story, it is that the idiot with the gun took the watch but left the very available money untouched. Talk about a one-track mind!

That's about it as far as it goes from this end. Guns are a real anathema to me personally and I can't help but feel that their frequent employment is a mark of a politically as well as personally immature people. Ideally, of course, no one, even the police, should have to use them. Given the political situation here in the country, I can understand the need for a relatively large number of people to have to be armed; but even then, not the whole population. I think what I dislike most is the carrying of concealed pistols. A rifle at least gives the observer fair warning that the holder may have to watch his step. A pistol is a lot more invidious and seems to me to be purchased more to use against other human beings than for any other apparent reason.

WANDERINGS

I Wandered the earth
Pushed by a force from place to place.
I Wandered for the touch of every grain of sand beneath me.
Every road,
Every sea.
A mystery had challenged me to conquer the world I met.
To know every pulse of its existence.
But there came a time when the force was destroyed by a feeling.
I felt a loneliness in places.
And in the ultimate the places fell away
And only the wandering in the worlds of beings remained.

Jacqueline Butler

(NAN)-GROUP 24

THE MISER

Mr. Minor was a miser,
He loved his money best,
He kept four salungs* from every baht,
(He gave his friends the rest*!)



*miser - ทระหนี่, จู้เพี้ยม
*salung - สลึง, ๒๕ สตางค์
*the rest - ที่เหลือ

And then one day old Minor died,
His lazy son named Mitch
Shed many tears* (of happiness),
(Mitch thought, "I will be rich!")



He ran into his father's house
And quickly looked around*
For the gold and jewels and banknotes*,
But this is what he found:



*shed...tears - ร่ำไห้

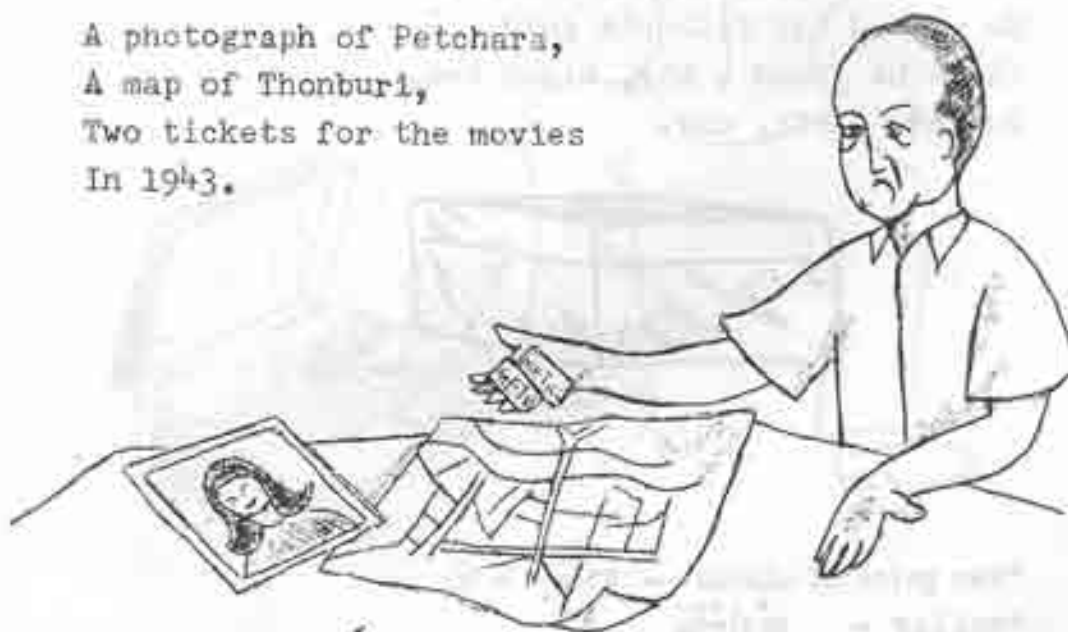
*look around - มองดู

*banknotes - เงิน

Five hundred pounds* of newspapers,
 Twenty-nine old shoes,
 A boy scout shirt, a radio
 His father never used.

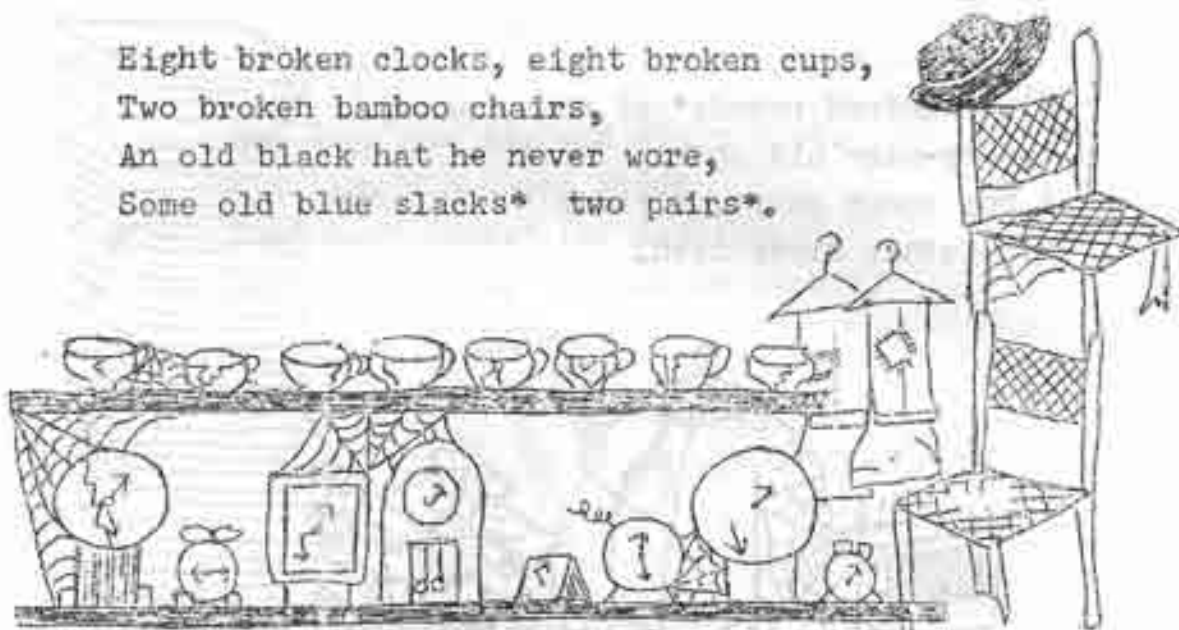


A photograph of Petchara,
 A map of Thonburi,
 Two tickets for the movies
 In 1943.



*pounds - baht

Eight broken clocks, eight broken cups,
Two broken bamboo chairs,
An old black hat he never wore,
Some old blue slacks* two pairs*.



Mitch ran down to the cellar*,
He wanted his father's gold,
There he found a big, black box,
Dusty*, dirty, old.



*Two pairs of slacks - กางเกง ๒ คู่

*cellar - ห้องใต้ดิน

*dusty - ฝุ่นจับ

He opened the old dusty box,
Then he danced and laughed and cried,
There were silver, gold, and banknotes
And many jewels inside.



He quickly grabbed* the wooden box,
 "I'm rich! I'm rich!" he cried,
 He stumbled* on the seventh stair*
 And broke his back* and died.



STORY: A blond-haired girl
 volunteer, initials, L.W.,
 in Group 24, who doesn't
 want her name printed.

*grabbed - จับ
 *stumbled - พลัดตก
 *stair - ขั้นบันได
 *broke his back - พังหลัง

Poem prepared by a Peace
 Corps Writing team at the
 Secondary Education
 Supervisory Unit in Bangkok
 for use in a M.S. 1
 supplementary reader.

VOLUNTEER PHOTOS:

THAILAND:

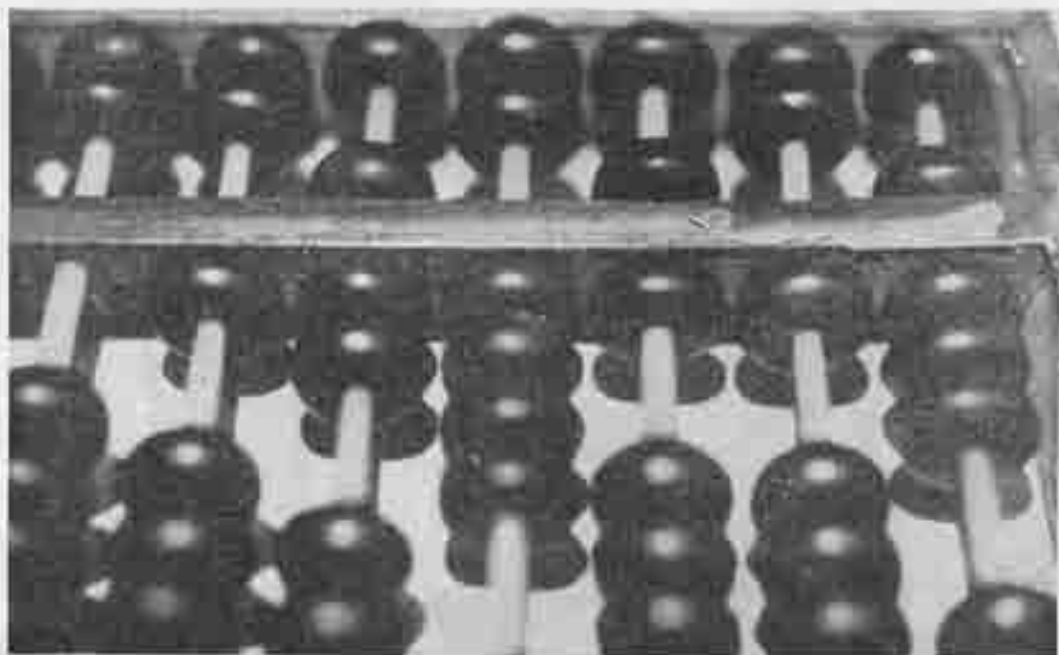


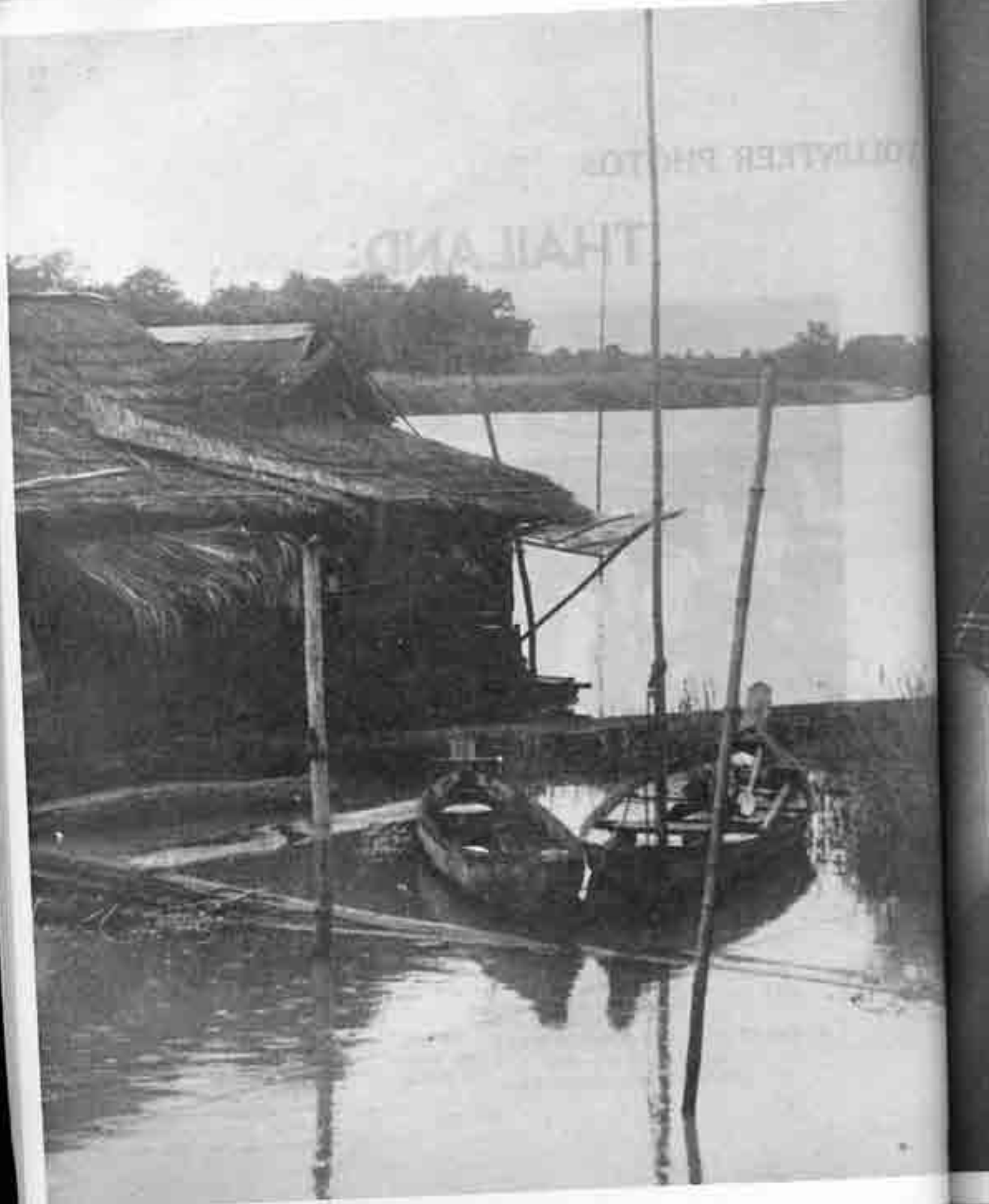
EXHIBIT ONE

We don't need an abacus to count the number of photos that have come in so far. We can use our hands (plus a toe or two, maybe) and add up the submissions. But don't think we're gonna give up. We're still waiting, dammit. So, pick up your camera and shoot something.

Thanks,
The Editors

OVERLEAF:

Boys on the beach near Utharut (Page 86).
Min. village family in a long house at
sandstone center, Laos (Page 87)







Snakecharmer charming kids with his
cobra in Kamphaengphet.

Thaismen mending nets on Gulf of
Siam near Pattaya.



with his



Monks at Way to Singu (left) show head of trader going into monkhood.

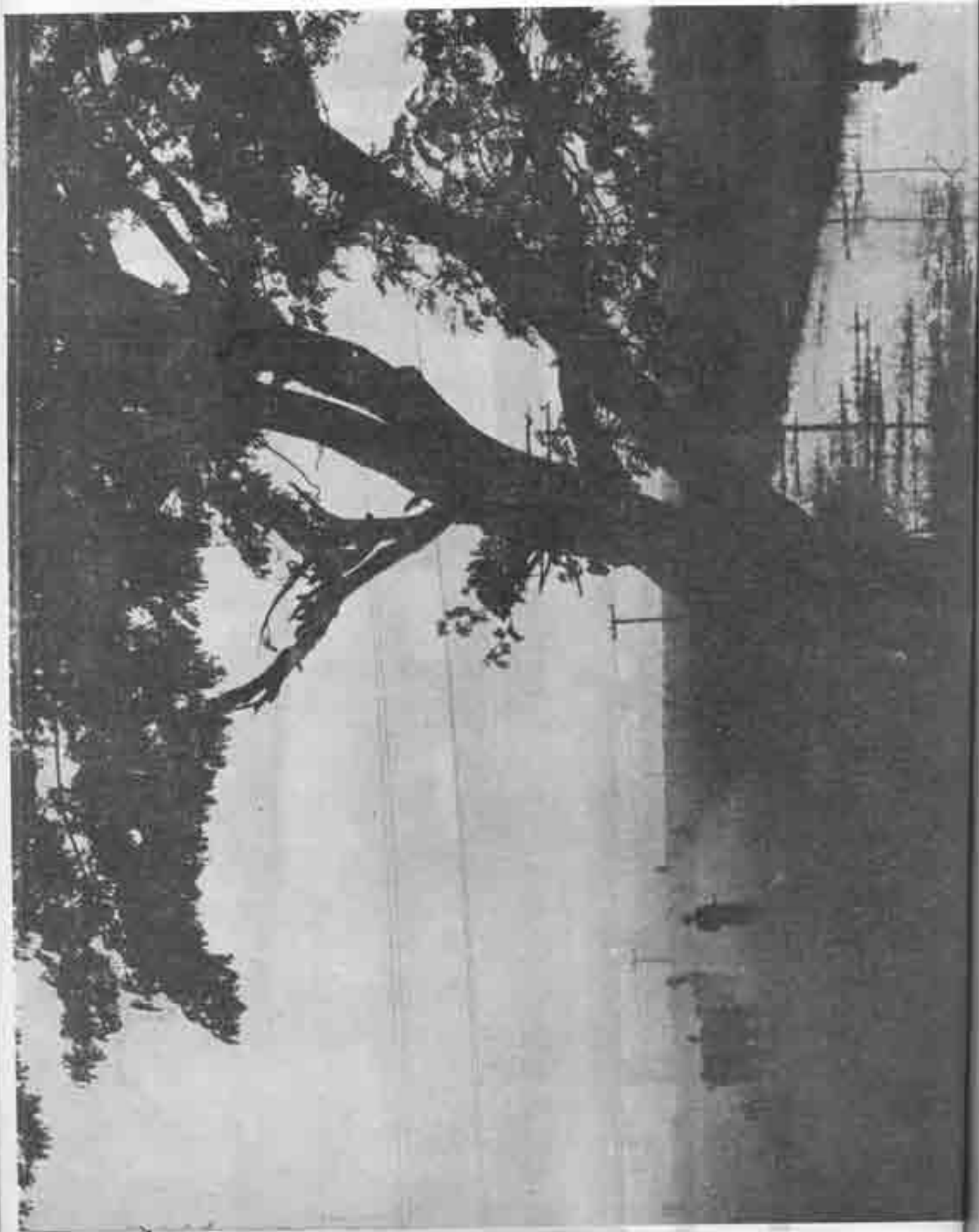
overlooked by the hills. The end of the day to Singu. Evening comes—farmers return from the fields and women from the market.

Japanese "Hells" on the River Kwai? said to affect prisoners in WW II. see Kanchanaburi. On the horizon, the mountains and Burma.









HOW TO

A

ERA

SUN SHOWER



PHOTO CREDITS:

- Page 85: Michael Schmecker
 86: William Boudra
 87: Terrell Otis
 88: (top) Steve Aufrecht
 (bottom) Alan Kohler
 89: (top) Paul Hobelman
 (bottom) Michael Schmecker
 90: Paul Hobelman
 91: Paul Hobelman
 92: Paul Hobelman
 93: Robert Denniston

WELL, DON'T JUST STAND THERE...GO SHOOT A PICTURE OR SOMETHING.

HOW TO BUY A CAMERA

Bob Denniston



CORNSTALK

Nearly every time a volunteer sees me with my Nikon in hand or about to take a picture, the question arises of what kind of camera to buy. "Say, I'm going to Singapore next month and want to know what camera to buy," is a common question. Most volunteers make at least one pilgrimage to Penang, Singapore or Hong Kong during their two years, and cameras seem to be the first item on most free port shopping lists.

For this article, I'll restrict the descriptions to the most popular kind of camera, the 35mm. single lens reflex with built-in light meter. Good reasons exist for its popularity: fairly small size, easily taken color slides, large film loads and a multitude of accessories ranging from interchangeable lenses to microscope adapters. Prices vary from the \$500 Leicaflex to the medium price of \$250 for Pentax, Canon and Nikkormat models, down to about \$100 for the cheaper brands. These are U.S. retail prices, and the Bangkok camera stores seem to figure about the same, and that's a lot of baht. The better brand names are Asahi Pentax (same as Honeywell Pentax in the U.S.), Canon, Nikon, Nikkormat (identical to Nikomat), Minolta, Miranda, Topcon, Konica, as well as a host of lesser-known. These are all Japanese. Germany competes with the Leicaflex and Contaflex, though both are more expensive (though not necessarily better) than most Japanese cameras. Free port prices usually run from one-half a two-thirds the U.S. retail price.

SINGLE LENS REFLEX

For those unfamiliar, single lens reflex (SLR) means you look directly through the camera lens while focusing and composing, rather than through a glass window which can only approximate the way the lens sees the picture. The main advantage of the SLR system is, of course, that you see almost exactly what you

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final picture will look like, as well as making the use of additional lenses much simpler. Nearly all current 35mm. SLR cameras feature built-in light meters. Five or six years ago, these were virtually unknown, and professional photographers frowned on them as temperamental toys. But due to miniaturization of components and stiff competition for the consumer market, the current generation of "through the lens" (TTL) meters are highly accurate and sophisticated instruments, and now most professionals are using them. The primary advantage is the speed and convenience with which you get consistently accurate exposures. This has helped make the 35mm. SLR the most popular camera in the world.

Specific methods of measuring the light that comes through the lens are almost as varied as the different camera models on the market, but three main methods exist. (1) The meter "sees" the whole picture area just as your eye does and calculates the exposure for the average. This is simple, but in the case of an unusual lighting situation, such as backlighting or a light subject against a dark background, the meter will still average and give an improper exposure. (2) This method is known as the spot meter system. A circle or rectangle in the viewfinder is marked off, and it is within this special area that the meter reads. So you have to make sure that when taking a reading, the spot is on the most important part of the picture. Pentax and Canon both use this method. (3) This is actually a combination of the average and spot systems in that the meter reads the whole viewfinder image, but gives emphasis to a particular part of the picture area, usually a central spot in the finder. Noted as a "weighted measurement" it takes into consideration all light values, but gives increased "weight" to the central 12-15mm.

marked in the finder. Nikon FTn and Nikkormat FTn employ this method, as does Minolta. One camera, the Mamiya Sekor DTL, offers two systems in one camera, with a switch to select either the average or spot system to be used for a particular situation.

Heretofore, the acclaimed leader in 35mm. cameras

and optics was Nikon. After the Korean War, many American and European photographers started bringing back Japanese cameras with them, and discovered that the Nikon lenses outperformed the German ones. Since then, the professionals have been buying Nikons for the most part, even though several other Japanese firms have made giant strides in catching up with Nikon's leadership. Today, the largest and most popular manufacturers are Nikon, Canon and Pentax. Each makes several models to choose from, and enjoys the prestige and trust of many of the world's great photographers. Most of the photographs seen in magazines such as LIFE, LOOK, and ESQUIRE, etc., were made with 35mm. equipment, perhaps the same model you will buy, or have now.



Child in the Southwest.

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Each manufacturer makes literally hundreds of accessories for its models, from fish-eye lenses to motor drives that take three pictures per second via radio control. Other firms also produce lenses and accessories that will fit several name brands of camera using an adapter. Lenses for the 35mm SLR exist by the hundreds.

HOW TO CHOOSE A CAMERA

So how to pick your camera? Within a medium price range, you might come up with a choice between an Asahi Pentax Spotmatic, a Canon FT QL, and a Nikkormat PTL, all with an F 1.4 lens and case, all within a few dollars price of each other, and all three fine cameras. So how do they differ? The lenses are near-identical in quality, but the Canon and Pentax use a spot meter system, while the Nikkormat uses a weighted system for reading exposures. All exposure systems are equally good; it simply depends on the user to learn how to operate his particular camera correctly. Some people are lazy about taking pictures and others are hung up on technicalities. A simple averaging meter can be just as good as the weighted method if the user thinks when he is using it. On the other hand, a person who does not know how to use his meter may invalidate the camera's potential if he does not take care, so that he might as well have an Instamatic (that isn't necessarily a rule; the Instamatics are sophisticated now, with interchangeable lenses and built-in meters). Careful use of your camera is required for good pictures.

Perhaps the most important single thing when picking out a camera is, in my opinion, how the camera feels to you. The camera is, ideally, an extension of your eye, and as such, should be entirely familiar and convenient for you to bring to your eye, make the necessary adjustments, and take the photograph. Anything which prohibits or retards full responsiveness is worse than useless. I have been a Nikon user for five years, and now most other cameras feel foreign in my hands, even a Nikkormat. Not that the Nikon is better, but rather I am used to it. If the slightly more compact and lighter body of the Pentax feels better, then that should be taken into consideration. If the Canon feels more solid and the meter switch is more convenient for you, remember that. If focusing seems easier with the Nikkormat, that is a valid factor. You may not like the fact that the Pentax and Canon close down to lens to working aperture when making an exposure reading so

that focusing simultaneously becomes difficult, but that may be a very minor point. These are only three of the many models available, albeit the most popular. True, you can get used to minor features of a camera if they are awkward at first by using them for a time, but if it does not feel right to you, you may find yourself not using the camera enough to become accustomed to its peculiarities.

WHAT IS AVAILABLE?

Availability of cameras and lenses may help you determine your choice, particularly if you are buying at a free port. During certain times of the year, notably in Hong Kong during Christmas, certain cameras and lenses are impossible to find because all shops are simply sold out. Perhaps you do not want the fastest lens for camera A, or they have no case for camera B. You may have to take what you can get rather than test all kinds before making up your mind. What is available may be the deciding factor.

Quite often a volunteer will wish to buy another lens besides the normal when he purchases his camera. The telephoto lens is usually the first accessory lens acquired, often in the 135mm. to 200mm. range. The "mm." specification is the focal length of the lens, and the longer the focal length, the more telephoto the lens is, with the normal lens being about 50mm. The wide angle lenses are shorter in focal length than normal, with the most popular being 35mm, but others available from 19mm. The fish-eye lens is a special wide angle lens, covering an enormous 180 degrees or more, with the superwide 21mm lens covering 90 degrees.

Your choice of a second or third lens depends on the kind of pictures you like to take. Telephotos are suited for sports, candid portraits and when you just cannot get close enough to your subject. Wide angle lenses, on the other hand, can be used for crowded places, indoor photography and perspective photography. The best bet is to try on several lenses when you purchase your camera, and pick out the one or more than that looks most useful to you. Another alternative is what I have done: rather than buying a normal lens, buy a wide angle and a short telephoto and you have a much wider working range. My two are the Nikkor 35mm F2 and the Nikkor 85mm F 1.8. They are both (as admit a lot of light), quick to focus and I never miss the normal length lens. Although I have two other lenses,

I use the 35-85 combination about 90 per cent of the time. If, however, you want to take a lot of close up photographs, the micro lens might be the answer. Usually 55mm., this lens allows you to focus from infinity all the way down to a life size (1:1) image. Although the micro lenses are not as fast (do not admit as much light) as the F 1.4 lenses, they are lighter and more compact.

Rather than waiting until you get to Singapore or wherever before deciding on your camera model, check out various kinds before you leave so that you will know what to look for and expect. The better Bangkok camera stores are a bit more helpful (usually, not always) than the average free port shop, and are in no hurry to push a sale over on you. Some of the better stocked stores are Viewfinder Photo (Petchburi Road near Peace Corps, and in Rajprasong), the Paramount Studio (between Peace Corps and USOM on Petchburi Road), and Fantarect, particularly for Canon equipment (across from Bank of America on Suriwongse).

SELECT CAREFULLY

When buying camera or any other equipment in a free port, you should watch out for a few things. First of all, make sure the equipment you are getting actually works and has a guarantee. The salesman may try to sell you a demonstration model that has been handled by everyone who comes into the store. Insist on an unused camera, and then make sure everything works. A volunteer I know purchased a new camera after testing the demonstrator, and when he got back to Bangkok, the light meter did not work. The shop owner may not be dishonest, but he does know you are there for only a few days and will not come running back to him when you discover something wrong while flying over Bali or Rangoon. Click the shutter, focus the lens and try the light meter as well as everything else. Tax-free prices are for the same top-quality merchandise you buy anywhere. Chinese shopkeepers are not making any less because the port is tax-free. Make sure you get the instructions, case, (if you pay for it), lens cap, meter batteries, etc.

It may not be possible to buy the particular model you want, or the lens. And it may not be possible to buy a camera body without a lens in case you want

(Continued Pg. 117)



Indo bird, Pura Bodhi, Bali

CHINESE LADY IN HONG KONG

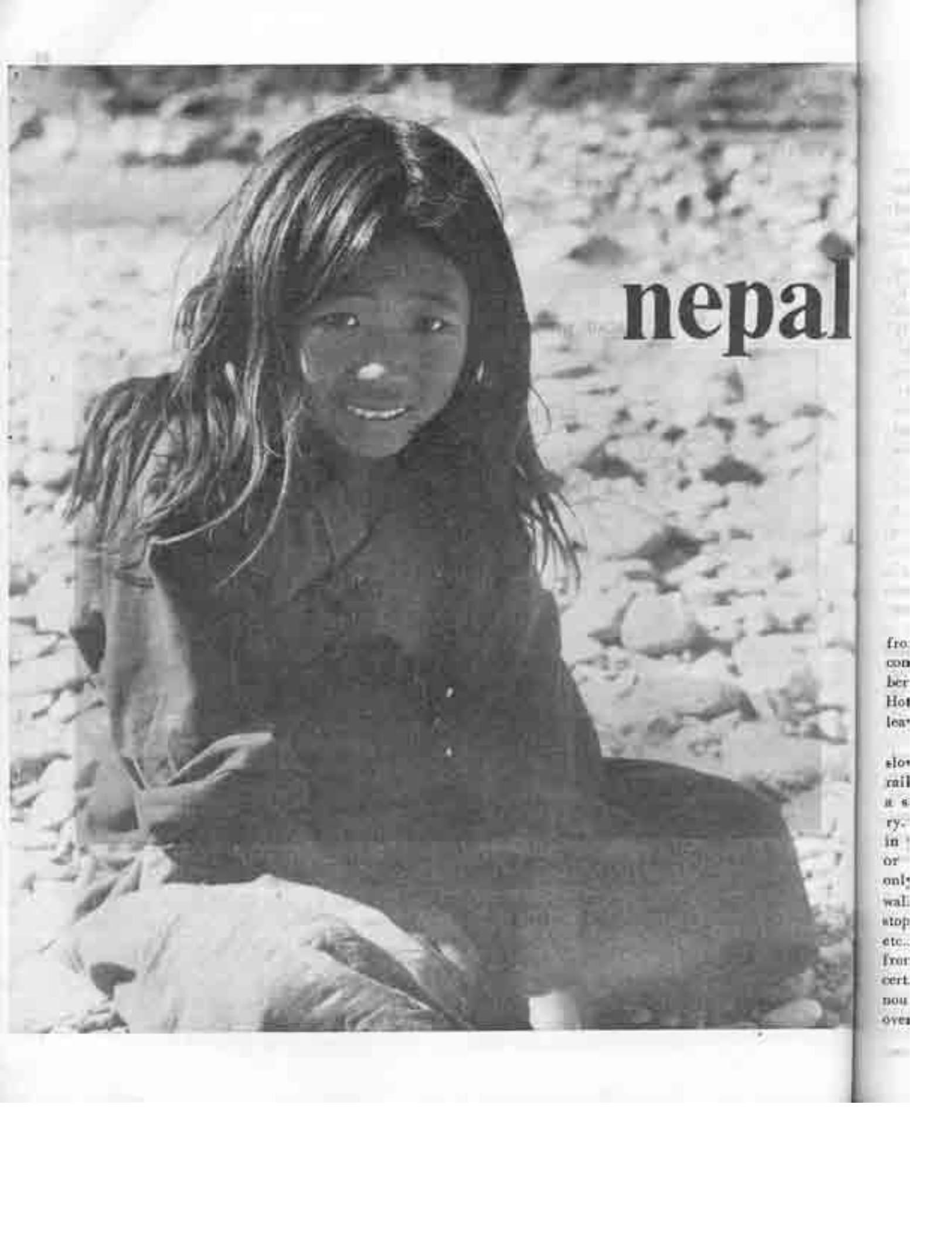


CANON FT-QL 135 mm VIVITAR LENS

MACAU, WITH THE HILLS OF CHINA IN BACKGROUND



CANON FT. QL (100 mm VIVITAR LENS)



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GOING TO NEPAL

Fast: FIA money BY = \$221.00.

That International "17-day Excursion" = about \$169.00.

Slower (and cheaper): UBA to Calcutta; Indian Railway to Raxaul; rest or bus or truck to Kathmandu.

Visa: Obtainable in Calcutta (for 15-day stay) at Nepal Consulate; renewable for 15 days in KMD at Protocol Section.

Trekking Permit: Needed to leave KMD Valley (to Mkt); available in Kathmandu; takes about 2 days.

Bring: Passport, WHO Card, passport photos (10).

For information write: Peace Corps

c/o American Embassy,
Kathmandu, Nepal

And: Department of Tourism
Basantpur
Kathmandu, Nepal

TREKKING OUT OF KATHMANDU

AN RPCV FROM INDIA GIVES THIS ACCOUNT OF HIS EXPERIENCE
IN NEPAL. PHOTOS BY BILL BOUDRA

BY AL MCDUGALL

Howrah Station, just across the Howrah Bridge from Calcutta, is the terminus for all trains west. My companion, Lee Jones, and myself, settled into upper berths on the passenger train an hour before departure. Hot, muggy, lively with hawkers, beggars, and family leavings, the seats below were jammed. What else?

A day and a half and three train changes (to ever slower but less crowded trains) brings us to Raxaul, railhead for the Kathmandu Valley. Our last train had a sari-clad woman with a tremendous goiter. Usual story. Gave her a bottle of iodine I had intended to use in purifying water. Explained she should drink a drop or two in water every day. Although we were sitting in only a half-bogey, it seemed people fell out of the walls to see what was going on. Raxaul was a welcome stop after all the questions about medicine, the USA, etc., but we did enjoy ourselves. The farther we got from the city the friendlier everyone became. This was certainly true in India, but it became even more pronounced in the next few days, as we entered and became overwhelmed by the people of the Kingdom of Nepal.

We had the usual rinky-dink with police and

customs on both sides of the border and the rickshaw-wallahs who conveyed us between these checkpoints. I do remember leaving a residence permit (which I did not relish putting with) with the police, and, premonitions correct, I never saw it again.

The countryside around Raxaul and Birganj (Nepal) is Gangetic plain, called the Terai. It is heavily agricultural and contrasts greatly with the interior which lies only a day to the north. We met three Aussies in the hotel and travelled with them by Land Rover the next day. The eight hour ride took us over the low ridge of mountains lying to the south of Kathmandu and then into the Nepal Valley. The road was American built, but all-Nepal in character. Several times the winding road brought us to a crew of laborers refinishing the road where it had been re-shaped by a landslide. Landslides were blessings because they brought the vehicle to a halt where we could walk, stretch, and take in the view, recovering slightly from our growing car-sickness. The road, slowly climbing, bends with each fold in the face of the hills and is continually washed away or submerged where small waterfalls wash onto it. The pass lies at 8000 feet and thereafter the trip became

otherworldly. The south side of the mountains had been thick forest but the northside slopes were terraced from about 6000 feet down to the valley floors. These rice terraces gave contour maps reality; many are only a few feet wide. In late October, when we were arriving, the fields were bright in the sunlight with the Lincoln green of full-grown rice ready to be harvested. Every bend in the road presented another carved view. Far beyond the immediate rim of the terraced valley of rice paddies spread a majestic backdrop, an enchanted faraway vision of what was yet to come: the white summits of the Himalaya. After another police checkpoint the road tumbled into Kathmandu, capital of a blessed land.

The Tibetans are among the friendliest of all the residents of Nepal. We first met them at the Tibetan Refugee Center just outside the city. Bulky woolen sweaters and rugs are made there and sold, as are many other artifacts actually brought into Nepal from Tibet. Most of the unique artifacts were picked up by the alert collectors when the Tibetans made their exodus in 1956. The leavings presently available include wornout harnesses, old-fashioned matchboxes, Tibetan coins, hand-painted scrolls and woodcarvings, prayer beads, and prayer wheels.

As we watched them carding wool with brushes, one of the women noticed Lee's Afro hair. She asked Lee in pantomime to come a little closer and then she proceeded to "straighten" his hair. After much stroking she gave up the effort amidst the laughter of the women around her. Subsequent visits by Lee were real affairs as everyone remembered the attempt to straighten him out. The manager invited us to his home for Tibetan "momos" and buttered tea. We quickly bought a beautiful carpet he had on his bed and several woolen pull-over coats.

Amidst sightseeing in the city, we planned our trek to Holambu, an eight-day round trip walk. The Peace Corps office had ample information on where to go and what to bring. We joined up with other potential trekkers at the Camp Restaurant. The leader of our party was an American ex-corporal who hustled us a guide-cum-cook and some provisions. Trekking day arrived crisp and clear. Lee was feverish. He went to a Peace Corps doctor and was promptly hospitalized with pneumonia. Had he trekked away a day earlier, he might not have made it back. Our party included Juergan, a

German emigre to Australia, the ex-corporal and his Scot girlfriend, and our guide Koncho, who spoke Tibetan, Nepali and English. Koncho normally worked at the Shwayambhera Monkey Temple which overlooks Kathmandu.

We each carried packs of varying weights, with an unusual assortment of equipment. I carried an 8-lb. pair of hiking boots on my back for an occasion which never arrived. Sneakers and sturdy shoes are usually ample, even for fording streams, if they're comfortable. An hour's bus ride brought us to our "jumping off" point on the Kathmandu-Lhasa road (Chinese-built). This road extends all the way to Peking but traffic on this route is minimal and generally oneway. We descended into a valley and walked down the paths between rice and sugarcane fields. We borrowed some of the cane to munch on and picked it out of our teeth the rest of the day. Yellow-gold, green, and dark grays opposed a clear blue sky under which we shed our clothes. Tea in the afternoon was taken beside a freezing, swift-running river. A two second dip was all the "cleaning" one could take. Our ex-corporal leader (just ask him) got his heterosexual jollies around the bend while we sipped our British "spot of tea."

The mountain villagers accepted us nicely after only a few minutes of curious questions. In crossing a small river we all managed to become soaked in the freezing water but this was an added blessing in the intense sunshine. Loinclothed natives with huge, 100-lb. loads carried with a tumpline over the head helped us get out packs over the river. Cost of portage—two lighted cigarettes. Koncho didn't want to expose them to Western prices. The prices we paid outside of Nepal weren't really the issue, but rather the attitudes and ideas that lead up to the "Hey you, one baht" syndrome.



Tibetan Refugee Camp with Annapurna in the distance.

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Dinner that evening was a pot of leftover spiced vegetables on rice—delicious and satiating, especially when the delicate quality of eating with one's fingers is added. Sleep came quickly on the porch of a store after that day's hard trek. Next morning I awoke, still sitting up, as I had fallen asleep, in the coziest of village scenes. The village path, cutting across in front of my porch-bedroom, was bounded on the opposite side by a low unadorned stone wall; beyond lay a burbling stream and the wall of the narrow, but extremely deep valley, faced with terraced rice fields. The valley, still in heavy shadow in the early morning, was open to the starkly contrasting Himalaya. Only praying seemed appropriate.

This was UP day and UP we went. The trail followed the crest of the mountain whose toe dipped in the river where we crossed. The next crest of the mountain was always visible but another was always concealed when we reached the ridge. The river fell back quickly and by the afternoon we were 3000 feet above the morning had been cold, but by the time we served our afternoon meal of eggs and vegetables on a small plateau near a village, we were sweaty from the heat of the sun and our own exertions. All the villagers were friendly and I was even able to converse in Hindi with several of them. The meal over, we sat around, shirts off in the sunshine, within a grove of trees which nicely accented the 315° view. Scampering from a nearby house came a little rhesus monkey on a log. He performed all the usual monkey mirror tricks and danced about for us all before retreating to his owner's shoulder.

UP and UP! Nightfall found us asking a little way to loan us floor space for the night. Several women sat on the floor, pounding oilseeds with a fulcrum-mounted weight balanced with the foot. One seedy old woman moved the weight, and a younger girl pushed the seeds under—both between blows of the weight. Tragic accidents can occur when the hand under the weight isn't moved quickly enough. The butcher arrived on his rounds with strings of chopped meat. Ears, skin, legs and strips of rancid looking meat were neatly hanging for the buyer's convenience. Not desiring the fatty parts, we stewed the meat with vegetables and drank the fatty broth from bowls and picked the vegetables out with finger tips. Through the haze of the smoke from the fire we could see the uneven floor, we went to sleep on. With eyes stinging but with bodies

and minds too tired to care, we collapsed in a huddle on the floor and slept through the freezing hours of the early morning as if in a coma.

Rude, stone chortains built on all the high points in the mountains met us at almost every turning on the trek to Tarkigaon next day. We left the crest of the ridge and moved horizontally for the first time in days. As we entered the valley the predominance of terraced fields on the mountain gave way to steep forested slopes. The snows came ever nearer and our world grew darker and the shadows longer as the mountains loomed closer and closer to our shoulders.



"Om mono pay me hum" prayer on a rock.

Tarkigaon is a tiny Shangri-la. Walking up towards it, one's eye first meets a wide-eaved monastery thrusting out of the village before a flat grassy lawn on the edge of the valley. The background to the monastery is the snow of the mountains themselves, still miles distant. The sweep of grassy ground in front of the monastery is studded with scores of thirty feet tall bamboo poles with red and white streamers of cloth whipping in the endless supply of clean mountain air. As the wind moves across these prayer flags, prayers from them are carried into the sky and hence to the gods. In the mountains the desire for sanctity is immense, the feeling of holiness pervades the air, and one feels so insignificantly small that belief in the gods is a necessity. One's life must be filled with forms of worship.

In a room to the side of the monastery is the largest prayer wheel in the area. Six devotees grab the edges of the wheel and run it around its nine foot diameter. All the prayers that can be fit inside, usually in the form "Om mono pay me hum" are sent to heaven each time the wheel makes a revolution.



Old lady smoking opium pipe in Kithipur
(outside of Kathmandu).

We put up in the house of friends of Kuncho and visited several of the same design but the interior decorations reflect the wealth of the owner. In the house we slept in the foil brand-name wrappers from cloth which were nailed to the wall, but in the nicest house we saw 7-Up and beer cans from some long ago mountaineering expedition covering the walls. Hot buttered tea was always a prelude to amiable conversation when the beautiful, friendly girls would come out to join us.

The next day we walked to a monastery over the ridge. The lone nun welcomed us to her hearth, center of all mountain homes. The only other guests by the hearth in the evening were a mother and her breastfeeding son. The morning of our last day going out found us scrambling up a misty trail sometimes submerged in shadowy glades with mossy floors. The fog dropped below us as we neared the summit of He-lumbu and the bright sunlight streamed down on our already overheated bodies. We were at the end of the earth. The fog lay like cotton over the earth and only the peaks could be clearly seen above the screen

of mist. The summit where we stood was barren save for a few clumps of grass and lichen in crannies of rock. On the very apex stood a large chortain with its attendant prayer flags flying in the stiff wind. The view north stretched from Gosalkundi on our left to Mt. Everest far away on our right. Looking straight across at the Himalaya Range the snow seemed to begin only a thousand feet above our elevation, but we knew it must be at least another 5000 feet above our heads. At our feet we could catch glimpses of the river valley 3000 feet below. The wind was chill even though we could feel the sun burning our faces and necks; so we ate our lunch in the retreat of a little hollow with soft grass and protection from the wind and a view to the north.

An hour later found our pounding hearts eased and the scene dramatically changed. The fog had moved higher up the valley and left us suspended on cloud nine with only the highest peaks as distant reminders of terra firma. Frightened a bit, we abandoned the path in a direction perpendicular to the trail which had brought us. Any way is down! We threaded our way clumsily through pencil-thin shafts of bamboo which seemed to grow higher with each step through it. Since all ways were down, we paid little attention to Indian life. When a canteen I was carrying disappeared out of my "pack" made of a sheet, ends fixed over my shoulders, I played ape and swung down after it into steep arroyo. Looking back up I realized I couldn't climb back up the way I had just come down.

Moving across the sharp slope laterally to a ridge, I found a glorious view of rugged rock falling straight into ascending fog through the bamboo sieve. This looked like it was for a rock climber, certainly not for me! And yet down seemed the only way. Down it is! Down, Down, and then another charming view with a 150 foot drop into primeval forest. And now real terror gripped me. Do I hear anyone? Does anyone know where I am? Holler! But no answer. Got any matches? Food? No. Can you make a rope? Don't be silly. Will it be cold at night? Anyplace to keep warm? No.

After a few more minutes of further courage-building, I decided to let myself down a bit by a run and slip-jump-dangle to a ledge, slip-jump-dangle slip-jump-dangle. And after another hour of this I found myself trying to climb out a precipice at an angle of

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more moss, more bamboo, and then finally a place to
ally stand. I can breathe. Clear view, less fog.
most important, I can move around the mountain
try to strike the trail between the monastery
the ridge. After half an hour of clam-boring

over rocks and outcroppings and trees, I hear the
beautiful gurgle from the one mountain stream we
had passed over on our way to the monastery. Rushing
towards its sound, I came upon the well-worn trail
which led to Tarkigaon, and then fairly sprinted up it
to the top of the ridge.

(Continued Pg. 117)



At the Tibetan Refugee Camp, Cecile Kohler teaches how to make a "cat's cradle"

THAI CULTURE QUIZ

1. A Thai whose name you don't remember greets you. You should say:
 - a. I never learned how to pronounce your name right. Would you say it for me again?
 - b. sawatdii khrap (kha)
 - c. I'm sorry, I've forgotten your name.
 - d. I'm sorry, I've forgotten your face.
 - e. I'm sorry, I'm in a hurry.
2. A Thai who obviously doesn't remember your name greets you. You should say:
 - a. You never learned how to pronounce my name right, so I'll say it for you again.
 - b. sawatdii khrap (kha)
 - c. I'm sorry you've forgotten my name.
 - d. I'm sorry you've forgotten my face.
 - e. Say, this is a pleasure, or my name's not Threadly Foster!
3. A Thai says to you, "You speak Thai very well." You should:
 - a. continue the conversation as if nothing had happened.
 - b. be annoyed.
 - c. be flattered and say "khawpkhun."
 - d. be annoyed and say "khawpkhun."
 - e. say "Thank you" and switch to English.
4. A Thai says to you, "khun phunt thay keng nuak." You should say:
 - a. Let's continue this conversation as if nothing happened.
 - b. khaw hay phunt iik thii phom (dichan) fang may than.
 - c. Thank you.
 - d. khawpkhun.
 - e. khawpkhun. Let's switch to English.
5. It is five p.m. and your Thai friend has just invited you to go to dinner with him (or her) that same evening. You should say:
 - a. You probably have another engagement. I don't want to bother you.
 - b. I probably have another engagement. I don't want to bother me.
 - c. Thank you, but I can't.
 - d. Thank you, I'd love to.
 - e. Thank you.
6. It is one a.m. and you have just invited your Thai friend to come and have a nightcap at your place. He (or she) should say:
 - a. You're too late. I'm tired.
 - b. I'm too late. You're tired.
 - c. It's too late. We're tired.
 - d. khawpkhun.
 - e. sawatdii.
7. You ask an either/or question and get a "yes" answer from a Thai. ("Would you like coffee, or tea?" "Yes.") You should:
 - a. Present the alternatives separately. ("Would you like coffee? Would you like tea?")
 - b. bring tea.
 - c. bring coffee.
 - d. bring both.
 - e. don't bring either until he answers your question properly.
8. A Thai friend asks you a yes/no question and you give him a piece of unexpected information. ("Would you like something to drink?" "Yes. Coffee.") He should say:
 - a. I'm sorry, we don't have any coffee. Would you like tea?
 - b. I'm sorry, we don't have coffee, but I can easily send my aged mother across town for some.
 - c. I'm sorry, we don't have any coffee.
 - d. khaw thoot. I didn't hear you.
 - e. I withdraw the offer.
9. (Men only.) A cleaning woman comes into the toilet without warning while you are standing at the urinal. You should:
 - a. pretend not to notice her.
 - b. say hello, facing front.
 - c. say hello over your shoulder.
 - d. wai
 - e. zip out of there.
10. A man you know comes out of the toilet noticeably doing up his fly. You should:
 - a. pretend not to notice him.
 - b. tell him hello to his face.
 - c. tell him hello otherwise.
 - d. tell him about standard Ivy League practice for when he gets his fellowship to the States.
 - e. assume there's a cleaning woman inside.

From: ENGLISH LANGUAGE INSTITUTE, BANGKOK

Pepekeo, Hawaii

The ceaseless blue motion below
beckones with hypnotic insistence
while I dip my feet in my mind
The outstretched palms reach
determinedly toward apparent eternity.

Life

Bodies—piles of bodies
Limbs jutting awkward and askew.
The blank stare
The slack jaw
Twisted, mangled flesh
Blood
running running running
The agony of awareness of existence.
The knowledge, yet ignorance of death.
The flowing stream of life, death, destruction;
Learning, forgetting; crying, laughing; helping,
hurting, desiring, fulfilling; conquering, freeing.
Most of all death
Emcompasses our lives.
Yet life flows on and on,
In circles, circles, round and round
Trying, trying to get away
Always the circle bringing you back.
And the old man watches the young
He watches him run—the same cycle
Thinking it's new yet tripping
Stumbling on the same smoothed stones
In the worn, rut-filled orbit.
And the earth spins and revolves
And man goes round, dizzy,
Stumbling, searching, not hearing
Not understanding,
But always coming back
In another Revolution.

Jeanne Van Atta

Chachoengsao - Group 23

Letters of the Editors: (Continued from Pg. 2)

TEFL - Of the PCV group, used for mental therapy.

TTD - Organism producing TEFL.

AB Generalist - Undefined PCV.

PC/T & PC/W - Certain strains of organisms.

STAFF - Parent group for the above organisms. Infections, causing discomfort, sometimes pain, mostly in the neck region (also in lower portions of the body). In recent years has spread to all parts of the world (Western). Untreatable, but never has reached plague proportions. Increased numbers usually causes dormancy of the organisms. Seldom die out, just sort of slowly phase out.

UNICEF - A super-charged adrenalin-type drug. Frequently used also as a nutrient.

PTR - An organism of the STAFF type, as yet unclassified, has not been successfully isolated.

CD - A mutation.

CRS - Newly discovered, weak organism receiving injections of TEFL.

PCP - Agent used as deterrent to social diseases.

Harry Walth EOL

(Earl of Lampang)

Group 20

Dear Editor:

The following is excerpted from George F. Kennan's Memoirs. It is a passage from his diary, written in 1950, describing his reaction to his first trip through Latin America. In reading this, I would ask you to ponder its relevance to the Volunteer in Thailand.

"Thus the price of diplomatic popularity, and to some extent of diplomatic success, is constant connivance at the maintenance of a staggering and ubiquitous fiction... Latin American society lives, by and large, by a species of make-believe; not the systemized, purposeful make-believe of Russian communism, but a highly personalized, anarchical make-believe, in which each individual spins around him, like a cocoon, his own little world of pretense, and demands its recognition by others as the social process.

"Confronted with this phenomenon, many non-Latin diplomats first pause in dismay; for they see that only by accepting it can they achieve many of their purposes. Yet to plunge deeply into it, as many finally do, is to lose oneself in a sort of

Alice's Wonderland, where normal relations between cause and effect have lost their validity, where nothing may be judged on its actual merits, where no idea has more than a relative integrity, where real things receive recognition only by their relation to the diseased and swollen human ego, where nothing is ever wholly finished because things are never more than symbols and there is no end to those things which are the objects of the symbols. Here, for the sensitive foreigner, there are only three forms of escape: cynicism, participation, or acute unhappiness. Most foreign representatives find refuge in a combination of all three."

(Kennan, Memoirs: 1925-1950, p. 482)

For the record, I do not quote this passage as a statement of my own views, though there are elements in it which I believe are relevant to both Peace Corps Thailand and Thai society in general. I present it to challenge the concept of cultural relativity by which one is forbidden to judge one culture by the values of another. I do not think that it is sufficient to dismiss Kennan's statement as culture shock or cultural insensitivity, though both certainly do cloud his judgement. Instead, I feel that a foreigner engaged in development work has no choice but to think about those aspects of the political culture which aid or hinder development. His commitment to development compels him to make value judgements about the culture in which he lives. Corruption, sycophancy, bureaucratic infighting, and other aspects of Thai political culture which hinder development should not be shrugged aside with the comment, "That's part of their way of life"; intellectual honesty requires that one think seriously about positive and negative effects they produce.

I am in no sense advocating that the Peace Corps go around setting themselves up as arbiters of virtue and exposers of corruption in Thailand; the very thought of that is pathetic. I do think, however, that Volunteers should recognize a spade as a spade, even if out-warily they must dissemble, and, in the few cases where they can be effective without being obnoxious, should do what they can to correct the problems caused by the insidious aspects of Thai culture.

Dan Amory

Trang RPCV

Gp. 20

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Regional Reports (Continued from pg. 9)

What does one learn living in a foreign country with a different culture, language, and value system? To begin with, that the native language must be learned well, that the differences in culture provide constant amusement and frequent concern on both sides, and that the differences in values are perhaps the hardest of all to reconcile. In cross-cultural relationships, much is negotiable. It is in the area in which either side stands inflexible that conflict arises. Specifically in my case, I cannot sit back and watch an engine seize up because of lack of oil, and remain calm with a "c'est la vie" attitude (or in Thai, "Mai Pen Rai"). The Oriental is perhaps more flexible concerning the relationships between man and machines, and might, for example, let the preventative maintenance on a machine go undone and accept the resulting damage before he would question a superior or upset the delicate interrelationships of his complex system of social hierarchies and taboos.

Conflict is to be avoided, and a situation each Volunteer soon encounters is that of simply being ignored by the Thai or Chinese, rather than having an issue come to a head. The abruptness, impatience, and frequent arrogance of the Westerner in his attempts to handle issues rationally and scientifically are often dismissed by the Thais as childish or immature behavior. Each is emotional over different issues, the differences arising from the sometimes opposing viewpoints on what is important. It is difficult to bring conflict into the open in the Orient. Face is an infinitely important concept, which can perhaps be compared to the emotions of Europeans who would duel over issues of honor in centuries past. The daily behavior of the Thais consists of not exceeding the boundaries, violating the rules, or upsetting the superior-inferior status relationships. Rapid change is not characteristic of the culture, a way of life in which pace and place are slower and somewhat inflexible.

The Westerner charging blindly into this complex scene is something like a young worker questioning the seniority system in a union labor shop. The Volunteer is repeatedly told that he must strive to understand the existing system and attempt to work successfully within it. At the same time he views himself as an "agent

of change," perhaps even as a revolutionary. Soon the conflicting forces are at work, and the Volunteer discovers the true meaning of frustration. As a guest he must be ever mindful of the way of life of his host. As one who has come to help others, he must discover which among his meager gifts are acceptable. He must learn to make himself graciously at home in another's house, be good company, and apply himself to useful chores.

The vast extent of American involvement in Thailand is a fascinating and sometimes frightening phenomenon. Loei, for all its isolation, is visited by Thai representatives. Many American missionaries are active in the area. The American government is represented by a vast number of agencies: USIS, Army Intelligence, CIA, agricultural workers, doctors, village security experts, advisors in countless fields. English is the unofficial second language of Thailand, and American music and movies are among its prime carriers. Clothing styles, behavior patterns, tastes and prejudices, business and government—much has been subtly or openly influenced by the American.

As an American I find I have mixed reactions to the influences of my culture on that of the Thai, for they have not managed to absorb only the good. The Western influence has brought the harshness of behavior characteristic of the efforts of the military and the large competitive businesses and industry and the frantic pace of our modern life. This is very much out of place in traditional Thailand. Yet Thailand is rapidly changing and the farmer who has worked largely at subsistence level soon turns to purchase a motorcycle or radio as times improve. The rise in demand for consumer goods has necessitated finding new sources of income.

I felt that the main image the Thai has of Americans is dominated by an association with the military; specifically, with the war in Vietnam and Laos and more generally with anti-communism throughout Southeast Asia. Whatever our motives for being here, because we are Americans we are inevitably linked to the overall thrust of American cold-war diplomacy in Thailand.

Today America is involved militarily in Thailand. The goal of this program is to make Thailand capable of defending itself against insurgency. The U.S. does have commitments to Thailand's defense through SEATO. Could we ever again become as deeply involved as in Vietnam? Certainly there is a grim possibility that we could.

A day in the life of this Peace Corps Volunteer begins slowly, as I emerge from the tent-like security of a mosquito net when the chorus of assorted barnyard animals of surrounding houses wins its battle against the silence which permit sleep. Cooking an egg and coffee on a stove from Red China while listening to the news on Voice of America, I get my eyes open and dress for another day. Although I am a Thai government official and entitled to wear a health department uniform, I choose the ambiguity of a simple white shirt for travel in my "sensitive" areas.

Arriving at the office, I greet my co-workers and exchange small talk. Then I ask each of the men in the office his plans for the day, and generally accompany the one with the most interesting or potentially productive itinerary.

Usually the day's work takes me into the field to inspect and supervise. I am not able to do much teaching, but can help with inspection and checking of countless forms. Malaria eradication activities in spraying DDT and giving medicine to patients involves a large team of semi-skilled laborers. While trying to avoid the role of a policeman, I remember the truth in the maxim "People do not what you expect but what you inspect." Building spirit is part of my job. This doesn't work for the job, but for each other.

My area of responsibility extends roughly a radius of 60 miles around Loei, which is the main city of a frontier province. The terrain is beautiful, but travel is always exhausting, since roads are pockmarked laterite and strewn with jeeps in varying states of disrepair.

Early in my stay here the parallels between life in Loei and that of the American "wild west" occurred to me. The horse is replaced by the small Honda or Yamaha. Many Thais carry guns at their hips, which adds to the illusion. Water buffalo and cattle wander across the roads, and each town has its saloon-like coffee shop or market place where occasional brawls occur. Errant hill tribes and communist terrorists are like the Indians, and the Thai border police and army units chase them like the cavalry. Medicine men in traveling road shows bring entertainment to be

villagers and sell them anything. The roads have no date; the hares, prostitutes; the beds, bugs.

Thailand has taught me a lot already, and I have another year left in the country. When I leave I will know one Asian country and its people and language and problems fairly well. I feel that living in another country makes one a better American, one who can appreciate more fully what is viable in our culture, and criticize more intelligently what is out of balance. Perhaps the most exciting thing that has come out of my adventures here is that I have met some of the world's active internationalists from many countries. The concept of nationalism which we live under today is limited and dangerous, and it is exciting to live and work with people who can see into the future and realize that we need some form of internationalism in order to survive into the twenty-first century. In one sense, these men and women are idealists, searching for a harmony which has failed to achieve so far. But in another sense they are the world's pragmatists, for they see the destruction and waste inherent in the existing system of competing national interests. Nationalism in itself is not necessarily evil, but it is limited. It has served the processes of industrialization and modernization fairly well, and continues to be important to today's developing nations. But the progressive and revolutionary nations of tomorrow and America must be among this group which look beyond nationalism to the next exciting step in man's political evolution.

BANGKOK

David Johnson

White shirts-blue skirts. Swishing past. A lot of brown, beautiful calves. "Farang in the middle of this sensual activity, thinks of his fish-like freckled legs hidden under trousers and wonders how down if these people can really find them attractive."

Don't push it...take it for a good thing, possibly of pale skin. Maybe they're right.

To the point. The purpose, so to speak. That's a mission, an undertaking. Off the big red sea to ascertain the truth or fiction. The question (must it always be a question? There must always be a question...the man wants to know what students in New York think about...yessir, the man wants to know what the bubblegum music rock-and-roll kids think about...there-VIETNAM.

Vietnam and the...how do you put it? Can you in all sincerity call it "The American Occupation of Thailand"? (Continued Page 111)

Book Spies, and Scholarships (Continued from Pg. 14)

This danger is mentioned in the book "CIA, The Invisible Government" by David Wise and Thomas Ross. (Random House, New York, 1964).

Commenting on the Intelligence Division of the CIA, Wise and Ross noted that "the job of the Intelligence Division is essentially a highly specialized form of scholarship. And 80% of its information comes from 'open sources': technical magazines, foreign broadcast monitoring, scholarly studies, propaganda journals and data produced by such visible branches of the government as the US Information Agency, the Agriculture, Treasury and Commerce Departments, and the Agency for International Development."

In a footnote to their mention of USIA (USIS, in Thailand) they noted, "Donald M. Wilson, the deputy director of USIA, was asked by the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on February 21, 1963, to explain what type of contact USIA had with the State Department, the CIA and other intelligence agencies. 'Very close,' Wilson replied. 'We have daily contact with them on a number of levels.'"

USIS in Thailand is engaged in a dangerous game, involving politics and diplomats, propaganda and the possibility of espionage. Under these circumstances, perhaps it would be best for Peace Corps to steer clear as much as possible from direct sustained involvement with USIS.

In the final analysis, then, what is the effect of America's total "educational" presence (USIS, Peace Corps, Fulbright, AFS and etc.) on Thai society? The results are hard to measure, since they deal with changes of attitudes and values, the moulding of impressions, beliefs, and ideas. Are we leaving any lasting impressions on Thailand?

The attitudes of Thais towards the United States and their picture of the American people and the American way of life is on the whole probably very favorable. America is famous for its technological achievements, its wealth, and its scientific spirit. The Apollo 11 space flight has put a cap of confidence on the American image in Thailand. We are renowned as an extremely talented nation of technicians, who have put a man on the moon. But it is hard to tell whether they are admiring us or our machines. Perhaps the US impact on the Thai mind is shallower than we think.

Hollywood East (Continued from Pg. 20)

"natural for war movies to have violence." But she also thought that violence in cowboy movies is unnecessary. The Board prohibits extreme violence or scenes that show how to break into a house. Some Italian films are cut, such as those of the Johnny Ringo genre. The reporter thought the violence in "Bonny and Clyde" was good because it showed children that crime does not pay. The Beatles' satire, "How I Won the War" was successful in Thailand because it was seen as "plain comedy" except by the more educated.

On the Beatles film 'Yellow Submarine': They thought it was terrible. It's the only cartoon people ever walked out on."

"Thais get their 'hippie' influence more through music and nightclubs than films."

The Thai official and reporter both felt that more films for children such as Walt Disney films should be imported. The reporter said that the Board likes to see Thai movies because they are easier to understand. Almost all of the students wrote that it was difficult for them to see American movies in theatres because they cost more than Thai movies, they are hard to understand, and for girls, their parents wouldn't let them go unescorted if they would let them go at all. These students have easier access to American movies than their up-country counterparts, and almost all the students wrote that most of the American films they had seen were broadcast on television. In Thailand, color television will soon become commonplace. When the students were asked to name their favorite American movie stars, more television stars were named. Television has had other effects as well. Jeannie's Water Ski in Nontaburi is named after the blonde genie on television's "I Dream of Jeannie."

Regardless of where the Thais see American movies, on television or in the theatre, they are watching them and being affected by them for better or worse. Going to a movie on Saturday night is one of the few farang pleasures a P.C.V. can afford. If the air-conditioning doesn't freeze you you can lean back in the comfortable seat, watch the Pearl and Dean commercials, and even drink beer in a couple of the theatres. You can almost feel like you are back in real farangland.

"Yankee, Come Home!" (Continued from Pg. 29)

recruiters fail to find new recruits there. It would truly be a great tragedy if Peace Corps, in the face of those who call for revolution as the only option in the Third World, turned to people who were convinced of and content with the status quo.

The answer to the CRV activists is not to give up and retreat into a "no change" attitude but to engage them in a realistic debate, country by country, on the approach Peace Corps has taken there in the past and should take in the future. That way the American student "revolutionary" with his paperback copy of the "Diary of Che Guevara" who perhaps has never even left New York will have to come down from his academic tower of misconceptions and fairy tale solutions to debate with someone who isn't part of his "world" and doesn't automatically agree with him. It might even come as a rude form of "cultural shock" to him to find out that everybody in the world doesn't think the same way as he does.

In the process, Peace Corps should develop a thicker skin against theoretical broadsides from critics whose experience in the "Third World" come from reading the "Berkeley Barb"; and a thinner skin to in-country critics of the Peace Corps such as host country nationals who work with or are associated with her, as well as the volunteers themselves.

In Thailand, the best judge of whether the Peace Corps is hurting Thailand or helping it by its presence is the CD volunteer in Sakol Nakorn, the TEFL teacher in Udorn or Bangkok, the health volunteer in Chiangmai; and articulate Thais such as Seni Pramoj, opposition party (Democratic) leader, and Representative Vemolmarn from Korat, head of the new Nationalist party in Thailand.

The latter are especially sensitive to American influence in and on Thailand and the Thai people. Even the "Voice of the People of Thailand" can serve to remind Peace Corps of the danger of its becoming part of a cold war strategy instead of a sincere humanitarian offer of service to Thailand.

There are two major points we are trying to make here. The first is that Peace Corps should field theoretical challenges to her work in the "Third World" by demanding that her critics discuss their criticisms

country by country. There is a basic fundamental dishonesty in posing questions such as "Is revolution or evolution, the solution to the problems of the Third World?"

The dishonesty lies in the fact that the term "Third World" is a professor's abstraction that encourages people to think of such totally different countries as Thailand and Cuba, Nigeria and the Philippines, as somehow all the same. They're the "Third World" that we can analyze as a unified whole. That sort of sloppy thinking is an insult to the fantastically diverse cultural, historical, and religious experiences of these nations. Thailand is not Bolivia, and "America" means something totally different here because Thailand's experience with America has been historically quite different.

It's like discussing "What's the best way to win a battle?" and refusing to define what you mean by "battle" or insisting on treating "battle" as an abstract noun. The discussion's value for actually winning a particular battle is absolutely nil.

The dishonesty also lies in the fact that if anybody should decide whether Thailand (or any other country in the "Third World") should have a revolution or opt for peaceful evolution it should be the Thai people, not the local chapters of the SDS in Kalamazoo, or the Peace Corps. For young American radicals to discuss the fate of Thailand and decide whether they should have a revolution or not is a subtle form of the same paternalistic, colonialist mentality that they deplore in the US diplomat or the CIA cold warrior.

The second point we are making here is that the people who should decide whether Peace Corps should be in Thailand (as in other countries) is Thailand herself. This does not necessarily mean that Peace Corps should only listen to the government to decide if it is really wanted or needed here. It can also, if it is sensitive enough, get feedback from other unofficial sources too, such as the volunteer's Thai counterpart, from the students and farmers whom the volunteer serves, (the "people" themselves) and host national critics of the Peace Corps here in Thailand.

The basic idea is to let the host country decide how and when and to what extent she wants to use the Peace Corps to help her develop herself, within the technical and philosophical limits of the Peace Corps to do so.

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What conclusions can we draw from all this? Perhaps these: First, regarding the effects of Peace Corps in a foreign country, criticisms like those of Nussbaum and the Committee of Returned Volunteers which deal with the "Third World" in general should be accepted by Thailand for what they are—generalizations—which may or may not apply here. He may be right on target in the Philippines—it is where he worked as a PCV but he cannot speak for Thailand or Ecuador or Liberia. Nobody can speak for the whole "Third World" at once. Let Thais and PCVs in Thailand speak for Peace Corps here. On the other hand, a "bill of particulars", a list of specific charges drawn up by ex-PCVs from Thailand should be examined carefully.

Second, regarding whether Peace Corps should be here in Thailand at all, we should listen to the Thais themselves—the government, the opposition leaders, the nationalists, our co-workers, and especially the voices of our critics here. To these voices we can add our own evaluations (PC volunteers and staff) of our effectiveness and worth here. And from a continuous honest review of the results we will know when and if to leave.

Thirdly, regarding the question of "revolution or evolution" in Thailand, that is a matter for the Thais to decide, not us. Perhaps Americans should stop trying to run other nations' lives—and that includes the campus revolutionary as well as the Washington politician—and let the nations themselves determine their own future and the role Peace Corps should play in it.

All that Peace Corps/Thailand must do is to keep its side of the bargain—to continue to function independently of US foreign policy considerations, as a genuine offer of friendship and help from the American people to the Thai people.

Hopefully, Joseph Blatchford agrees.

The Times They Are a Changin' (Continued from Pg. 32)

We reached the Petchburi Hotel, unloaded our luggage, and lined up for room assignments. As I glanced about I suddenly felt we'd been booked at the wrong hotel for certainly this one catered to the U.S. Military only. I picked up a copy of Pacific Stars and Stripes and glanced through the mail scores as I awaited my room. Over the desk a flannel bulletin board advised me of the departure time of R & R flights returning to Saigon. A few G.I.s and their "dates" strolled hand-in-hand past the desk from time to time. One glance at the girls made any speculation as to their intentions unnecessary.

I dumped my bags in my room, collared some unwilling companions and headed out for a Singha. I was tired but I'd waited a long time to return to Thailand and I knew I wouldn't be able to sleep yet. We headed for the only bars open at that hour: G.I. bars on the Petchburi "Strip."

Most of the shops we passed that night were closed but as we approached the "Strip" it was obvious by the number of bars, massage parlors and tailor shops that they catered to G.I.s. I recalled the days when I'd been making \$16. per day temporary duty pay and wondered where these places had been when I really needed them.

During the next week of meetings and orientations I was continually awed by the number of Americans I saw in Bangkok. Someone once told me the American population in Saigon could qualify it as the third largest U.S. city. I wondered what position Bangkok rated in that survey.

Colonel Lance, looking and speaking like the Catch-22 character his name suggested, gave us a "sanitized" version of the military role of the U.S. in Thailand later that week. He told us about the "handful" of special forces troops "advising" the Thai Army. Although his talk was not of itself impressive, his subject certainly was. For years I had been underestimating the Green Berets thinking they could not be the supermen portrayed in Robbin Moore's book. Now, however, I find the "handful" Colonel Lance spoke of to be possibly the most mobile of any U.S. fighting unit, outside the Strategic Air Command. I keep bumping into them all over Thailand. My friends mention similar encounters. I saw a picture of them once, a group portrait in the Opera Hotel labeled 46th Special Forces Group. Many must have been absent from the picture session that day for the **Bangkok World** later reported that 300 Green Berets were to be withdrawn from Thailand.

By the end of my first week I was thoroughly disillusioned by the overwhelming U.S. presence in Bangkok and didn't relax until I boarded the train north to my site in Uttaradit. The train rumbled out of Hua Lamphong station and I sat back to enjoy the view. As we cleared Bangkok I noticed two boys paddling one of several styrofoam boats. The khaki color and the bomb impression inside left little doubt as to the intended purpose of the container. I became reconciled to the fact that the Thailand I had known had been left with the indelible mark of the U.S. military.

BRIAN (Continued from Pg. 49)

THE BORDER INCIDENT

I had the kilo of grass on my body. It was hot in July. I made a belt of ripped up sheets around my chest and strapped it tight so it wouldn't bulge. I could hardly breathe at the border going into Iran. I was riding in the front of a big truck. After we got through the border I took it off and put grass in my duffel bag. But three kilometers on down they had another border check. I was scared to death. This car stopped the truck and made the driver open the boxes he was carrying and he opened packs and smelled inside boxes and then told me to get out.

The grass was lying right on top of my duffel bag and he told me to open it up so he could look in. So I put my foot on the bag and said "No" and started screaming and bitching and shouting about how I was tired of being stopped and that we had just been checked back down the road and that I was sick and tired of all this searching and poking and prying and I wasn't going to open my bags up again. (I remembered some Germans had done it once and got away with it). I put my foot on the bag and he tried to drag it out but he gave up and let us go. And we took off again.

LUCK OF THE IRISH

It's nice to have an Irish passport. All the border cuts think that Irish are just drinkers, not dope runners.

BOAT TO BORDEAUX

I went all the way to Scandinavia on that kilo. That winter I got back in Copenhagen and hopped a boat to Norway and after a month there I decided to get on a ship and go wherever I was going. You can always get a job on a ship in Norway. They were short of workers in Oslo and so I heard about it and rushed across the country and got on this ship that was going to Bordeaux. The sea was a bitch in the winter. It was freezing and the ten days on board were like a prison. I met a lot of sailors and they told me they had been all over the world but they never left the docks. All they see is the bars and the docks in a town. They didn't see anything of the country outside of the docks. And they only stayed for two or three days in one place and then they shipped out again.

TRAVELER'S CHECKS

I spent Christmas in Munich after the boat trip and I met a friend of mine there who had \$100. I had \$50 and so we decided to put it together and get some traveler's checks. I needed \$100 to get back to Ireland. He was a South African who had been a mercenary in the Congo and knew how to get some bread. I spent a week learning to copy his signature but he was left handed and I was right handed so it

was very difficult. Finally we reached a compromise—a compromise signature that both of us could do. When I learned how to do his signature, he gave me a bunch of documents and papers from his wallet and kept anything that had his picture on it. Then he took the \$150 and went into the American Express Office and bought traveler's checks. When he walked out he handed me the checks and I went to two or three banks and cashed them and got \$150. They asked me for my passport but I said I forgot it at the hotel but I showed them the other papers I got from my friend's wallet. So they let me sign the checks and the signatures looked the same. So I got the money, \$150.

When I got back, my friend went to American Express and said that he had lost the checks and his wallet in a crowd to a pickpocket or something. They gave him new checks for \$150. So we were both richer.

THE COOKS TOUR OF LONDON

I tried it once more with "Cooks" cheques in London on my way back to Ireland. I was the one who bought the checks but they arrested my friend when he couldn't do the signature. I knew I was in trouble so I went back to my pad and cleaned my stuff out. The police came a half hour later and found some incriminating letters he wrote to his friend, telling him what he did and it was all there in the letter. I shouldn't have done it again but I needed the bread.

AMSTERDAM AND REPATRIATION

I went back to Amsterdam but ran out of money again. I sold my watch and my ring and some other stuff but finally I had to go to the Irish embassy in Amsterdam and ask to be "repatriated." They take your passport and give you the money for a ticket to Ireland and you have to pay them back before you get your passport again. I finally got back to Dublin. It was the spring of 1967 and the flowers were blooming.

(POSTSCRIPT.)

Early in November, Brian came back from selling Chinese medicine in Cholluri. Two weeks on the "medicine trail" had netted him \$800. The first day on the job he wore a tie. He held up a bottle of medicinal which had a picture of Hercules lifting a house on it and pronounced something in English. Actually, he could spell out anything since no one in the village understood English anyway. He chose to recite "The Raven" by Poe. The second day he got rid of the tie. The medicine company owner protested. How could Brian be a real M.D. if he didn't even wear a tie? But it was too hot and Brian won the argument by threatening to quit.

(Continued Pg. 128)

BACK TO AMERICA (Continued from Pg. 68)

So what about me? Did I make it? The answer to that is a qualified no. I did not complete the course for reasons I will explain in a moment. I did, however, experience some momentary asmadhi, that has shown me what lies ahead if I were to continue to practice it successfully. It made the effort very worthwhile for me.

PROBLEMS

Well, Joseph, why did you stop? I'll tell you. First, after termination from the Peace Corps, I had to become a tourist in the eyes of the Immigration Department. Thus, even though I put up a 5,000 baht bond in order to get my thirty day visa extended without having to leave the country, I was still required by law to report to Bangkok every two or three weeks. There is no other type of visa available if one is unemployed while staying in Thailand. Also, I thought I would be allowed extension until I finished my course. Such was not the case. One is allowed only six weeks worth of extensions and then must leave the country to begin the process again on a new tourist visa. Because I did not know this, I was totally unprepared for the notice I received at the meditation center giving me forty-eight hours within which to leave the country. It being a Friday, I could get no Lantian visa, so I had to go to Malaysia, a wasted four days.

In addition to the above problem, which all farangs must cope with, I was forced to correspond with the Selective Service in order to have my pre-induction physical taken here in Thailand and secondly, to appeal my I-A classification.

Thus, I repeatedly had to break the restrictions on travel, on reading, and writing and broke my concentration. My mind would wander to these secular problems every time I relaxed my concentration for an instant. As I have stated, the result was that my progress was very slow and frequently stagnated.

So, what did I get out of all this? I think I've gained quite a bit, actually. I now am more at ease, less up tight about my future and much less emotionally involved with the timeless problems of humanity. I have a mental discipline with which I can now keep my emotions more under control—through awareness. I feel a new, quiet self-confidence. I know for example, that I could be alone for weeks and not suffer from loneliness, not be afraid or bored. I think I have a better grip on

reality. I don't fear pain as much as I did before. Of course, I'll have to wait for some personal crises in order to test myself, but I still feel that whatever happens to me from now on, I am better prepared mentally having the ability to practice Vepassana.

Other manifestations more obvious than those mentioned above are that I don't smoke anymore (I was at a pack and a half a day before), nor drink, nor do I lust after other sensual and worldly pleasures to the same degree as when I was up tight. I'll never have to do anything out of boredom again.

BUDDHISM AND VEPASSANA

Well, Joseph, are you now a Buddhist? No, not yet. It is not necessary to be a Buddhist in order to take a meditation course, nor do you have to promise to become one. Anyone, male or female, who is seriously interested can take a course in Choburi. What does result, though, is a deeper appreciation and understanding of Buddhism and the monkhood. Being a monk makes it much easier to practice meditation, since there are no secular enticements nor secular responsibilities to distract him.

If you guys are interested in finding out more about Vepassana practice, Ven. Asabha Thera has some excellent pamphlets in English which explain in more detail than I can here. Also there are several English publications that can be ordered from the London Buddhist Society.

For those considering the possibility of taking a course, I recommend that you make several visits to Choburi beforehand to size up the situation and to meet Ven. Asabha Thera. I must warn you that in order to be accepted, the Abbot must be convinced of your sincerity in wanting to take the course. Don't go with the idea of doing some freakout, hippy-thing. This would be completely counter to serious meditation. Don't take a course simply to add another ribbon on your Peace Corps, crosscultural merit badge sash either. Ven. Asabha Thera is like a practicing psychiatrist and he can see through all that stuff.

One should come more prepared to stay than I did. I originally intended to stay for three weeks and wound up staying the full three months. I would like to have stayed longer and maybe even take another three months course early next year but Thai Immigration and especially the Selective Service make it too difficult for

me to continue. If one visits Wat Wiwekasom beforehand, a room can be reserved, and food and laundry arrangements can be made.

Also, before beginning a course, make arrangements not to have visitors during your stay there. Friends coming to visit can leave imaginary conversations in the mind that can last for days. If you have a draft problem, try to get permission from the Selective to take a course beforehand.

One final detail, the Abbot is Burmese and unfortunately he does not speak English. The entire course is carried on in Thai. Being Burmese, Ven. Asabha Thera speaks Thai with a Burmese accent, which you probably will have difficulty understanding at first. Don't worry, once you pick up his accent (which requires a little effort) you'll have no problems. He is a genius with the art of the simile and metaphor. He can express the most sophisticated concepts in ways that five year olds could understand. Indeed, a few of the most successful yogis are those with no education and some are even illiterate. Not only that, but Ven. Asabha Thera has that magic quality called a sense of humour.

MASTER OF MY FATE

So team, that's about all I've got to say except that 99.99% of all Peace Corps Volunteers never get much further past Thailand's jewelry stores, silk shop's or night clubs than do the tourists or the G.I.s. There's so much more beneath it all for those who really want it. It's right under your collective nose, and since you all speak Thai, you can get some of it and take it back with you. I only got a little bit, maybe you could get more if you want to try. It's free and yet worth more than my \$8,000 college education in terms of helping me to be master of my fate.

Vejassana is what it's called, and Choburi is where it is at. Good luck and stay humble.

Yours Truly,

Joseph H. Johnston

P.S. References:

Mangalo Bhikkhu, The Practice of Recollection
Mahasi Sayadaw, Discourses on the Basic Practice
of the Satipatthana Vipassana.

LIFE (Continued from Pg. 64)

college after zonking his brain during senior year with pot, hash, and acid, the hippy movement still seemed like a pristine search for a new different style away from the strife of American life. So the White Liberal gave serious thought to becoming a hippy and just grooving on something or other for the next few years. Instead he joined the Peace Corps and became a farang. In the meantime, the Hippy movement has really been plasticized, and the White Liberal had only a brief contact with it (walking in St. Marks Place in the East Village, on his way to a Ukrainian bar, he was stopped by two cats (one in combat clothes, the other looking more like an Indian). "Hey, man you got some change? We wanna go to the Electric Circus". He remembered that the cover charge there was 5 bucks and just said, "Shit".)

Later, on the trans-continental flight back to San Francisco, the White Liberal remembered this incident and sadly thought that this, what seemed like a real chance for his own "peace and freedom", had come down to helping to pay a stranger's cover charge at the Electric Circus.

He was sad-even nostalgic. As much as he was tired being a farang, it seemed even worse to come back as one of this country's citizens in a few months, and again worry and agitate about race, the cities, the war and crime. Not worrying forced one to have a dirty conscience.

He looked out the window over Colorado, and noticed the canyons 30,000 feet below him, very yellow, very peaceful and inviting. Yes, he might do that when he came back—just find some crevice in this vast country in Colorado, in Arizona, in Wyoming and just stick around for a few years. He would avoid both of the populated coasts (which were the only America he knew till now) and stick his ass somewhere in between, in the country's vastness. He would give up politics, newspaper, and even chess, along with being a White Liberal. Yes, maybe he would do that—return to nature. But in the meantime, he was winging his way back to his last six months in Thailand and Don Muang's waiting taxi-drivers.

How to buy a Camera (Continued from Pg. 97)

a second camera body or a wide angle and telephoto lens combination instead of the normal lens. Be prepared to substitute.

A few basic accessories make life easier. A skylight or ultra-violet filter on your lens will protect it from dust, dirt and moisture. A lens shade prevents unwanted lens flare. And film is always a good investment, particularly color film. The cost of a 36 exposure roll of Kodachrome-X with processing (KN 135-36 P) is about \$4.00. This breaks down to about 11 cents per slide, comparable to the price of black and white film, processing and one postcard print from each frame.

Since cameras are usually looked upon as the first item tourists carry, crossing borders is usually not difficult. Duty seldom must be paid, except where it appears that you might sell the equipment in country, precisely what the customs duties are intended to discourage. It has happened, however, that volunteers have had to pay up to 35 per cent duty for bringing back a camera. When returning to the U.S., duty is necessarily paid on amounts past the first one hundred dollars, with cameras usually taxed at 15 per cent and lenses and accessories at 25 per cent.

Below is a list of three popular cameras and lenses with the prices in free ports. This is only approximate, however. Any questions concerning photography (or anything else in LOTUS) should be directed to the Editors, LOTUS MAGAZINE, Peace Corps Bangkok. Meanwhile take pictures, write something and send it to us. We'll try to print it!

Asahi Pentax Spotmatic with 50mm. F 1.4 lens	\$130
Super-Takumar 35mm. F 2 wide angle lens	60
Super-Takumar 85mm. F 1.8 telephoto lens	60
Super-Takumar 200mm. F 3.5 telephoto lens	75
Canon FT QL with 50mm. F 1.4 lens	\$135
Canon 35mm. F 2.5 wide angle lens	55
Canon 85mm. F 1.8 telephoto lens	65
Canon 200mm. F 3.5 telephoto lens	75
Nikkormat FTn with 50mm. F 1.4 lens	\$140
Nikkor 35mm. F 2 wide angle lens	80
Nikkor 85mm. F 1.8 telephoto lens	85
Nikkor 200mm. F 4 telephoto lens	90

Trekking out of Kathmandu (Continued from Pg. 105)

Reaching the top of the ridge on the trail, I looked at the setting sun and wondered how I would get back to the village in the dark. It was pitch black, and I had taken several minor tumbles and one severe one which sprained my butt, before I saw a lone light off to the right. I forced myself towards it and wondered what kind of reception would be awaiting my arrival. I couldn't talk to these people!

I queried the first man I met in Hindi. He pointed to a house behind him. The owner and his son spoke enough Hindi for me to explain that I had been wandering on the mountain all day. They fed me and animatedly talked about what a crazy fellow I was. The hearth fire roared; the house became unbearably smokey. My eyes watered, my fatigue hit me, and nearly gasping with each breath, I fell asleep with the chanted prayers of the head of the household in my ears and thoughts of how frightening the day had been and yet how much more I loved Nepal now.

Koncho was amazed to see me walk into Tarkig-aon early next morning and he danced with glee. A wash in the mountain stream took away my wild look and made me feel like climbing again, almost.

The last three days back were glorious. One afternoon we inquired for curds from a village and were offered a huge bowl of buttermilk for two silver-paper wrapped "Aspros." A whole bottle of Terramycin was refused because it didn't have the official looking label like the aspirin. We drank the milk with handfuls of ripe raspberries we had picked in the sunshine along the trail.

Slowly the mountains receded to their proper distance as we trekked back towards Kathmandu. We arose early the last day and trekked headily back to the bus stop. Again our confidence exceeded our knowledge and we meandered, half lost, over rice fields and encountered many bewildered residents. After lunch we didn't stop for four hours until we reached the bus just before sunset. Oranges quenched our thirsts while our lower extremities tightened with the released strain of not walking. Never quite so weary, I don't remember anything until I awoke the next morning in a Kathmandu hotel. Several days of "high" living on a very low budget helped me regain strength before trucking to the more normal, but far less exhilarating world of India.

BANGKOK (Continued from Pg. 110)

Don't want to get everybody too uptight over a few hotels, taxis, changes in life style and aspirations; Don't want to go upsetting the old durian cart but, ah well, what do they think of the Petchburi Road scene and all?

What we got to do is find out just where they are at concerning these G.I.'s and everything.

Stands there in front of the mirror in the morning. Oh deary, that hair is curling around the ears isn't it. Yep, see it popping out behind my head in the morning sunlight. Ah well, is total perfection in the disguise necessary? It's only fair play to toss out a few hints.

Sparkly white shirt but a floral tie. A dash of spice for all the nice...the instructor. Brief respite to giggle. Giggle. Well, for Chrissake it is funny.

Not more than 24 months previous sitting self-consciously surly in the back of a class-room while somebody up front was trying to "relate to the younger generation." Now this. Role reversal is putting it mildly. THE INSTRUCTOR. Open the door and emerge. Hello Thailand.

Hey, You!

On the way to the university, plan the interrogation. Perhaps it is evident that this reporter is biased prejudiced, completely juiced out and cockbatted into an opinion that is not exactly impartial.

How about a frontal attack;

"WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT BLOOD?"

The lashes in front of the brown eyes go up in dismay and inscrutable displeasure. Never do.

Power trip. The desk. The DESK. Children cower, babies scream. Rat-tat-tat and battlefront-behind these lines sits the great giver of grades, imparter of mimeograph sheets, the khru guru, neck-tied and omnipotent.

She sits, eyes cast down, feigned terror.

THIS IS A TEST.

What is your name? Where do you live? Do you have any hobbies? (They all collect stamps here in Thailand. One of the grammar books made the mistake of telling everybody that collecting stamps is a hobby and they all collect stamps now except one ingenious boy who collected coins.) What does your father do?

Teacher sweats, stares above her eyes, gulps, and—

"What do you think about the war in Vietnam?"

"I don't like it."

We smile at each other. The sun shines a beam on my crystal paperweight. The fan rustles some pages of a book and in the next room there are women laughing.

I don't like it either.

New shirt-shirt combo. Daddy been Ambassador to America, coup d'etat and daddy been Ambassador no longer. Hip little chick, she's been to America, knows where that scene is at. Ask her all about these new boys her hometown and she says:

"I have no feelings. I have no knowledge. They make the girls.....you know..... the girls....."

A marine climbs that last mountain munching babies between his big chompers. Spitting napalm at an innocent bystander. He pulls Yankee Dollar from his hip-bugger combat trousers and proceeds to one by one "make the girls...you know...the girls..."

The fan keeps buzzing, the paperweight keeps glinting, and the women stop laughing.

There is one farang sitting listlessly at his desk who feels little success at foisting his guilt feelings and masochistic paranoia on this certain set of sons of rice farmers. The boomerang keeps coming back for a new strangle hold on his throat. Mea culpa, mea culpa—doesn't anybody see me mea culpa?

A young man, a smart young man. No fleas on him, nobody's fool, this boy.

"The young and educated don't like the leaders but for now we must follow the old."

Wouldn't go down at Berkeley. Guess this isn't Berkeley.

Now we have a smiler and a brown-noser. Looks at me with a contempt he doesn't know I know. Or does he? It's so obvious. The vehemence of it is astounding. On the Westernization of Thailand.

"Some say it's bad. I say it's good," ingratiating smile. Apollo "keng maak". You boys are number one. Thanks, chief.

Must be fair now. So many tell me how big countries should help little countries and how these commies better be stopped right now. The domino theory is alive and well in Bangkok. Five hundred miles from Vietnam you have to be uptight about something.

Standing in teacher position in classroom. New approach. All men. Ha, ha, guys we're gonna talk about Vietnam today. Let's wrap your vocabulary around the big problem. Yep, heh heh, now I want to find out, um... well... um...

"Why do you want to know, my teacher? Why do you want to know about that?"

"Well, I'm interested, and this magazine wants an article and....."

"Are you working for the C.I.A., teacher?"

Are they pulling my leg? Are they serious? They're laughing, but are they serious? They finally conclude that I'm not, but if I am I'm damn good; but old Peace Corps doesn't get off the hook, now.

One of my students told me a story. He went into a G.I. bar where his friend worked. One of the ladies plying her trade there happens to drop the remark that he's a creep because he's not a "farang" and that he's sure not going to make it with her.

He's very handsome, cool and proud, this guy. He works on her. Comes back to the bar a few times. She begins to dig him and he begins to make afternoon visits to her house while her farang husband was out working. She loves him; she loves his sweet voice talking in a language she can really understand. She loves him and she loves him to the point where she can't do without him. When this point is reached, he drops her.

And in a way, that is a student opinion of farangs in Thailand.

Sitting by the ocean, pretty crooked on Maekong, and he turns his face up to me, this student of mine, and he smiles disarmingly, and he says, "I like Ferlinghetti. 'America go fuck yourself' (laughter). He's a good poet."

SAKOL NAKORN

Rich Goldrick

There's a record that's very popular up here now called "Sad Movies" by Mani Maniwan.

I thought I would share it with you in case you haven't heard it yet.

The phonetics are mine as is the translation.

"Sad Movies"

(A Gury Arrowmide Production)

Cotnasy rak caak mia chaw

Ay khian lettur thung thur diat cawn Khian nay flact thi yun khury nawn changwad Udawn, prathed Thisylaend,

Ay brook ken haat yun nua anderataend Cawn. Dawnlaa khaad khlaen

Mia sekkhan haend khawng yun yang

Khaw yun thung mia chaw hiw

Krapaw koo boom thung rawy cuab

Lanh boom con chep

Ay soom phraw yun encaw

Fawked yawr wayl klab pay yun Hlanwy

Ay siacay con pen thaylawyd

Aw thaykur awy nua tha kan taay

Sook saw kwaa sad munwli oo cawn

Yun mek mi khimay

Ay loonlii sia con phawm phay

Yaak taay wany yun thung mi

Rawy nam taa yod rod bon laayen

Has sawng say caa nua may pen

Too wen ury wen lau chuay khian ti

Chik thing lettur han pay cur Di Di Thi

Krud bany, sawat dii

Koo mit kab mi thi muang

Di en.

(Love letter from a rented wife Dearest John,

I'm writing this letter to you, darling, in the flat where you used to sleep sometimes in Udorn Thailand. I'm broken-hearted, you must understand Dear John. My money is all gone. Your second hand wife still waits though you've thrown me over, packed your bags and gone home. You can forget the kisses and the embraces but my figure is spoiled because you enjoyed me. You've forgotten me and returned to Illinois, but I'm so sorry that I've gotten thyphoid and have to use Tiger Ole so I don't die.

So much more sadder than sad movies, eh John you make me cry. I'm so lonely I've wasted and I'd like to die. Why did you leave me? Tear drops stain the signature as I put the letter in the envelope. I can't address-O my sinner and my fate who can help me write?

So rip and throw away the letter and turning away see DDT. Goodbye, goodbye, you will meet me in the last place.)

"PEACE CORPS"

A new fun game from Milton Bradley, the makers of "Clue", "Monopoly", "Gettysburg". Copyright 1970. Made in Thailand.

RULES:

1. ANY NUMBER OF PEOPLE CAN PLAY
2. EACH PERSON SHOULD HAVE A "MOVER" TO PLACE ON THE BOARD—A SINGH BEER CAP, A BAHT, A WOODEN ELEPHANT, A PENNY, ETC. BEGIN AT THE RED ARROW. EACH BLOCK REPRESENTS A WEEK IN THAILAND AS A GENUINE PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEER.
3. THE OBJECT OF THE GAME IS TO BE THE FIRST ONE OUT OF THAILAND. FIRST ONE OUT IS THE WINNER.
4. USE A SINGLE DIE. IF YOU DON'T HAVE A DIE, MAKE A SPINNER WITH 1-4 AND PUSH A TOOTHPICK THROUGH IT. THIS DETERMINES HOW MANY SPACES A PLAYER MOVES.

SPECIAL NOTES:

1. Girls ignore spaces concerning the draft, except: a) if husband loses a 2-A deferment and is drafted, both he and his wife are out of the game.
b) if husband gets lottery #1 and must extend, wife extends also and must lose next two turns too.
2. If someone lands on "Coup d'etat", everyone goes home early, with an honorable discharge, and the Peace Corps game ends.
3. Early terminations, being drafted out of the Corps, sent home for pot—all are dishonorable discharges. Winner must have honorable discharge and last two full years.
4. Buying Honda 250 is optional. If you buy it and later wreck it, you must return all the way back to the day of purchase. Do you still want that bike?!

BRIAN (Continued from Pg. 114)

After he returned to Bangkok, he found out that the job at Thammasart University had fallen through. There was a possibility of getting a few English classes in two or three weeks if he would stick around.

But that was too long to wait. He had already been in Thailand for two months and wanted to move on. The medicine man job had given him just enough money to get to Japan. He had thought of hitchhiking through Cambodia and into South Vietnam, down to Saigon. But they were bombing and fighting along the Cambodia-South Viet Nam border and the road to Saigon went through the middle of a war zone.

He found a French shipping company in Bangkok that had a cargo boat going to Kobe, Japan. It was to be the last run for the line. It was folding in December. The price was \$103. He made a quick decision then and there to go.

The ship left the next day. That night he showed up at the house to pick up his sleeping bag which he had left under the couch before going to Chulaburi.

Besides the sleeping bag, he had only two other pieces: a small U.S. Army duffel bag and a Tibetan

wool bag with some Lao cigarettes and a few pocketbooks stuck inside.

We talked about Japan and someone mentioned that it would be cold there now. Did he have a sweater or anything? No, he didn't. He had a thick Irish knit sweater with him when he was in Europe but he sold it in India after lugging it through one tropical country after another. One of us brought down a sweater that they had conscientiously packed upon receiving the clothing list from Peace Corps/Washington. Brian rolled it up in his sleeping bag and took it along.

Brian was looking forward to Japan. For a long time he had wanted to learn how to grow miniature orange trees like the Japanese raised in flower pots. He had seen them once in Dublin.

Someone asked him where he would go after Japan. He didn't have any real definite plans. But someday he would go back to Ireland and start a pub. Brian's pub would have music and singing and cats from all over Europe and America and the world, and they would sing all the songs they heard on the road and tell about their travels. And there would be a warm place to sleep upstairs at the end of the night. And Ernie, Sam, Mike, and I were invited.

THE ★ END!	LOST PLANE TICKET lose next turn	THE PURGE lose next turn		TOOK FSI TEST results: 4+ go ahead 1		EXTENDED 3 MONTHS lose next turn	
GOT DRAFT LOTTERY No 1 had to extend lose next 2 turns			GOT FELLOWSHIP FOR COLLEGE go ahead 2	GAMMAGLOBULIN INJECTION go back 2		"KAMOID" lose next turn	
		GOT PX PRIVILEGES go ahead 5		SUMMER ASSIGNMENT OWN CHOICE go ahead 1		MAY POLE DAY	
OUT of GAME 2-A DEFERMENTS CANCELLED PCVs drafted go to war	LOY KRATONG go ahead 1		PLANNED A WEDDING triple score on next turn	FELL IN LOVE WITH A THAI go back 1- or- go ahead 1	CHRISTMAS double next score	JAN 1 st NEW YEARS go ahead 2	DISCONTEN WITH ASSIGNME lose next
		HALLOWEEN 	PARTY AT GOVERNOR'S HOUSE go ahead 1		TRAINED NEW GROUP IN HAWAII go ahead 3		
LIVING ALLOWANCE MISTAKE GOT 2000B go ahead 3	BOUGHT A HONDA 250 go to July 4 (option)		MAY DAY		GOT PARACHOLERA go back 3		GOT DRAF LOTTERY 3A  go ahead 1
	WENT TO KORAT WITH 100 STUDENTS go back 2	GOT DENGUE FEVER go back 3		BITTEN BY RABID DOG go back 2 	St. PATRICK'S 		WENT TO PENANG go ahead 4

EXTENDED 5 MONTHS lose next turn		PET PIG HAS LITTER go ahead 1		MET TERRORISTS IN YALA run ahead 3		SURIN ELEPHANT ROUND UP go ahead 1		WRECKED HONDA 250 (NO INSURANCE) go back to d of purchase
"KAMOID" lose next turn			STOMACH PROBLEMS FROM "PET" FOODS go back 1		EXTENDED 1 YEAR lose next 2 turns		"BY TIEW-ED" WITH VILLAGE HEADMAN go back 1	
MAY POLE DAY		COUP D'ETAT  GAME ENDS		APRIL FOOLS		FLOOD go back 1 		CAUGHT SMOKING "TE" go to pot OUT! 
AN 1 st NEW YEARS go ahead 2	DISCONTENT WITH ASSIGNMENT lose next turn			LINCOLNS BIRTHDAY	RECEIVED NEW ASSIGNMENT go ahead 4			
			WENT TO VIENTIANE go ahead 4	MET NIXON AT DON MUANG go back 3	WON NATION'S LOTTERY 500 BAHT go ahead 2			TERMINATE! EARLY OUT of GAME
	GOT DRAFT LOTTERY 365  go ahead 10	WENT TO CHIENGMAI go ahead 4		TECH CONFERENCE (Nakhorn Pratom) go back 1			MALARIA PROGRAM SUCESSFUL ALL MOSQUITOES DEAD go ahead 2	
	WENT TO PENANG go ahead 4	VALENTINES 	WON LOTTERY 200 BAHT  go ahead 1	FELL OFF BANGKOK BUS  go back 1		RAN DOWN BY A TAXI go back 1	ARRIVED IN THAILAND	

