

# KLONG

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THE JOURNAL OF PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEERS IN THAILAND

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JULY 2509 (1966)





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*Cover drawing by Julie Martin*

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Barely, whose present assignment is as an elephant handler at an institution for psychopathic animals in Nakae district, Nakorn Phanom province, is working on a song glorifying the old-time virtues of the Corps. On his last visit to Bangkok he revealed that two verses had so far been completed and we persuaded him to sing them so that they could be written down for posterity and for your singing pleasure. Barely received no formal musical training but there was real fervor in his voice as he sang:

"Put tinnis shoes on mah son's feet  
An' make' im show lots of proud espreet  
As he takes th' test to join the elite.  
(It's real tough t' pass, but don't let' im cheat.)

One hundrid folks are ast t' train,  
'Bout thirty-five kin stand th' strain  
Without throwin' up, or gittin' wawter on th' brain;  
Those that caint, go down th' drain."

We predict a big future for Peace Corps/Thailand's own Barely Saddled, and we just hope he'll be able to finish his song and take the Corps' story to the American people. Barely plays the guitar, too.

The deadline for contributions to be considered for the next issue of KLONG is September fifteenth. Manuscripts whose contents bear some relation to programs and problems in Thailand, or to volunteer life, are particularly welcome. Typed manuscripts already checked by their authors are a boon to the editors, but unavailability of a typewriter must not be allowed to stand in the way of true creativity.

A cover drawing, funny or beautiful or whatever, is needed for the next issue.

Address contributions to: Bradley Martin  
National Institute of  
Development Administration  
c/o Thammasat University  
Bangkok

Special note to Groups XIII and XIV: We're glad you're here and eager to hear from you.



## MAILBOX

Benchamarachootit School  
Chantaburi, May, 17, 1966

Dear Editor:

I am sending you a copy of a list containing five suggestions pertinent to Peace Corps policy, which was presented to volunteers staying at the hostel between April 30th and May 2nd. The results indicate that 35 volunteers out of the total number staying at the hostel, were in complete agreement with the list of suggestions. Since each volunteer who agreed was asked to sign his or her name as well as their group number, it was determined that of the 35 volunteers, 32 were in group 11 and 3 from group 10.

On May 3, 1966 the list with the signatures was given to Mr Adams.

N.B. The reasons for such a list are twofold:

First, it represents a positive and direct statement concerning Peace Corps policy by present volunteers, who do not wish to be governed by policy established by terminating groups at an end of service conference.

Secondly, the list serves as a means of informing the staff of how a relatively large number of volunteers stand in regard to certain questions, which hitherto, have not been answered satisfactorily by the staff and which to a large degree remain the object of rumors, gossip, etc.,

Wayne Ries  
(Group XI)

### FIVE POINTS FOR CONSIDERATION

We the undersigned are in complete agreement with the following suggestions in regard to Peace Corps policy.

1. That a centralized location be maintained where Peace Corps Volunteers can gather for any of the following reasons.<sup>1</sup>
  - a. Medical
  - b. Business
  - c. Social (providing that leave has been authorized)
2. That fans be supplied all volunteers on or about the time of their arrival up-country.
3. That Peace Corps policy concerning motorcycles be discussed in conjunction with a representative group of volunteers.<sup>2</sup>
4. That transfers continue to be considered on an individual basis and not against a background of pre-conceived by-laws.
5. That "regional representation" (on the part of the staff) take the form originally intended and that the prevailing form be eliminated, i.e., regional reps. be stationed in their respective regions.<sup>3</sup>

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1. A centralized location should include a building such that a large group of volunteers will be provided with adequate and sanitary conditions for sleeping and bathing. In regard to administrative problems, etc., it should be remembered that it is the responsibility of the P.C.V., as well as the staff, and that any decisions will accordingly accompany a joint discussion.
  2. The idea here intended is not only to reaffirm previous decisions but also to investigate the plausibility of fresh ideas in regard to present policy.
  3. "Regional representation" has as an essential element the meaningful flow of ideas between volunteers and staff. Also implicit in this term is the idea of availability of the representative when individual problems arise.



## BRIDGING THE KWAI DEPT.

Dear Mom and Dad,

It's so nice to be in Thailand after all that hard work in Hilo. I just arrived in the village this morning where I will be teaching for two years. I had a wonderful lunch and I want to tell you all about it.

All the important people in the village were there so I was on my best behavior. I wore a pair of pants I had made for me in Bangkok and a black tie. Everyone was very impressed by the tie and kept talking about it and pointing at it.

When we got to the headman's house, I remembered that Thais like to take their shoes off before going inside, so I quickly slipped mine off. I had carried them almost to the top of the stairs when I realized the others were leaving theirs at the foot of the stairs. It's lucky I saw this; it could have been a real social blunder. I decided the best thing to do was to be flexible, so I called one of the men over (he was the man who is going to be my headmaster) and as soon as he was below me I handed him my shoes to put at the bottom of the stairs. Everything was going O.K. when his hand slipped and one of the shoes dropped on his head. It bounced off harmlessly. But so no one would worry, I gripped the stair with my right hand and reached down to feel the place on his head where the shoes had landed with my left hand. I told him it was O.K. I think I did the right thing, because when I finished the examination, he seemed very relieved.

Then I went into the house where I met my host. I gave him the Thai handshake. (Thais put their hands together in front of the stomach and bow as low as they can.) I started the conversation rolling by giving him a compliment. "You certainly have a lovely house here," I exclaimed. "I especially like that cute little bird house you have out front!" He began to laugh and I could see I had appealed to his love of birds.

I kept on chatting and then after a while I asked him to say his name again so I could write it down in phonetics. He repeated it several times for me while I wrote it with an old red ballpoint I had lifted from the TEFL room. Out of curiosity he peered at my note pad and jumped back in surprise at seeing his name written in red ink. I thought maybe they had never seen red ink so I passed the pad around for them to look at, which they did. They kept saying a whole bunch of stuff I couldn't remember from the dialogues. I thought I would make a gesture of international good will so I handed him the pen as a gift. I thought maybe he had never seen one before, but I guess he had because he replied politely that he didn't want it.

He had a nice house, but I don't think he was wealthy because he couldn't afford chairs and a table. I just acted normally flexible as we all sat on the floor to eat. They all sat cross-legged, but since it hurt my ankle bone I said if it was all the same to them, I'd just stretch my legs out behind me. They all smiled and agreed. Then the food came out.

It was real good, though I wouldn't eat any of the real spicy dishes. I told them I liked all Thai foods except the spicy ones. The rice was real good.

The soup was great. They set a large bowl of it in front of me. I bowed and told them that I thought it was too much for me, but I managed to get it all down. The funny thing was that no bowls of soup were brought out for the rest of them. . . . I guess they don't like soup.



I became a bit worried about a diplomatic problem. Nothing to drink had yet been served, and I wasn't sure what I'd do when it was. You see the medical office had told us not to drink any unboiled water, but I was afraid my host would have hurt feelings if I wouldn't drink the water. But I needn't have worried; no drinking water was brought out, so I didn't have to face that problem. When the meal was finished I remembered that old Chinese custom was to belch after a meal if you thought it was good, so I belched loudly and washed my hands off in the large silver fingerbowl they handed me. (Did you know they put ICE in fingerbowls here?)

Like I say, it was a wonderful meal. I can't understand why all those books we studied in training worried so about differing social customs—if this meal was just like eating in America. All you need is some flexibility. I can't wait until I'm invited back for my next meal.

Love,

Mike

- Michael Love, Group XI, Singhaburi



## A STICKY INTERNATIONAL SITUATION

FATHER (in a letter from home): "Should I continue to use the colorful new U.S. commemorative stamps on the letters I send you, or have you found that no one in your area collects stamps?"

THAILAND P.C.V.: "For heaven's sake, Dad, please do continue using those fancy stamps on your letters. If you stop, whoever it is that rips them off the envelopes between the time they leave Bangkok and the time they reach me, about five days and two postoffices later, is likely to get mad and deliver my mail even slower than he does now."

Merle M. Moore

Group XII, Narathiwat



## An Amateur's Ideas On Underdevelopment

To replace the hot showers and hamburgers of America, a Peace Corps Volunteer in a rural village in Thailand is given a large urn of "fresh" water (with ladle even) and rice everyday. Under these circumstances he has an opportunity to personally see and experience economic underdevelopment. Although he is sufficiently imbued with Peace Corps idealism, and has already mentally prepared himself for two years of physical hardships, that water looks more than a little dirty, and the rice just doesn't fill the same hole that a plate of roast beef does. But soon he begins to crave a refreshing bath after a hot day in school (dirty water—so what!), and one day he actually asks for more rice. About that time he realizes that life out here "in the sticks" isn't so tough after all.

As he becomes more adjusted to the life of the village, the thought occurs that if he, a spoiled American, can live comfortably here, then the villagers, who have never experienced a better life, must be satisfied.

With these questions in mind (and with his college courses in economics and sociology—does it matter that he was an English major?), the amateur social-economist begins to look around.

As he takes note of what he sees, specifically in terms of development and underdevelopment, he is surprised by the incongruities that he failed to notice before. The principal of his school, for example, has a television set and spends his evenings with his six children watching such American cultural exports as *The Beverly Hillbillies* (Ole Granny really looks pretty funny speaking Thai); while in the house next door, four or five women squat round a pile of recently harvested garlic and cut the stems from the bulbs, one piece at a time. And they have been doing the same thing every time he has passed their house. But at least they have a transistor radio to listen to while they work.

Then one Saturday afternoon he takes a walk through the gardens that surround the town. Here he sees men shoveling water from the trenches, which run through the fields, onto the neatly planted rows of vegetables. And in the next field women, dressed in their black smocks and long black skirts, wearing large straw hats to shield them from the brutally hot sun, trudge along, continually bent over, picking the vegetables and placing them in a sack slung over one shoulder. At one corner of the field stands their home. It's built on stilts and the walls and roof are made of thatched palm leaves. (It's a little less than plush.)

As he walks back to town the PCV realizes that, although these people are poor, at least they have enough food to eat. That fact alone makes them better off than millions of less fortunate people in the world. But by his standards (and recently, with the widespread availability of Western style consumer goods, by theirs), a full belly is just one of the factors that constitute "a good life". He begins to wonder what can be done to help those people achieve a better life.

Since most of the people are engaged in some phase of agricultural production, that seems like a good area in which to begin. The PCV recalls that when he first arrived in the town, all land around was flooded. It rained every day. When he traveled by boat on the nearby river, he was a little uneasy because of the force with which the muddy waters rushed to the sea a few kilometers away. Now he sees that when the rainy season ends, the water



begins to dry up, and the gardens, which are the economic base of the village, reappear and are ready to be cultivated (after a couple of weeks repairing the mounds and trenches). The people plant their crops and, after a few months of diligent work caring for them, harvest their yearly crop of vegetables. But by harvest time almost all the water has dried up, so they cannot plant another crop. Several months go by while the fields lie idle. Then it begins to rain, the fields are flooded, and the unending cycle begins again.

The PCV recognizes the waste that is represented by these dry, useless fields, and he recalls the vast amount of water that poured by just a few kilometers away during the rainy season. With a dam and an irrigation system (that is, with several million dollars and a few years), the agricultural yield of this area could be substantially increased. But obviously that is a job for a government. In the meantime (which may be forever), how can the farmers increase their yield and decrease their workload?

The apparent absence of tractors leads the PCV to speculate on the possibility of giving them to the people. But as he takes another look at the gardens, with their built-up mounds and deep trenches, he realizes that tractors just couldn't do the job here. But something simpler and much less expensive could be used. It is a machine that is pushed along as it floats on the water, the gardener guiding its speed and direction, while a small engine pumps water onto two rows of vegetables at the same time. Great! But how does a gardener, whose family is living close to subsistence already, buy one of these machines? Being an amateur, the PCV leaves that question to the financial and economic experts.

Rice is the major crop in Thailand. Rice is also grown in America. The yield per acre of rice in America, however, is substantially higher than in Thailand. And whereas it takes five people to grow a certain amount of rice in Thailand, that same amount of rice can be grown by one worker with the help of his machines in America. Here there seems to be some possibility for improvement by introducing American methods which can be adapted to the land and climate of Thailand. But with a change in the method of agriculture, the social system, which is built on centuries of rice cultivation in the traditional way, is in danger of being shattered. What will the four people who can be replaced by machines do? In an industrial society where 90% of the working force is employed in manufacturing or services, people displaced by new methods of production can be retrained and employed in some other kind of work. But in a society where 80% of the people are employed in agriculture, and where conceivably half of them could be efficiently replaced by mechanization, and where there is a meager industrial sector capable of absorbing only a small fraction of these "emancipated" workers, what could be done to avert wholesale unemployment?

These kinds of problems are too much for the PCV to handle, so, confused and frustrated, he hurries home to plan tomorrow's English lesson.

— Jay Gordon  
Group XI, Rajburi



# The Adventures of Salem Winston, P.C.V.

## PART II

Salem Winston had tried everything. Now, as a high school freshman he had to face the apparent fact that there was no way he could avoid being, for the rest of his life, the butt of peoples' jokes. It had been all right for a few years. Only his grandmother, Miss Eula, had called him Salem. His mother, Lurleen, hadn't liked the name from the beginning; and his father, Billy Joe, repenting of his cruel and rash prank at the expense of a helpless infant, had decided to nickname the boy "Buddy". In consequence, Salem had a tolerably undistinguished childhood and entered junior high school without any remarkable complexes. Occasionally at the beginning of a school year his teacher might address him as Salem Winston, and there might be a few titters from around the room as he explained: "My name's Buddy;" but the name through the grade school years was only a minor handicap with his peers.

It was in the junior high school years that catastrophe struck. The R.J. Reynolds Company decided to bring out a new menthol filter cigarette to complement the exceedingly popular and tasty Winston, and in the competition between the names "Giraffe" and "Salem", the advocates of the geographical designation easily won the day over the throat-conscious Giraffe men. Insiders who were present in the smoke-filled room of decision report that the animal-lovers, who were mostly old-timers still around from the early Camel days, were appeased by an offer to feature Nature in the new five billion dollar T.V. advertising campaign. The die was cast; and Salem's anonymity was past.

There suddenly developed among Salem's acquaintances, friends and enemies alike, a powerful, mindless rage for telling and hearing Salem Winston jokes, a rage which spread to affect strangers in every hamlet and town in that part of the state. "Fresh as a breeze in springtime, eh Salem?" students would call as they spied his huddled, cringeing form on campus. Having once succumbed to the tobacco slogans madness the community predictably carried it to excess, ranging far beyond the meager possibilities offered by the Reynolds products. Occasionally, kindness emerged to cool the glowing coal of Salem's wounded pride—as when the county's board of education fired a recent graduate of Chapel Hill's history department from his instructor's post for his impertinent but undeniably truthful comment on Salem's report card: "Outstanding . . . and he is mild!" No action was taken, however, to halt such banal outbursts as the announcement in the sports section of the junior high newspaper that Salem was the only entry in the annual track meet's new event: walking a mile. As he entered high school Salem Winston's evil fate continued to pursue him with trick and guile.

As we said earlier, this was the time when Salem foresaw that his equilibrium was destined to disappear in ashes. But lo, he had increased in stature so that he was now seven feet three inches tall, and he was quickly offered an opportunity to repack the loose strands of his self-respect as the king-sized center of the Whoop County High basketball team. The canny coach sensed that care must be taken to insure that nothing be allowed to crush Salem's will to win, so he called a meeting of the other members of the team, the managers, and the cheerleaders and warned them never to try any new blends of the standard ingredients of a Salem Winston joke. This mentor's plea was so impassioned and hot that even some team members who had been multiple offenders were immediately cured of any tendency to weed that ancient plot.

Salem's happiness was uncircumscribed. For the first time in a number of months there was a group of people outside his own family with whom he could feel comfortable, relaxed,



unapprehensive. It's true: the team became his life. Each day after practice, walking the six miles to his home, he would breathe deeply with satisfaction; though the season was winter, for Salem every puff was springtime. It soon became evident to the team's following, which included virtually the entire population of Whoop County, that Salem's happiness was having a salutary effect on the team's record. In fact, by early January, no team had even come close to beating the Dervishes, as the aggregation was named. Thus, all the fans had cause to refrain from inflicting upon their hero anguish and pain.

But then wicked Fate emerged in a crisply sinister manner from its flip-top box and made itself once again an irritant to the membranes of Salem's psyche. It began innocently enough. As a result of Whoop High's fantastic winning streak, attendance at the games tripled. An election campaign was coming up and all of the county's politicians naturally turned up to compliment babies, kiss mothers, and pass out dark, evil-smelling cigars. Led by E.R. "Bubba" Calhoun of the reactionary faction of the single local party, and W.O. "Bubba" Wallace, of that same party's throwback faction, they surrounded the exits, infiltrated the locker rooms, and deployed themselves strategically in the stands. Political expediency had caused them all to purchase a single brand of cigar from a wholesale distributing house owned by P.Z. "Bubba" Bird, the state highway commissioner. This was the Zeppelin brand, whose manufacturer has been cited in testimony before the House Unhealthy Additives Committee as a knowing tool of the international air-pollution conspiracy. Needless to say, the nonsmokers put up a terrific stink when they found the gymnasium filled with a massive black cloud of nose-filling, lung-searing, face-smudging, ear-stopping, eye-stinging smoke. The women protested the damage done to their clothing by flying sparks, and the teenagers harbored secret fears that continued attendance at the games would place them in bad odor with their friends of the opposite sex. The Methodist minister, who was the only adult male to refuse the proffered cigars, was irritated by the reduced visibility which limited his enjoyment of the wholesome spectator sport. A committee was formed, and Mrs. O.R. "Bubba" Haskins was appointed to write a letter to the *Whoop County Times* ("A Better Government Publication"). Mrs Haskins' letter stated succinctly the results of the group's ruminations.

As luck would have it Salem's father, Billy Joe, a functional illiterate, had made it a habit since the beginning of Salem's basketball career to spend five hours every Thursday night laboriously poring over the single sports page of the weekly *Times*. Billy Joe, it must be said, was also among the chief beneficiaries of the politicians' studied largesse. During a single basketball evening he had been known to smoke as many as nine Zeppelin cigars. Billy Joe, as we have noted earlier, also had rather a queer sense of humor, which he had forced himself for a number of years to direct at other targets than his unfortunate son. The opportunity which now presented itself to him was an exceptional one, to be sure, but given relative sobriety he could have compelled himself to refrain from taking it. The difficulty was that Billy Joe had not done any work on that fateful day, but had spent the entire day drinking with members of the "Bubba" Wallace faction in the back room of the barber shop belonging to Wallace's brother-in-law. The participants in this festive interlude had managed to keep themselves entertained with the usual store of quips, puns, and cetera. The gathering ended at six o'clock in the afternoon with an uproarious, side-splitting ceterum contributed by "Bubba" Wallace himself; when Billy Joe started home he was laughing drunk, thus con-



stituting a danger with which to be reckoned. When he realized it was *Times* night his slogging pace quickened.

Billy Joe sat down at the table and Lurleen, his wife, handed him the paper, which she had already read. "I see from the paper whar Miz Haskins writ in to complain about them see-gars you men's been smokin' over to the basketball games," she said.

"Haw Haw Haw," Billy Joe chuckled. "Whut'd that ol' bitch say?"

"She sez it's got so a body cain't hardly breathe nor see the game on account uv all that smoke. She sez thar's no-smokin' signs ever-which-way all over the place, but don't nobody pay'em no mind, ust goes on an' fills up the place with all that black smoke an' makes it ob-noxious for people what's paid to see a basketball game. Only she called it a athaletic ee-vent."

"Haw Haw Haw," laughed Billy Joe. "'Ol' Lady Haskins sez all that?"

"Yes, an' she sez y'all don't stop smokin' them thangs she an' her friends is gonna call the shurf."

"Haw Haw Haw!" roared Billy Joe.

"Whut're you brayin' about now, Billy Joe? If thar's signs up over to the gym I reckon the shurf kin make y'all quite smokin' indoors."

"The shurf's done give out a passel o' them see-gars his self, an' I reckon if he tried to git us to quit smokin' 'em us boys might jest vote fer Bubba Wallace's man. I guaran-damn-tee yuh Bubba Calhoun ain't gonna have no truck with lettin' the shurf do a dumb thang lak that what with them 'lections comin' up in three weeks."

Billy Joe smirked and thought about that for awhile. Then he burst out laughing. "Haw Ha • Haw," he screamed.

"Now whut's got you goin' again, Bilty Joe?" Lurleen shined. "I knowed you was drunk the minit you come in the door," she said, "but I declar if I've been able to figger out in twinny six yurs livin' with you why you laff so when you've been at the bottle. Now whut kinda foolery are you thinkin' on this time?"

Billy Joe either couldn't or wouldn't answer. He was leaning over the table, convulsed with laughter, perspiration drops sliding down his purple face.

After a while he recovered sufficiently to ask his wife for a sheet of paper and a pencil. She complied immediately, but expressed amazement that Billy Joe would think of writing anything besides his signature.

Billy Joe sat at the table until one in the morning, writing, crossing out words, thinking, and from time to time reverting to uncontrollable mirth. Then he got an envelope and a stamp, enveloped and stamped the letter, addressed it, and carried it out to his mailbox for the R.F.D. man to pick up later in the morning. His task completed he joined his wife, who had long since retired for the night, and went to sleep.

During the next week, whenever Lurleen's curiosity got the better of her and she asked him what the letter was, Billy Joe's only response was a wild guffaw.



On Thursday, however, she found out what it was; so did the whole county. Readers of the Whoop County *Times* opened their papers to the editorial page that night to find the following letter to the editor:

Dear edter,

Them wimmin what writ in to complane about all that Smok over to the Jim and all dont need to wurrie none long as my boy Salems on the teem, his greter linkth filters the smok meks it mild,

Prowd father

B.J. Winston

Within a few hours' time Whoop County in its entirety had gone utterly berserk. With its self-imposed task of avoiding humor at the direct expense of Salem Winston, and with its bitterly divisive controversy over the cigars, the county had wound itself tightly to a high tension — which was easy game for the sharp wit of Billy Joe. When Salem emerged from practice that evening at seven thirty, he encountered a scene of pure insanity. The managers and cheerleaders were rolling around on the schoolyard, shrieking with laughter, one of the winsome lasses clutching to her sweated bosom a shredded copy of the Whoop County *Times*. When they saw him several of the pretty things went into such paroxysms of laughter that they stopped breathing entirely and had to be revived with mouth-to-mouth resuscitation skillfully administered by the hooting managers.

Salem went up to the corner of the sheet and took from her shaky embrace the document that finalized his social damnation, as far as Whoop County was concerned, and made his dreams disappear like smoke rings.

After reading it he returned to his home, from which in the ensuing three and one half years he seldom emerged. His occasional forays out were the seeds from which sprang his new life—but for that the reader must await the third installment of the continuing "Adventures of Salem Winston, P.C.V."

Bradley Martin



## Steaming-pot Spirit

"What's the matter with the old man?" asked the witch-woman. The ghost hesitantly moved his right arm toward a basin of rice grains to draw a picture in response. The picture was at first hard to make out, for the poor ghost's vehicle was somewhat cumbersome.

No one knew who this ghost was or where he came from. He had been called by the old doctor-woman to come and enter a wooden rice-steaming pot, which is a frequent habitat of this type of ghost. Then a wicker-basket-like contraption was placed on top of the pot and the ghost entered it. The basket was fitted with wooden arms and dressed in a man's shirt, so that it looked something like a human torso. Now it was being firmly held on each side by the witch and the family matriarch, to keep the trapped spirit from flying away.

The picture was crude, but it was definitely the outline of a chicken. "He wants you to give the ghost that attacked the old man a chicken to eat," explained the witch. Ailing grandfather's proper remedy was discovered.

Several other problems were put to the pot-spirit. He answered "yes" by loudly banging his left arm on the floor, much to the delight and merriment of the children gathered round (the father of the family had ten children); and "no" by rising a couple of feet in the air. "Where will I meet my sweetheart?" asked a 20-year-old daughter. The ghost scratched away in the rice for a few seconds, but he was evidently writing something in the archaic northern script, which nobody in the room could read. The two old women picked up the hapless ghost and shook him violently for his inscrutability. A second try produced scribbblings equally baffling: "Hell, now he's writing in Chink!" said someone. "Now none of that!" Somebody placed a coin in the basin for the ghost. He touched his arm to it, seemed satisfied, and drew an arrow. The girl would find a man in a village to the north.

The spirit who struck grandfather had been up to other mischief as well. When a ghost causes harm, he usually causes it in more than one place, and a young daughter was also out of sorts. The pot-spirit was called upon to help bring back the girl's khwans, or energy-elements. In her cupped hands she held a sacred white thread, a small banana, an egg, a ball of rice, and a few drops of water. The ghost ate and drank from her hands by touching the food with his arm. He would see what he could do to help. Then he disappeared.

—Richard Davis, Group IX. Nan.



## the triumph of five village dogs over evil

no no says the man  
of this land.  
i heard no dogs but  
it is mebbe the sea  
beating on the moon eh?  
it is neither noise  
nor nuisance  
nor your own agony.  
mister  
i have slept here nearly  
all my life with one wife  
and have never heard what  
you say you heard  
it was what?

dogs i tell him again.  
he will watch me walk away  
tomorrow  
and he'll smile at his woman...  
yet just there  
in the weak rising dawn  
i see five village dogs  
feeding  
on a great ghost fallen  
from a tree where it had squatted  
throughout the darkness.  
soon they'll stretch in the warm  
dust of the day  
and begin to lick the shreds  
of this night away.

Gregory Maronick



## The Artist

Amrah got up and rubbed his seat. He had cramps again, but he was glad he'd gotten them. If he hadn't, he'd have gone to sleep. He turned around and went back into his cave. There'd been nasty talk going around the village lately. The women didn't like him in the first place because he wouldn't share his cave with any of them, and now the men were beginning to complain that he wasn't doing his share of the hunting. He looked out the door of his cave again and wondered why most of the villagers had absolutely no appreciation for the looks of things around them. The women cooked and suckled children and spat and the men hunted and slept and begat and nobody, it seemed, even bothered to look around them at the way things all looked. They all worshipped the spirits that lived all around them but they never just sat and tried to soak up everything that was around them.

The sun had gone down now and it was almost too dark to see. Amrah moved to the corner of his cave and picked up the torch. He scraped some of the charred wood off the end into a bowl and set about making a fire. He kept thinking about things he'd seen and couldn't forget, like the sunlight flashing on the reddish fur of a deer's flank, and gray moss hanging from the trees in the dark parts of the forest, and ferns and small flowers, and the way the dust looked on the hide of a dead rhinoceros. He stuck the blazing torch in its niche and went back to the bowl full of charred wood. He spat into it and stirred it around with his finger. Then he moved over to the back wall and removed his stretching rack from its usual place on the wall.

There it was. He stood back and cocked his head to the side. A slow smile spread over his face. He almost laughed out loud. There on the wall was his own thing of beauty. As a child he had always regretted the coming of the night because it meant that he could then no longer see all of the things that had filled his days. He had gained a reputation as a young man for just sitting in his cave and staring at the wall. The villagers had all thought that he was somewhat retarded and laughed and ignored him. They never realized that on that blank wall he was staring at, he was recreating a thousand sights. In his mind he saw thundering herds of stampeding bison, stirring up huge clouds of reddish dust that blotted out the sun. He saw the horrifying beauty of two scaley-flanked giant lizards tearing each other to pieces, the fresh, light color of a tree broken over by a sloth, and the instant terror of a lightning flash in the dark sky.

Then, only recently, his great idea had come to him. The medicine man of the village had the sacred right to draw magic symbols. These symbols looked like animals and were supposed to bring good hunting. They actually did work as everyone expected they would, even the people who didn't like the medicine man particularly, and even Amrah, who was the only one who harbored the sacrilegious thought that the drawings didn't look very much like the animals they were supposed to look like. Then Amrah had gotten his idea. If the medicine man could paint animals, so could he. Amrah put down the stretching rack and picked up the sticky black mess he had just made from the ashes of his torch. He picked up the frayed reed that served as his brush, and went to work again. Even though he knew what he was doing was sacrilegious, he tried not to think about it or else rationalized profusely. The medicine man would probably be furious. Amrah had learned a very large



respect in a very short time for the medicine man. Drawing was very, very difficult. But the promise of something beautiful to look at after the sun went down drove him on.

Amrah stepped back and looked again. It was finished, his legs were a little stumpy, and the irregularity of the wall it was painted on made it look a little bit warped, but it did look like an animal. It looked like a much better animal than the medicine man could draw also, thought Amrah. In fact, it was beautiful. The artist threw his brush into the corner and hit himself on the side of the head. He chuckled and began to skip around his cave. He finally laughed till tears came into his eyes. It was beautiful!

Amrah spun around just in time to see a small, dirty heel disappear from sight. He raced to the door too late and listened as a set of small footsteps retreated into the night. Quickly, he stood his stretching rack over the fresh drawing and doused the torch. His mind raced as he lay down on what was his bed. Now what? He had tried to pretend that this would never happen. He had thought that maybe he could talk to the medicine man eventually and come enough into favor with him that he would be willingly, even gladly, allowed to draw the pictures. Perhaps they would just think that he was crazy. After all, being a medicine man was not just a matter of drawing pictures. It was hereditary. The medicine man could talk with the spirits, he was different from normal men, he was above them. Amrah was just a common hunter, he couldn't actually do anything sacrilegious. He didn't have the power to. But the women of the village were all angry at him. The few remaining single women in the tribe didn't like living with their parents and Amrah wouldn't help them by marrying them. They could try to get even now. Once a hunting party he had been with had missed its game because he had been watching a spider spinning its web. They had tried to kill him that time. It was all ridiculous. It was only some dirt smeared on the wall!

Amrah decided that the villagers really had no argument with him. He was only scaring himself by thinking about it so much. It was childish. He got up and lit the torch again. He moved the rack again and stared at his work. The beating of his heart slowly returned to normal and his fear drained away. He smiled again. A little nervously this time, he laughed again. It was beautiful.

Then a club slammed into his back and Amrah hit the floor. He sucked air back into his lungs and tried to roll over. A foot caught him near his kidney and he heard the voice of the medicine man. In a frenzy, the voice accused him of sacrilege and a club fell again. Amrah felt something warm and wet trickle over his shoulder and felt the back of his neck grow cold and numb. He watched, still on his stomach, as the medicine man obliterated his drawing with a rain of blows from his club. He heard several familiar feminine voices cry out and weep as the medicine man railed about the death and starvation that had been summoned by this presumptuous fool. Amrah started to cry as he heard the medicine man's voice rise to a scream and heard several men stumble through the door of his cave. He wanted to explain but he couldn't even speak.

He had really wanted to tell them. He had thought about it at long time, but now it all seemed so suddenly useless. Amrah tried to think about the simple picture through the buzzing in his ears and then screamed as someone's club split his skull.



## An Agency for Revolution

The Peace Corps, says Andrew Kopkind, is "the last remaining, isolated and beleaguered outpost of the New Frontier." The associate editor of *The New Republic*, writing an article entitled "The Peace Corps' Daring New Look" (Feb. 5, 1966), argues that all the other "fortresses" of the Frontier "have fallen to the captains of consensus."

Kopkind believes that the Corps possibly foreshadows "a new kind of politics for America." Under new Director Jack Hood Vaughn it must "in the next year or two...prove that point or die." The past role of the Corps has been to send to developing countries "not much more than young, relatively inexpensive Point Four technicians", whose "identification with poverty-stricken *campesinos* or African tribesmen simply made their jobs easier." This role was designed partly to counter anti-Americanism, but in this, says Kopkind, "the Peace Corps has not been very much help. Anti-American sentiment runs high or low and regimes come and go in countries where volunteers work, without relevance to their presence." Noticing that applications from young, radical activists were not exactly pouring into the Corps' recruitment office, Washington officials sensed that something was missing in the program. The Peace Corps, they decided, should be a "government-sponsored agency for revolution in the 'third world'."

In Latin America, the first testing-ground for the "new look", community development volunteers have the task of actually beginning communities where before only collections of poor people lived. The community at first centers around some volunteer-aided project like a school, a basketball team, or a discussion group. Then the members of the group "begin to see ways in which they can use the power which they have as an organization. They may go to the Ministry of Education Office and demand a new school or more teachers, or they may form political movements." At this point the volunteer "catalyst" should start to become superfluous.

Promoting social revolution abroad, Kopkind observes, "raises enormous questions for American foreign policy, and makes the Peace Corps too politically vulnerable." Frequently the results of this new kind of "community development" may "run directly counter to the objectives of State Department policy." Kopkind quotes Jack Hood Vaughn to the effect that a stronger Peace Corps program in the Dominican Republic might have resulted in nonviolent change, making American military intervention unnecessary. But, says Kopkind, "when revolutionary forces are put in motion, the forms they will take are largely unpredictable, and uncontrollable. The Dominican uprising might have been bigger (and perhaps successful) if the volunteers had done a better job." And, if this sort of thing happened, "there would certainly be a clash between the Peace Corps and the Administration's 'real' foreign policy experts."

What would happen if volunteers went beyond activities tending to encourage organized protest and actually participated in the resulting political action? Kopkind doesn't know, but he quotes a Peace Corps Washington official as saying that "those who don't know where to draw the line, and who try to become political activists abroad" are not wanted in the Corps.

At present, in Kopkind's analysis, the Peace Corps "is a convenient 'cover' to forestall criticism of US policy. The Peace Corps, foreign aid, food-for-peace and the small kindnesses GIs extend to distressed peasants are the 'good parts' of that policy. They comfort the minds of those who are put off by the military interventions, the irrational anti-Communism, the dictatorships supported, and the napalm raids." But Kopkind takes note of the possibility that in the future the Corps may begin to stimulate long-range changes in American policy: "What it would mean for the Peace Corpsmen to be running, say, the State Department is anybody's fantasy."

Concluding, Kopkind predicts that the Corps "has a job cut out for itself convincing Congress and the public that revolution, not the traditional notion of stability, is a valid objective of US policy." Peace Corps, if it succeeds in this, "could be the first break in the old politics of nationalism." The volunteers' work is "not internationalist... Rather, it is nonnationalist. It has less to do with nations and their foreign relations than with people and their human relations. That is a point the Peace Corps needs to make."

— Bradley Martin



# Talking Peace Corps Blues

(Just strum along in 4/4 time, key of G, regular chord progression, and talk.)

Now I joined the Peace Corps to get away,  
It's sick and tired of the U.S.A.  
But now that I've been on the roam,  
I'm gettin' lonesome, wanna go home.

Nobody even speaks English here, whole place is full of *foreigners!*

The house I live in's kinda nice;  
It's out in the middle of a field of rice.  
There's birds on top and snakes underneath,  
And a tiger on the front porch pickin' his teeth.

He's waitin' for me to come out. Been there two weeks. I ain't comin' out.  
Dumb cat.

The school I teach in's a dandy, too.  
It's up on stilts in a field of goo.  
It's nice and airy, though, the screens are all gone,  
So's the equipment and the hong naam.

Pawn shop on the corner's doin'a booming business. I'll teach the front office  
to cut our salary.

The kids I teach are smart as a whip,  
They study real hard and don't give me no lip.  
We sing folk songs and do the ramwong,  
And take turns lookin' for the Viet-cong.

Saw one the other day, too. In the third row.

If Miss Gomez could see me now,  
She'd be as proud as a littered sow.  
I use my TEFL books every day,  
And all those handouts she gave away.

You see, my Sears catalogue nor my Reader's Digest have come yet and paper's  
kind of scare up here. I ain't proud, I don't have to use that soft tissue stuff.

They sent me a booklocker full of good things,  
Like "The Miracle of Vitamins" and "Burl Ives Sings"  
Along with a book that tells real clear  
How to cook all the things you can't buy here.

As a bonus, I got two novels by Francis Parkinson Keyes who, I'm told,  
compares favorably with the best works of Frank G. Slaughter.

My first-aid kit came the other day.  
And I started using it right away.  
The polymagma's now long gone,  
And I might not be able to finish this song.....

Michael Dension



## Sue Kay is my Sister / A Sketch

I suppose the nicest girl in the whole world is my sister Sue Kay who is in the sixth grade and whose long black hair is always swinging, whether she is playing two-square or hopscotch at the playground, or even if she is only sitting still, maybe to play checkers with the school-yard director who is in college and who holds her hand longer than I like him to and who once kissed her on the wrist. I absolutely hate him although the reason why is not because he likes her. Oh, no, but I think it is because he gets along with her, and so I always feel strange and know the two of them wish I'd go away whenever I show up at the yard to maybe kick the soccer ball around or just watch them hunched over the checker board in the shelter, where it is quiet and cool and dark, and the trouble is, maybe, that Sue Kay and I are the oldest in our family and have always been together to do things and I like to be with her to do anything—to play kick-the-can in the alley or flatten pennies on the streetcar tracks in front of our grocery store.

Of course I know that one day we will have to stop playing and fit into the world and she will probably marry someone like Albert Wing next door, but if I had my own way Sue Kay and I would always do things together because we go together like two halves of anything, and even when we fight each other I know I would shoot myself if I really hurt her. I remember once she pushed me onto my face in the alley and I got two teeth cracked right off on the sewer grating and I remember she would not eat her supper for a week, even after my father whipped her with his leather strap and screamed at her that she was a devil-girl. To say it another way, we were always a team, the two of us, but I am not forgetting that she is only my sister, and I am only her dumb brother who wants to make her laugh all day long if I can—who will break his neck if she will smile a little bit, and I would like to never stop any of this, except that I am in the high-seventh now and maturing in school and I know that one day she might have to leave San Francisco, forever, maybe to go to New York City or L.A. or Portland or Chicago or some place, I don't know, and then in five more years I want to go to college myself to study technical engineering—just like the schoolyard director is doing. I know I hate him when I think of him and it is all because he likes Sue Kay, not because he hates her. He likes her as much as I do, I think, and I know she likes him, too, and for me it is not very important that he is not a Chinese, only I wish he would not let her lock her fingers into his fingers. But whenever I tell her anything, she tells me *shut up*, and turns around to look at him and smiles, and even now I do not understand what the whole story is between them. Yes, I know he is *nice* and that the high school boys like it when he walks over to play basketball with them in the afternoon because he can jump high—my God, how high! I have seen him put a basketball through the hoop with one hand, and the other boys like to see that, but I do not. I hate the way he runs very fast and jumps and slams the ball down through the netting—no, I do not like to see that because he is doing it by himself and I believe everything right has to be done together with someone else, as on our church softball team where the word is Co-operation. That is how to play, according to Mr. Sun, our coach, for otherwise we would all begin to fight against each other to get our own way. But still I have to admit that it is *something* to stuff a basketball through the hoop with your hand. You have to be a six-footer to do it—but me, I am a Chinese.

I wish the the director hated Sue Kay a little. She needs someone to hate her, but everybody only loves her, especially HIM, and I am only one person anyway, only her brother who hangs around her like an extra scarf maybe, and of course it doesn't matter, you see, that I sort of still love her because there are other people who do too, and I can do nothing about it. No, nothing. I have no rights of any kind in regard to my sister, she is only my sister, and when I stand in the playground shelter and ask her to please come home with me so that our mother can cook the dinner now, and she only wants to play another game of checkers and laugh some more at the faces he is making for her, who am I to swear and beat his chest with my fists? Who am I to make Sue Kay so afraid and he so surprised? I am no one to do a terrible thing like that...

And now I know it was the worst thing in my life because he is only her good friend, and I know I should have figured it all out ahead of time—it is such a simple thing.

— Gregory Maronick  
Group X, Bangkok



## Incident in Miri

Malaysia is paranoid. Well, maybe that's a bit too strong. *Certain* Malaysians are paranoid. No, still too general. Perhaps I'm viewing it from the wrong angle, perhaps—yes, that must be it, exactly—I'm paranoid.

My incident took place in Miri, one of the larger towns in Sarawak, located on the northern coast somewhere in-between Kuching and Brunei. No special reason why I was staying there. Only that I had missed a 9 a.m. bus to Brunei and would have to wait another five hours until the next bus left. What do you do in a town which has no more than four main streets, each of which is ten shops long and all of which have been walked through several times already? Sit in a shop, drink coffee, and read Dreiser. Naturally. Read Dreiser for no other reason than to finish highly sentimental *Sister Carrie* and then, as if by pure accident, leave the book on the table for some unfortunate native of Sarawak to pick up enthusiastically as if he had found the world's greatest treasure, looking upon it as the key to his entrance into modern civilization. I am always leaving dreadful books behind, one of my pastimes being to imagine what sort of person will next possess them and suffer their monotonous drivel. Never leave good books behind. I could never think of doing *that*. That might be even regarded as a touch of humanitarianism. And you *know* the English are still in Malaysia.

Cup of coffee and four slices of toast with butter, please. Please... that's funny. Reminds me of the Qantas (barbarians, no u!) advertisement where two attractive Asians, male and female, are dining—candlelight, Courvoisier, everything quite correct—and are being served by a Caucasian. An Englishman, I presume. Perhaps even a dispossessed colonial. Too bad everything's changed. Then they could have an advertisement showing a colonial, Kitchener type, dining (served by one of the natives, of course) with Queen Victoria. Cutting into an India-shaped piece of steak. Steak is rare; streams of rich, thick blood are spilling over the sides of the piece of meat onto the plate. Bloody good and all that. Strips of asparagus neatly decorating the meat. Potato halves lightly buttered and salted. Remnants of oil-black caviar on a plate lying to the side of the table. And a tall glass of strong, dark stout with which to wash down the repast. Don't eat too much, though... indigestion. Here come coffee and toast. Thank you. Now to drysir. What page am I upto? Only a hundred eighty pages left to go. Books like these should be numbered backwards. That way you always know how many pages are left and it's made absolutely clear that an end does exist.

So I kept on reading. Between paragraphs I took word-sized sips of coffee and sentence-sized bites of toast. My stock of coffee and toast would have to be replenished several times during the five hours. But by eleven I was getting tired and decided to take a ten minute break, a break in this situation being an attempt to make myself consciously aware of the details, as opposed to the composite whole, of the place I happened to be in. When I closed the book I found that I was sitting at a marble-topped rectangular table—a one-half inch deep crack which, when you looked at it, made you momentarily shudder ran across the marble surface from the side opposite to mine. My table was on the right as I was sitting towards the back of the room. The shop itself was three tables wide, rectangular settings decked with slabs of marble on either side but circular settings, also topped with slabs of marble, in the center. All tables except mine were occupied by at least two people. In fact, some were even



overcrowded. Mine remained with only one, that being myself. I rationalized that there must be an Asian superstition about sitting at tables with cracks in them.

At the table parallel to mine on the other side of the room were seated five or six Malaysians. I didn't take particular notice of each individual but just made a quick glance around the table. It may be asked why I looked at the table at all. For, had I not looked there, my incident, insignificant as it may be, would never have occurred. Neither would I be telling all this now. I can only say that the pictorial aspect of seeing these Malaysians seated at the table, good-humoredly imbibing their Carlsberg Pilsener and pleasantly tossing peanuts into their mouths, appealed to me enough to want to take a picture of this "typical" coffee house scene. I took out my camera, focused, and then tried to determine the aperture opening. Why didn't I *first* find the aperture and *then* focus? Simply because I enjoy focusing immensely and this way I get the opportunity to focus twice. Actually I just wanted to get an initial view of what the picture would look like. Anyway, my lightmeter showed that there wasn't enough light and that I wouldn't be able to photograph this scene at all. Unfortunately the people at the table opposite assumed that I *had* taken a photograph of them on first focusing because, after I had put the camera away, one of them turned and smiled. This being such a trivial affair, I didn't bother to stand up, go over to them, and try to explain that I *hadn't* taken one at all—there was something completely senseless in doing that. Just let the matter rest. Ten minutes having passed, I returned to my book.

I had finished a few more pages when my eyes were distracted by a form, apparently human, next to my table. It was just standing there, "it" meaning the form. I use this pronoun in place of the conventional "he" or "she" because in using the latter we mean to express some kind of animate existence. Well, this man who was stationarily placed in front of me, all parts of his body immobile, blocking out entirely my line of sight to the left, showed no signs of animation whatsoever. His eyes, dreamily open, never blinking, showed such a lustre that they seemed to have been polished with some kind of eye wax. They reminded me of a person I had seen on a ship with a glass eye—only at this moment there were *two* glass marbles vacantly, yet persistently, staring at me. They too, as the rest of the bodily parts, were immobile and showed no expression except perhaps for that of a cretin. The one other feature of this man which made itself immediately noticeable was the frozen, perpetual smile plastered on his face. Have you ever dreamt of lips smiling without a face? The smiling lips now before me, if looked at long enough, became distinct so that it seemed as if the creator, originally never conceiving of bestowing upon man oral appendages, for the sake of amusement, both man's and his own, had arbitrarily put them in anyway.

I recognized this fellow as one of the people who had been grouped around the table mentioned before, and decided that he was only trying to be friendly. I asked him to sit down and started to converse. It happened that he couldn't speak English. A thought quickly flashed through my mind that if he couldn't speak English then why did he take the trouble to come over to me at all. The answer was simple—he was one of those people who just enjoy sitting with a foreigner. It didn't matter if there was conversation or not. Even if nothing was said, the mere physical presence of two cultures sitting at a table, smiling at each other, was sufficient. (I, of course, by rules of social conduct, had to reciprocate my friend's smile, which I did for the whole time we sat together.) But even this kind of "transmitted" friendship and understanding has its weakness in that it may become tiresome. Therefore I told him about myself—my occupation, my home near Bangkok, why I came



to Miri, etc.—and tried to ask him simple questions to which I got answers consisting of a slight downward nod of the head or a slight widening of his smile and then a return to its former position. There was an effort on his part to establish some communicative level and it consisted of two English words, though actually only one since it was repeated. Neither were these words directed toward me but to the proprietor of the shop and formed the appeal of "Beer, beer!" Thus, we spent the better part of two hours together finishing several bottles of Carlsberg and smiling at each other.

I enjoy beer. But I get drunk quite easily after only a few glasses, my state of intoxication being to get very tired and then fall asleep. Since I would be leaving soon I knew that I shouldn't drink too freely. Yet, despite all my protestations, my silent friend continuously filled my glass with beer. What disturbed me was that he was drinking much less than I. I have mentioned paranoia. I admit to being slightly tinged with this mental condition which at times makes life much more interesting and unusual than it would be in its absence. My glass was always full to the brim; my drinking companion, not drinking as much as I, ignored my now excited refusals of replenishment, even though he saw I was beginning to feel weak and tired. For a moment, for the tiniest fraction of time, I believed that he was intentionally trying to intoxicate me. But the rational part of my behavior triumphed and I dismissed the idea as absurd. This was only his way of demonstrating a non-verbal friendship.

It was now about one o'clock. I had to be at the bus station, a few meters away, a half hour before my bus's departure so that I would be in time to reserve a seat. I should therefore leave the shop at one one thirty. I was starting to feel uncomfortable, even strange, staying here with this extremely reticent Malaysian. By explaining that I had to be at the bus station an hour before, I could properly excuse myself from the table and extricate myself from this peculiar situation. By moving my fingers along the table, uttering individual words, and pointing to the clock on the wall, I explained that, because I was to leave Miri for Brunei, our pleasant *entre-chat* would now have to come to an end. This my friend seemed to understand quite clearly, so clearly, in fact, that by using his fingers and a few isolated words, he informed me that the bus was not leaving for another hour. Moreover, he wanted me to come with him for the remaining time. I thought it queer that just as I was about to leave this man should suddenly become animated. And, when I declined his hospitable invitation, whereupon he kept on insisting (he was now quite emotional about the thing) that I come with him, I began to think him queer too. This bantering back and forth of "Come with me" and "No, I can't," occasionally modified by a "Where?," lasted for some minutes. Determinedly, I told him that I would not go with him until I knew where we were to go—he answered that we were to visit his house. My mother had made me aware of certain men who find their pleasures in unusual outlets (my father not being of the disposition to engage in conversations of the "what every son should know" type), but I had never expected to find them in an isolated place such as Miri. My experiences (visual only, of course) had been confined to the gay haunts of Times Square and the East Side, and, to a much greater degree, to the character and situational descriptions I had found in novels.

It may be asked why I should have believed this man to be, in one way or another, out of the ordinary. For I had twice before received similar invitations, once in Songkhla and



once in Malaya, invitations which I immediately and unhesitatingly accepted; and both those times I stayed as guest with my hospitable hosts for three days. Why, then, should there be any feeling of ambiguity in the present situation? Was it another instance of paranoia? The answer to this is that the sudden change in the state of this man's nature and attitude from one of complete reticence to one of almost violent insistence made me uneasy. For the two hours we had been sitting together no emotional behavior had been shown—we had sat there drinking beer, hardly exchanging any words. Now, as I stood up, about to leave, this fellow was excitedly shaking his head and saying I must come with him. Even if my original suspicion about him were wrong, I sensed that even an over-friendly person in extending an invitation would not get this disturbed over such a minor incident. Or was it really paranoia? Maybe too many Bond movies. I *could* spare the half hour in which he wanted to show me his home. But that wasn't the question. The question was whether my mental perception of the situation was correct or incorrect; analogously, whether the rational or irrational was at work.

I decided in favor of the former since I felt that there was more in this man's invitation than the invitation itself, an ulterior motive. I picked up my bag and walked out of the shop. Naturally, my friend walked out with me, still asking me to come with him—he accompanied me all the way to the bus station. While I reserved my seat, he made a telephone call. I learned that the call was being made to one of the police chiefs at the local police station. So my original suspicion was wrong. I tried to think of any offense I may have committed which would warrant police attention but couldn't. All I knew was that this man wanted to detain me, for what reason I didn't know. The police chief came and he and my friend went off to confer by themselves. I, meanwhile, took my seat in the bus. If they were going to detain or arrest me they would have to drag me out. Passport and health certificate in order. I knew that I hadn't trespassed the law (what a strange idiom—makes one think of someone running through an open field trodding down grey, wilted blades of desiccated law). Thoughts of Jose Ferrer, as a Turkish police chief detaining O'Toole as Lawrence of Arabia for contestable purposes, came to my mind.

Fifteen minutes later my curious friend returned alone and sat down on a bench in the bus terminal. He was still sitting there when the bus left for Brunei at two o'clock.

—Leon Berger  
Group XI, Rajburi



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