

Udorn Monthly Report

July 1966

GENERAL

The rains are with us in earnest now, and most of our folks are dampened both physically and in spirit, resembling a bunch of bedraggled, miserable chickens, too discouraged to stand up straight.

One individual, however, has shown a cheerful attitude lately. He spent long months suffering with an ill fitting hairpiece which was dislodged by every shock wave from jet aircraft take offs. Now, he has a new custom-built wig which has nice wavy hair and stays on without his grabbing with both hands every time an after-burner is used. The only defect is the condition of the back of the coiffure which fails to follow the curvature of his head, hanging straight down and looking exactly like the business end of a whisk broom.

Plans are being made to construct at least one putting green for the golfers, on the front yard of the Operations/Administration Building. Also, a combination tennis and volley ball court, and possibly a handball area are to replace the present fire station when that structure is moved to a more centrally located spot.

The Club continues to do a land office business, with daily receipts reaching toward the thousand dollar mark. Ninety-one employees are kept on the run trying to take care of customers. The two bars showed a decrease in sales for a short period lately. This was due partly to theft by Club employees (confessions obtained) and the presence of one of the wives who was instrumental in causing some patrons to vacate the bar. This abominable pest made a habit of hanging out in the bar and trying to engage the men in conversations, which were actually monologues regarding her problems, what she thought about so and so, etc., and were undoubtedly the most boring ever developed in the history of mankind. In self defense, the men usually departed immediately, pleading "press of work," "have to see a fellow," or they came right out and admitted illness. One day, practically all the men had left, and only one group, including three other wives, remained. These three had been watching this harassing hag, Hattie, with rapidly increasing disgust and rising tempers. Hattie, with nothing else to do, decided to join the group, a decision leading to slaughter:

"Mind if I sit with you?" asked Hattie.

"Sure, Hattie, sit down. Your feet must be killing you, chasing the men all the time."

"What do you mean? Why, I ---."

"And that mouth of yours! Know why all the men run?
My dear! Your breath!"

"Listen, you ---!"

"I heard one man say, 'How come Hattie's clothes hang
so funny? She had her breast removed?'"

"Now, wait a minute ---."

"And another said, 'Hattie sure has bum fitting teeth.
She sprays you when she's talking at you.'"

"All right, you cats! I'm gonna ---."

"Gonna what, Hattie? Go home and fix your hair, I
hope. That stringy stuff is a real come on to get
a conversation started with a man, isn't it? What have you
put on it, lard?"

"I'm not gonna sit here and be insulted, this way.
I'll fix you for this!"

Exit Hattie.

Somehow, the news got around at high speed, the male customers
reappeared, and a bottle of champagne was presented to the three
champions and favorite females of the regular patrons. The few men
who had witnessed the affair were not so elated. In fact, they were
somewhat frightened and appalled at the display of ferocity and
complete disregard of mercy, fair play or sportsmanship by the
winners, who obviously disdained any other aim but annihilation of the
enemy by any available means.

The work on two more Supply Buildings (Warehouses 5 and 6) is
underway now that the POL storage has been moved out of the way to
its new home south of the recently completed General Maintenance
Building. The Utility Building, as well as additional taxiway hard
surfacing, storage shed, and an additional Shops Building should
start soon. This last edifice will have to be built around the
water treatment plant initially, as the relocation of the water plant
can't be made until some additional land is available. This land
plus some other parcels south of the school and old administration
building, and south of the U SING-DINE Snack Bar (requested long ago)
should be turned over to us soon.

With considerable misgivings, we took some more photographs of the compound here lately. Not only do photographs of this place become obsolete in a few days due to new buildings, but each new set of pictures seems to alert various organizations that their pictures are out of date, thus generating more photo work.

There are considerable differences in the habits and methods of living between American families and those native to the host country. Some of these are apparent to human beings, and some may not be. For a different (dog's eye) view, a conversation between an American dog (left guarding his owner's automobile in the Air America compound) and an indigenous dog has been made available. No doubt much has been lost in the translation from Canine to English, but people who speak "dog" are hard to find, and the following is the best we could come up with:

"Hold it! Don't come any closer. What you want?"

"Nothing. Just wanted to say hello."

"Okay, come on up. Take it slow and easy."

"How come you're so full of hair? Aint it hot? What kinda dog are you, anyway?"

"German Shepherd, we're called. A fine old family, too."

"You sure smell funny."

"Here! What're yuh doin'? Keep yuh nose to yourself and stay around here in front of me. Keep your distance, too, yuh mangy bag of bones. How come you're so skinny? Don't your family feed you?"

"Family! Course not. What would they do that for? Dogs are supposed to feed themselves. My family aint got anything but rice, and not enough for themselves. Do you mean your family feeds you?"

"Why, sure. Every day. Meat, bones, and sometimes stuff out of a can. I got a special diet. Makes my coat pretty."

"Well, if that don't beat me! Kid, you better get rid of that coat. You'll roast. What's the good of a coat, anyhow? Say, what do you have to do to get your family to feed you?"

"Why, nothin' much. I figured I was supposed to keep everybody but my family away from the house, but the first time I took into a guy, I got a beatin' for it. And I got to stay inside the house at night, too. The woman tells her man she's afraid unless I'm inside the house. How am I supposed to look after things if I'm locked up?"

"You sure aint accomplishing anything. Take me, now; I can get in and out of my family's house any time I want to. (I guess you'd call it a shack). One thing my family's real strict about -- I got to go outside when I, 'er, you know. What do you do about that?"

"Have to wait. Sometimes I nearly bust. But that's better than a heating. Family has a bathroom inside the house for themselves. Your family got a bathroom?"

"You crazy? They can't afford a bathroom. Don't need it, anyway. They wear their bathrooms."

"Wear 'em. What do you mean?"

"Well, take the woman, for instance. She wears a sort of long, loose dress that aint got any buttons. She just pulls it tight at the top and ties it somehow. You ought to come over and watch her take a bath. She just loosens the dress but keeps it on, and takes a bath inside it. I've watched her a hundred times and still can't figger out just how she does it. Seems to work all right, though; she smells okay when she gets done."

"Yeah, I'd like to see that. You have any trouble with robbers - kemoys, I think you call 'em?"

"Naw, nothin' in my family's house to steal. So they don't need no doors, or locks. They just flake out and go to sleep and nothin' bothers 'em. All I got to do, is keep other dogs and water buffalo out."

"Well, my family and all the other American families all the time hollering about kemoys. Wonder why they're kemoys bait?"

"Simple. Those people, from what I hear, got loads and loads of clothes and people-food they don't need, and these kemoys can sell it. If they'd get rid of all that junk, and just keep what they need to eat, and get a dog and give him a free hand, they kemoys would leave 'em alone. Say, is your family scared of snakes?"

"Scared! They go out of their minds. Once in a while when the woman aint looking, I stick my nose on her leg. She screams bloody murder. It works every time. Boy, does she stink when she gets scared! Snakes bother you all?"

"Well, they aint exactly bosom pals, but they generally leave yuh alone if you don't bother them. Everybody gets a few snakes, now and then. Nothin' to go crazy about, though. Well, I been hangin' around here long enough. I guess we both got our problems. People just don't seem to have good sense. Be seein' yuh."

"Right. If we could just get rid of people, maybe we'd have some peace in the world. So long."

Edorn Monthly Report

October 1966

GENERAL

One American characteristic -- continuous, rapid, and unending change -- has been firmly transplanted to the Edorn base. Only a few of the natives can remember when the place wasn't almost completely taken up with new construction to take care of changing and increasing requirements. Sometimes the program gets out of phase, however. One example is the construction of the new, enlarged shops building around the old Water Plant which can't be demolished until the new, enlarged Water Plant is finished. Men's belongings, too, are caught up in this unending confusion which strains their sanity. One mechanic ran into difficulties when he returned from leave and tried to get into his locker in Hangar Bay 3. His key didn't fit the lock on his locker. Confused and abused, he spotted another employee nearby and shouted,

"Hey, you! You know what, damn put another lock on my locker?"

"That ain't your locker. You don't belong to this crew, neither! What are you doin' here, anyhow?"

"I sure do belong to this here crew. Who are you? You mista come here while I been gone?"

"Well, it ain't none o' your business, but I'm Higginbotham, and I run this chopper maintenance crew, and you ain't in it. That's O'Donoghue's locker you been messing with, and you better let it alone. What's your name? D'ya know?"

"Yeah, I know, wise guy. What's that whack about chopper maintenance is here? You're mist! This is 723 maintenance space!"

"723 space? My, that's been over in one of the new Hangars for nearly a month. Every o' your you get on outa here before you get in trouble. Nobody will care if our guys' locker, and 723 space. Damn you. What's go?"

The new Utility building is taking shape -- and also taking the east end out of the old Administration Building, as the two structures are on converging courses, longitudinally. The remaining part of the old Administration Building temporarily houses the Superintendent, which is now well stocked and doing a thriving business, conducted by such things as the prevalent boycotts (or lockouts) organized in the States by Unions against the chain food stores.

The school population has about doubled in size from last year's total. (We hesitate to believe that the reason is the addition of a beautiful new school teacher — those kids are just too little). Now, the dining room is lost to adult use from 1130 A.M. to noon, daily, Monday through Friday, for the small fry lunch period — no room for grown-ups.

A look at the new school teacher immediately calls up visions of other uses for the talents of this lovely creature who, as an instructress, would doubtlessly fill to overflowing our mechanics training classes. Her students wouldn't fall asleep when struggling through the depressingly dull, unromantic subjects of engines, cylinders, fuel, etc. A few of our unimaginative, orderly supervisors have pointed out that probably the students wouldn't keep their minds on the subject matter hopefully being driven into their skulls; but such previous problems have been dismissed as unworthy of consideration, and those bringing them up have been sharply reminded that we must all be appreciative of the finer things of life. Anyway, who cares? Unfortunately, the lady has a husband whose tour of duty in this area is approaching its end. (Yes, yes. We are frantically trying to find a suitable, legal, job for this guy).

We are happy to find that some of our folks have taken a great deal of interest in improving things, aesthetically speaking; and now we have large, gaily colored signs on each end of all six supply warehouses identifying each unit alphabetically. To make an easily read, well arranged picture, these buildings were tabbed "A", "B", "C", "D", "E", and "F", from left to right. One obvious fellow gleefully discovered that each individual unit was identified differently, depending on which end was being viewed — that is, the southern unit was marked "A" on the east end and "F" on the west end. Hastily, and with minimum publicity, the west end signs were reversed, and now read "F" through "A" from left to right, resulting in each unit being the same anyway you look at it.

Now another problem, aesthetic and practical, has developed. The U SING HINE Snack bar just doesn't do anything for a customer (except serve food and drink). The location has something to do with it, as this establishment has a large, heavily patronized, toilet adjoining it on the west, a combination cow and pig lot on the south, and the generator building on the east. Several of our people complain that the odor from the south and west is so powerful it makes their eyes water and they can't see the menu, and can't hear above the racket from the generators. The first corrective plan includes closing the sides of the building, and installing a combination air conditioning/olfactory organ cooling system to induce cool, scented air into the interior of the structure, and also reduce the noise level.

It appears that the general overall situation doesn't change greatly, we continue to be swamped with requirements, and are still growing. However, we have about finished with another rainy season, and the mud and muck are being scraped off automobiles and clothing, and people are looking forward to the approaching delightful winter social season.

Udon Monthly Report

November 1966

GENERAL

We have many odd incidents here, brought about by the construction program(s) going on from early 1962 through the present time. One of the latest got quite a few people involved. A pilot had innocently parked his automobile and gone off on his duties, and, on returning a few days later, could not find his vehicle. A claim of car theft was lodged with vociferous verbiage and appropriate gestures, and a search started. Several hours later the little foreign auto was found by a man who peered over a pile of construction material placed adjacent to a new supply warehouse being built. The interested parties, including the contractor who could not speak English, and an interpreter, rallied round and the vocal exercise started.

"Who in blazes put all that junk around my car? If it has a scratch on it, somebody's gonna pay or git his teeth knocked out! Now git that stuff outa the way!"

"Wait a minute, kid! You better pipe down before you got somethin' to worry about besides a car. That thing o'yours aint nothin' but junk, anyway. How come yuh parked it there?"

"There wasn't no other place. You dumbbells can't seem to understand you got to build more parkin' area. Come on, git movin' and get the car out! I want mah car and no lip from you!"

"S'pose you close that wind tunnel yuh got in the middle o'ya face and I'll get the interpreter to talk to the contractor -- or git it out yourself, I don't care! Now, which way yuh want it?"

"Go ahead. I'll give ya about five minutes and then ----."

"Any time you feel ready, guy, just hop! Hey, Namkraking, ask the contractor if he can make a hole in that lumber and git that bug out."

"He say no can do. He already lose money on this job and you tell him hurry. He say he must have more money."

"Ask him how much."

"Wait a minute! You guys aint gonna bleed me for no money to get my car! Now cut out this hagglin' and show some action!"

"You keep your jaw clamped or you're on your own! Go ahead, Nrmkrakiang, ask him how much."

"He say he have to talk to partner."

"Where's his partner?"

"He say maybe Bangkok."

"Bangkok! When's he comin' back?"

"Look, I aint gonna wait on no partner comin' from Bangkok to git muh car! You ----."

"Shut up! When's his partner comin' back, Nrmkrakiang?"

"He say he don't know. He try find partner yesterday and wife say he go and leave no money. He say he have to give partner's wife money and he losing more money this job, and ----."

At this point a mechanic began turning up at full throttle, a C123 parked so that the pile of lumber and the vocalists got the full benefit of the slipstream.

"Hey! Cut that engine! Somebody tell that galoot to cut his ENGINE! Look out! The whole pile's goin'!"

The pile of lumber was partially blown down - enough for the pilot to drive his car out, and all but the interpreter and the contractor started to depart, paying little heed to the interpreter who frantically implored:

"Wait, misters! He say he must have money to get lumber piled up again! He say ----."

"Tell him to git his lumber outa this street before he gits thrown off the base! As for you, big shot fly boy, you got ya piece o'tin. You happy, now?"

"Yeh, I'm so happy I'm about to vomit. Pilin' junk aroun' muh car! You guys didn't have no idea how to git it out. No wonder we aint got no parkin' area, with drips like you havin' anything to do with it!"

"You want to git away from here in one piece, you better take off, varmint! Get going; blow!"

Problems continue to pile up. The constantly increasing cost of living brings on higher wages, higher prices, etc. The tab for entertainment has soared along with everything else. In an effort to hold down the expenses of Club parties, we began negotiations with a local band to furnish music, except for the drummer, which we agreed to provide. The plan was to place a rooster inside a wire cage secured to the top of a bass drum which was placed on its side on the bandstand. Electric heating elements were inserted between the chicken's feet and the drum, and turned on thirty seconds before each piece the band was to play. As the heat increased the fowl raised one foot, then the other, at a constantly increasing speed until he was beating a rapid tattoo on the drum. Several unacceptable defects in this performance cropped up. When the rooster was stamping as fast as he could, neither the rest of the band nor the dancers could keep up with the tempo. Also, when a piece was completed and the heating elements were turned off, the heat did not immediately disappear, resulting in chanticleer continuing to play his drum after the other musicians had given up.

We are now planning some recreational activities such as volleyball, handball, etc. This was forced on us, in a way. We have never had any luck in getting the Club cook to reduce portions of food served, and waistlines have been expanding rapidly, so some exercise is indicated. For the ladies, the present normal size bridge tables and chairs will be replaced by ten foot square tables with chairs having seats only one foot off the floor, forcing some walking and hip reduction activity in order to play each card. Considerable research showed that recognized authorities agree that, of all methods of female hip reduction, the short legged chair is fully capable of holding its own.

Turn about is fair play, and it now appears that we can return a favor or two from the Home Office, and be of some assistance to it. A visit to that organization almost invariably requires going to the legal offices. Possibly other departments need help, but certainly this section is in dire need. A call to that forbidding area usually results in being required to read some dull, dusty, incomprehensible briefs. (We have always wondered how those lengthy affairs could be termed "briefs"). A page or two of such stuff starts one nodding and holding onto his chair, fearful of dropping off to slumber and suffering a severe bump from hitting the floor. The secretaries pretend being awake, but this is a tremendous effort, and they cannot rightly be reprimanded for dreaming, considering the material they are required to peruse and type. As a suggestion, why not install a large fountain, spraying water into the air and imparting some life giving moisture to the dehydrated, listless atmosphere? Write the legal treatises so as to read one page of brief and the next page out of a murder mystery. Fill the place with colorful pictures, and alarm clocks set to ring ten minutes apart. And above all, furnish an English translation of each page of legaleze.

Life goes on much as usual. The first of next year should see the new Utility building completed, and enough bedrooms for transients so that the nightly arguments started by those arriving too late to get a sack, are heard no more. We also have another promise of a dial telephone system, starting installation in February -- so we are told. We also have hopes of completing many other improvements before New Year's Eve, and -- our previous offers still hold good -- anybody who has run out of problems -- drop us a line.

More people and more aircraft are due soon. The sound we thought was the result of rain, turns out to be caused by the copious tears of the Club employees who will have yet more mouths to feed and more dishes to wash.

Udorn Monthly Report

December 1966

GENERAL

Well, we made it through another year, and will now have a go at AF (AFTER FLOOD) ♪.

The year 1966 has seen a number of improvements and an increase in personnel — and along with more people, more problems. One of the problems seems to be that our employees have lately been marrying a decidedly weaker version of American women. Looking back, we cannot recall anything special demanded of us in dependents' medical care in the past. But now, we have numerous female dependents who have special, special troubles which require transportation (usually in the middle of the night) to big city specialists. The same ladies are also too weak to cook — must eat at the Club — and too tired to bring their ailing children to the Dispensary — put 'em on the bus and unload them on the distracted school teachers. It is amazing, however, that all of these poor creatures are endowed with brutally strong jaws, capable of continuous clacking throughout the day.

While we get a steady stream of new arrivals, there are some departures, too. Sometimes the recent additions are engaged in conversation by an employee attempting to wind up personal affairs in this area. One greenhorn was approached in the bar by a gentleman about to say goodbye to Udorn and the following conversation resulted:

"Howdy, friend. You're new here, aint you?"

"Yeah, just got in to-day."

"Well, maybe I can help yuh. I'm about to leave, myself; but I been here over a year and I know the ropes. One thing, you oughta have a car. You taint git no place atall here without a car. You married? No? Well, maybe you'd like to meet some nice gals. What d'yuh say?"

"Why, I dunno. I guess so, but I don't know nuthin' about —."

"Lemme help yuh. You wanna take a look at my car? I'm offerin' it at a steal price 'cause I'm gettin' outa here. Nice Jag. Come on, I'll show it to you."

The two left the bar and headed out through the main gate.

"How come you don't park inside the compound where the rest of the cars are parked?"

"Aw, I don't like to take a chance on some dumb cluck clobberin'."

my Jag. Out here's better. Well, here it is. Crawl in."

"Who's that settin' in there?"

"That's my girl friend. What do you think of her? Does all my laundry and everything."

"Homely little thing, aint she? What's her name? Why did you leave her out here, 'stead of takin' her in to the Club?"

"Name's Bulldog. She likes the fresh air out here; don't like some o' them clowns that hang out in the Club. Since I'm leavin', if I say so, she'll be your girl friend. Nice, aint it? Now about the car ----"

"This sure is a pile o' junk. What is it? Late '25? How much you want for it?"

"Only 1400. It's a steal! A car like this rightly oughta bring 3000! But I'd like to help you get started right, so for 1400 you can have it and Bulldog. Okay?"

"I think I better look around a little more --. Here comes the Chief Pilot. Evening, Captain Smith."

"What are you guys doin' out here? You tryin' to unload that car and that babe on this man, Finnegan?"

"Why, I was only tryin' to help him ----"

"Help him! I'll bet! Now, you and that bag beat it. You're already canned, and I wanta see you outa here to-morrow."

The girl got out of the car and, with Finnegan, headed for the bus terminal.

"Why don't they drive the car off?"

"That car's been settin' here for four months. Won't run. And if you're curious about why that female was out here, it's because she got flung outa the Club the first time she was there, for trying to get guys to buy her drinks and give her cigarettes, and can't get back on the base. Come on, kid. You don't seem to be dry behind the ears and need a little lecture entitled you stay out of trouble."

The Chief Pilot and the rookie left, listening to Finnegan telling his girl:

"These cheap skates here! I'm sure leavin', soon as I can, and I aint never comin' back! Tryin' to help a guy, and I git a ration from that snotty Chief Pilot. Come on, git on the bus!"

Our training program (miniature considering our needs) is moving along in a jerky fashion. Sometimes we are forced to admit that the instructors have an extremely exasperating task. Their students need constant prodding, and are prone to surrender easily to the arms of Morpheus. Some have developed the ability to sleep while holding text books in the proper position, and keeping their eyes open. Usually the blank, glazed appearance of their eyes is quickly spotted and brings on verbal exchanges such as the following:

"Hey! Come alive, you ---! What do you think you're doin'? This here's page one you're lookin' at, and the rest of us are on page twenty! Don't you want to get through this school?"

"No like this book. I sleepy."

"Well, wake up or git out! Can't you understand what's in the book?"

"I try to know, but things on pages move around. I hold book like you say, but I no read book. Book read me."

"Book read you? What kinda nonsense is this? I had about enough outa you! Now, you ketch up and stay caught up, or I'm gonna head you back to the rice paddies where yuh belong! Book read you! I'm about wore out with you birds!"

We (and Santa Claus) sweltered through another Christmas. It is nice, though, to sit beside the Club swimming pool, eating ice cream, reading Stateside papers about the blizzards, and taking an occasional dip in the blue water.