

DATELINE



BANGKOK

FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS CLUB OF THAILAND MAGAZINE

SECOND QUARTER 2000

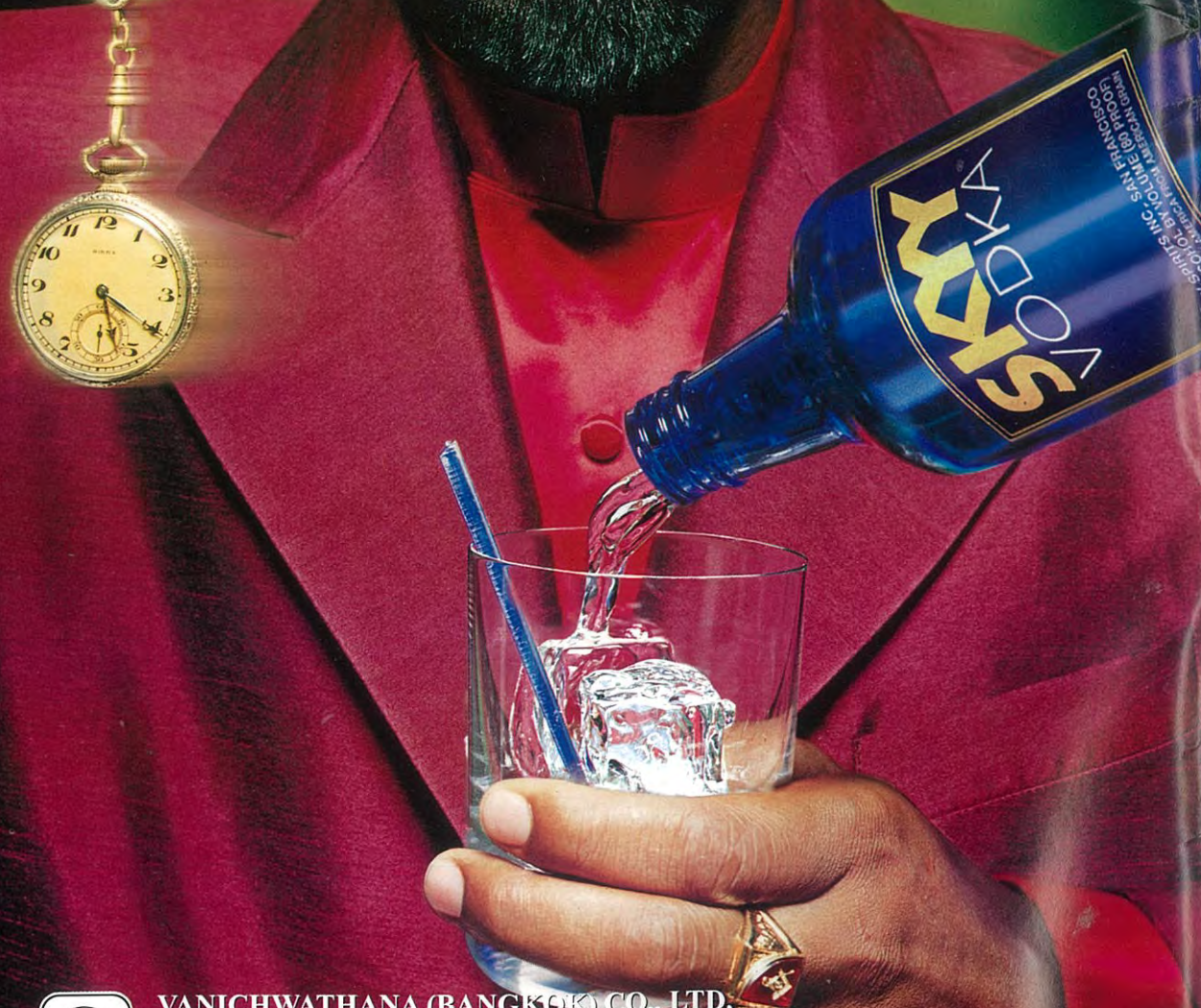
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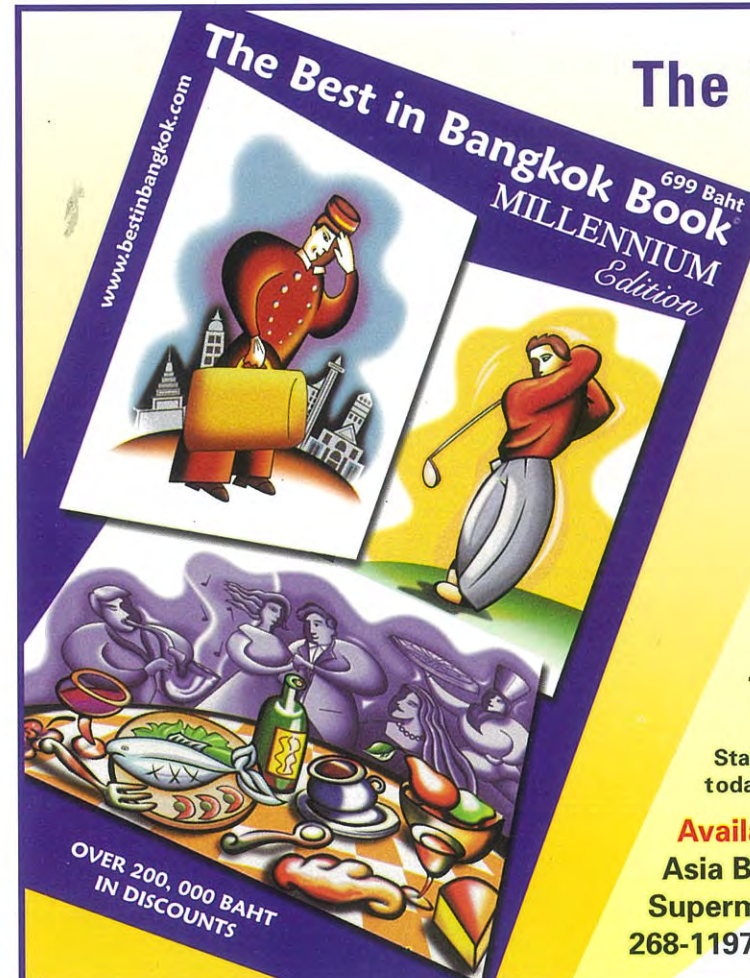
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THE FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS CLUB OF THAILAND
 Penthouse, Maneeya Center Building
 518/5 Ploenchit Rd., Phatumwan,
 Bangkok 10330 Thailand
 Tel.: 652-0580-1 Fax: 652-0582
 email: fcct@asiaaccess.net.th

President
 Thomas Crampton
 International Herald Tribune
 Tel: 655-0612 / 01-824-7827 Fax: 655-0613
 email: tcrampton@iht.com

1st Vice President
 Philippe Decaux
 French TV
 Tel.: 255-4652 / 01-845-3654 Fax: 255-3040
 email: foghorn@asiaaccess.net.th

2nd Vice President
 Jeanne Hallacy
 AsiaWorks Television
 Tel.: 255-6800-1 Fax: 255-6840
 email: hallacy@loxinfo.co.th

Immediate Past President
 Heather Kelly
 AsiaWorks Television Ltd.
 Tel.: 255-6915 Fax: 255-5919
 email: asiaworks@loxinfo.co.th

Correspondent Secretary
 A. Lin Neumann
 Southeast Asian Press Alliance
 Tel.: 653-7393
 email: lin_neumann@csi.com

Recording Secretary
 Michelle Cheung
 CNBC-Asia
 Tel.: 255-6800-1 Fax: 255-5919
 email: mcheung@loxinfo.co.th

Correspondent Director of Publicity
 Christine Chaumeau,
 La Croix and Les Echos
 Tel.: 213-1718 Fax: 213-1718
 email: cc2@loxinfo.co.th

Correspondent Director of Membership
 Shawn Crispin
 Far Eastern Economic Review
 Tel.: 251-1139 Fax: 254-4843
 email: shawn.crispin@feer.com

Correspondent Director of Programs
 Geraldine Carroll
 British Broadcasting Corporation
 Tel.: 01-666-1434 Fax: 652-0666
 email: geraldine.carroll@bbc.co.uk

Treasurer
 Majoke de Vries
 Tel.: 260-1973
 email: mvcon@loxinfo.co.th

Associate Director of Publicity
 Sylvia Saw-Mckaigne
 Bangkok Post
 Tel.: 240-3700 Fax: 240-3666
 email: ssy1@loxinfo.co.th

Associate Director of Membership
 Mira Kim
 Columbus Presentations
 Tel.: 01-910-1405 Fax: 266-6298
 email: mirakim@asiaaccess.net.th

Associate Director of Programs
 Ardi Braken
 Netherlands Embassy
 Tel.: 254-7701/5 Fax: 254-5579
 email: braken@ban.minbuza.nl;

DATELINE
 Editor: Christine Chaumeau
 Associate Editor: Sylvia Saw-Mckaigne
 Photography Editor: Jeanne Hallacy

Marketing & Production
 Advertisements: Finn Balslev
 Layout: Phaisan Nangnoi
 Publisher: Gregers Moller
 Scand-Media Corp. Ltd
 4/74 M. 3 Thanyakarn Village,
 Ramintra Soi 14, Ramintra Rd., Bangkok 10230
 Tel.: 943-7166-8 Fax: 943-7169
 email: scandmedia@thai.com

The opinions expressed by writers in Dateline Bangkok do not necessarily reflect the views of the Foreign Correspondents Club of Thailand or the editors.

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Cover photo by Tim Page, from his photo collection of photographers of different nationalities who have either died or have disappeared while covering the wars in Indochina.



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Join Us

You don't have to be foreign and you don't need to be a correspondent to become a member of the Foreign Correspondents Club of Thailand. Membership has its privileges: The club frequently hosts news breaking panel discussions with the leaders of government, private sector and non-governmental organizations. Each month the club exhibits work from a different photographer and every Friday there is live jazz music at the bar. Each member also gets a subscription to this magazine for absolutely free. So why aren't you a member? Don't forget that the Foreign Correspondents Club of Thailand is one of Bangkok's most prestigious addresses for press conferences, social gatherings and product launches. The club is outfitted with all the latest techno-gizmos, from wireless microphones to remote control television cameras, and can provide all types of catering, from light snacks to full meals. Impress your guests with the well known hospitality of the Foreign Correspondents Club.

Got a tale to tell?

This is your club's magazine and we welcome letters to the editor, articles, photographs, drawings, poetry or just about anything to help us fill up each issue. Submissions should address journalism or the story behind getting the story. All ideas considered, but please contact Thomas Crampton before doing too much work. Submissions are paid for with glory and bar coupons.



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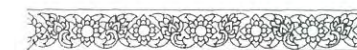
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Last Words ...

Fellow Members,

With great regret and immediate effect, I hereby resign as president of the Foreign Correspondents Club of Thailand.

Banished from the Kingdom by my Paris employers, I will be based in Hong Kong from July. Billed as a promotion, it feels like an exile.

In Hong Kong I will have much the same job as here: Travel regionally to write news and features for the International Herald Tribune. I plan frequent trips back to Thailand.

As for the club, I am pleased to report that this year's executive committee has managed a major turnaround in all aspects of the club's fortunes.

Now profitable, the club has the fastest growth of membership in many years, the highest level of attendance since moving into Maneeya Center and the most intense pace of programming in the memory of our long-serving club staff. The Tuesday executive committee lunches now attract a growing crowd of active first-time participants.

Our recently launched website – www.fccthai.com – has received praise from members and non-members alike, most of whom use it to find out about upcoming events.

Recent and planned celebrity panelists include the wife Malaysia's now imprisoned former deputy prime prime minister, Bank of Thailand Governor Chatumongkol Sonakul, Thai Foreign Minister Surin Phitsuwat, Thai Finance Minister Tarrin Nimmhaeminda and – potentially – His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

Embassy nights have started up again; we have sponsors for Friday evening jazz; the revamped menu is attracting back a lunch crowd and two nights of the UK-based Punchline Comedy Club in May drew more than 500 people to the club, most of whom came for their first visit.

As decreed by the constitution, I pass the presidency into the very capable hands of first vice-president and former club president Philippe Decaux.

Thank you to everyone who has made Thailand such a wonderful place to live.

I look forward to seeing you soon!

Sincerely,

Thomas Crampton

switch on.



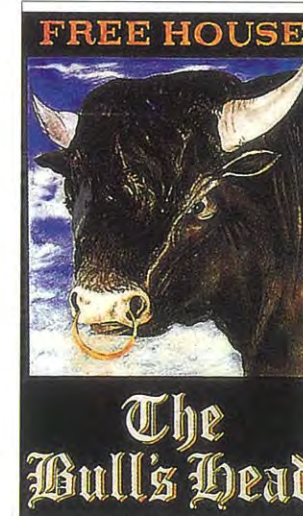
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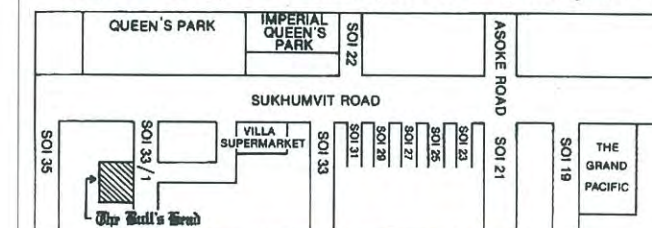


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English Comedy Hits Bangkok

"Really were top acts and yes PLEASE do organise some more – we're all gagging for this kind of entertainment in Bangkok. It was the most fun I've had with my clothes on," said Anita Idnani of AMI.

"Please sign me on for tickets to the first night of EVERY future comedy show! I had a great time," Nima Chandler of Nancy Chandler Grapics.

"Absolutely hilarious – keep me posted on the next one!" Claire Saunders, Accor.

Yes, the organizers heard you. For those who can't get enough of laughter, and for those who missed Comedy Night at the FCCT (shame on you), here's another chance.

Thanks to Joy Menzies, of the Great British Pub Company, much needed laughter will be brought to you again on 7 and 8th July, with two more top comedians, the first British, Sean Meo and the second Australian, Bruno Lucia.

In conjunction with the Punchline Comedy Club, who hold shows every month in Hong Kong, Joy is reminding us how fantastic it is to spend the night laughing so much your jaw aches. As she says "we've never had English speaking comedians here and I want to remind people what it's like to laugh constantly for two hours and so hard your whole body hurts!" The first shows on the 12 and 13th of May opened with John Moorhead, the owner of the Punchline Comedy Club, warming up the crowd before Simon Bligh, one of the two London Comedy Circuit Comedians, came out to really get the crowd in stitches. Both comedians, Tim Clark and Simon Bligh, performed to full houses at the FCCT and brought the whole place down in wave after wave of laughter.

The FCCT is an ideal forum for the show with clear views to the stage and an excellent bar at the back. In July, the Barbican, part of The Great British Pub Company, will serve up another sumptuous buffet for 300 Baht. Tickets to the actual show are 900 Baht (FCCT Members 800 Baht).

Founding editor of Bangkok Post, dies

Alexander MacDonald, the American founding editor of Thailand's oldest English language newspaper, the Bangkok Post, has died of a heart attack, the daily reported Tuesday.

He was 92. MacDonald, formerly an agent with the U.S. Office of Strategic Services in the Pacific during the Second World, was one of a small group of Thais and foreigners who helped set up the newspaper in 1946. He was the first editor, a position he held for eight years, producing a four-page newspaper six days a week for some 200 subscribers. He wrote a respected column called "Postmen Say."

"During his term as the editor of the newspaper, MacDonald fought censorship and guided the paper through coups, assassinations and prison sentences," said the Post in a front-page tribute.

MacDonald was forced out of the editorship and banished from Thailand by a military regime that objected to the Post's reporting. He settled in his native state of Massachusetts and edited a weekly newspaper in Marblehead where he died Sunday, the Post reported. (AP)



Photo: Bangkok Post

LETTER TO EDITOR

I would like to ask why Dateline magazine apparently has a policy of publishing anonymous letters to the editor. Every newspaper and broadcaster I've ever worked for has insisted that writers to the editor must be identified unless there are truly exceptional circumstances.

One circumstance might be where a letter-writer exposes information vital to the public interest, but legitimately fears reprisal (loss of job, sanction from powerful interests for example) if it were known that he or she were the source.

But to launch a cowardly attack on an individual from the safe and comfortable perch of anonymity? And to print such an attack anonymously merely because the letter-writer requests it? Where's the fairness in that? Where's the integrity?

Even if there is no accusation involved, a letter to the editor should be signed. How else can your readers evaluate whether the letter-writer has some hidden purpose, a score to settle, or an interest to protect? This is basic stuff.

I don't know Andrew Drummond, and I don't know if he's a plagiarist. From the evidence (and even a rudimentary knowledge of newspaper editing), you would have to think not. But if those WERE his standards, they'd be no worse than Dateline's.

To write an anonymous letter to the editor is an act of public cowardice. To publish it without compelling reason is equally cowardly—and an abrogation of journalistic responsibility.

Yours, etc.

Douglas Earl
FCCT Member
Phahon Yothin Road, Bangkok

FCCT Swingers

Right: Wassana Logan won the Ladies competition and is seen here taking a break at the 6th green with husband Douglas who went on to hit a superb 78 for the day. Below: Peter Shuler, seen here at the 14th, won first prize which was a Scandinavian car-battery saver worth Bt2,200 kindly supplied by our competition sponsor Hyland Development Co., Ltd.



SOI WHISPERS

Visit not-so-sleepy Laos Year 2000. Call it bad luck or good fortune, but when ABC bingo caller **Ginny Stein** and Asiaworker **David Leland** went to Vientiane to shoot a fluffy feature about an Olympic runner, a small bomb exploded in a restaurant directly across from where they were eating. Our fearless crew swung into action, camera blazing, as wounded backpackers bled all over their well-thumbed Lonely Planets. All for nothing, though: paranoid officials snatched the tape, leaving Ginny to file a lot of highly descriptive radio stories. **Read more about their adventures elsewhere in this issue.** ■ **So who's buying beers tonight?** ITN correspondent (aka the hair and teeth) **Ian Williams** returned from the UK recently with a major victory under his belt in a libel suit against *Living Marxism* magazine. The magazine had suggested that **Williams**, another colleague and broadcaster ITN had misrepresented an image of a Bosnian Moslem in a Serb prison camp in 1992. The image of the emaciated man came to symbolize Serb aggression and its impact probably speeded up western involvement in the war. The magazine ran an article called: *The Picture that Fooled the World*. ITN and its two reporters sued and won with a unanimous jury awarding them over half a million dollars. ■ **Another winner.** **Steven Erlanger** of *The New York Times*, formerly a Bangkok-based correspondent and active member of the FCCT, has won the *Peter Weitz Prize* for excellence in reporting on European affairs, awarded by the *German Marshall Fund* of the United States in Washington. Erlanger was chosen by a jury of American and European journalists for his reporting from Serbia and Kosovo during and after last year's NATO air war against Serbia. He was one of the few American journalists who spent nearly all of last year in the war zone. ■ **Bullets, Ballots, Booze and the Barry Babes.** For those of you who follow the exploits of the unstoppable **Barry** sisters, here's the latest chapter. The pair returned to Bangkok from an extended stay in East Timor documenting, on video, the behind-the-scenes of East Timor's quest for independence. It seems to have paid off. They're now sitting on a comprehensive and original film which focuses on the Falentil guerrillas, who held back from picking up their weapons and turning the place into a total bloodbath (as opposed to a partial bloodbath). Only one problem: What to call the film? A boozy brainstorm at the FCCT bar produced some lame-o suggestions, which included: *Rebels with a Cause*, *Birth of a Nation*, *Dili Burning*, *The Good the Bad and the Hairy*, etc. They eventually settled on *Ballots and Bullets* only to find out later the same title is being used for a book on Timor by former Australian politician Tim Fischer. ■ **What's in a name?** The publisher's plug for Nate Thayer's long-awaited tome on **Pol Pot** refers to the follically-challenged scribe as "a man with a mission, a mobile and an AK-47." The book has almost as many titles: Nearby the blurb in which it is called *Sympathy for the Devil* is a picture of the same man and book, but called *The Insanity of Evil*. ■ **They come they go.** Lots of movement out there in Bangkok journoland and a lot of good-byes. At Associated Press, **Patrick McDowell** is heading off to Kuala Lumpur, **Tassanee Vejpongso** of APTN has departed for Beijing. At Reuters, **Rajan Moses** is headed for Singapore and **David Brunstrom** will put on a bureau chief hat in Hanoi. **Geraldine Carroll** of the BBC and husband **Stephen Collinson** of AFP are heading off to Washington DC. Stephen's replacement, **Sarah Stewart**, is arriving from Hong Kong. Rumor is that **Dan Eaton** will soon leave AFP Bangkok for Phnom Penh. The Asian Wall Street Journal's **Pichayaporn Utumporn** is going to the US for studies and **Thomas Crampton** of the International Herald Tribune is off to Hong Kong. **Ted Bardacke** of the Financial Times is leaving journalism altogether to go to the United States to study urban planning (Where did he get that idea?). And **Howard Winn** is leaving Bangkok for Hong Kong to take up the position as editor of *The Asset* magazine. ■ Seen taped to the AsiaWorks fridge: 'The TV business is a cruel and shallow money trench, a long plastic hallway where thieves and pimps run free and good men die like dogs. There's also a negative side.' — **Hunter S. Thompson** And we at Soi Whispers thought they were such a nice bunch.

"The Hunter in the Darkness and the Monk"

Photo Exhibition of Suthep Kritsanavarin

The Hunters in the Darkness presents the occupation that takes risks between life and death. Climbing the cliff or scaling the scaffolding is their lives. These people use only simple material to gather the Chinese delicacy "Bird's Nest" in the dark cave of Andaman archipelagos. With various bamboo shapes that help these people ascend to the cave ceiling, lights from the ancient style torches are important key to finding the white gold.

Buddhist Monks Buddhist monks in Thailand have communicated the meaning of Buddhism. As Lord Buddha disciples, monks have daily routines in Buddhist Monastery. After Lord Buddha has laid down for more than 2500 years ago, the principles of practicing among Thai monks were made to stand still by worshipping, staying with emptiness in the Nature and meditating to reach "wisdom".

Suthep Kritsanavarin found himself in a different way of life as a "Photojournalist" while studying Business Administration at Bangkok University. For many years he tried to capture documentary photography throughout Asia — from unseen life of remote people to endangered wildlife—to communicate his messages with people in the modern world via his Asian eyes. Today, he works on a Mekong project to protect the charm of this great river from human development.

This photo exhibition will be displayed at the FCCT club house in June 2000.



Local TV News to Go 'Round the Clock'

With the flick of a switch on June 1, one of Thailand's most dynamic media groups started what was billed as Southeast Asia's first local-language 24-hour television news channel. The Nation Channel, run by a media group with roots in Thailand's pro-democracy movement of the 1970s, will concentrate on local news relating to Bangkok but will also include regular English-language news broadcasts. The start of the service comes as media organizations across the region begin rebuilding after painful setbacks during the economic crisis that started in 1997.

In Thailand alone, several newspapers shut down, and thousands of journalists lost their jobs. Now, as economies and markets bounce back, millions of dollars are being invested in new ventures, including a number of Internet organizations. This week, the second-largest English-language newspaper in Hong Kong in terms of circulation, the Hong Kong Standard, was repackaged in a tabloid version called iMail.

In Indonesia, where the press has been flourishing since the abolition of censorship, media groups have begun looking for ways to invest their newfound profits. And in Bangladesh, the first privately owned TV broadcaster, Ekushey Television Ltd., began broadcasting May 12.

An important side effect of increased media investment and regional broadcasting will be a further erosion of censorship, according to Toby Mendel, head of the law program at Article 19, a London-based organization that promotes freedom of expression. With more regional satellite channels, Mr. Mendel said, people in the region's "less free countries" such as Malaysia or Burma will be able to hear "free debate" about politics within their countries. The perceived need for independent debate is what inspired Suthichai Yoon and a group of disaffected Thai journalists to start the newspaper The Nation in



1971 after both of the country's English-language newspapers were purchased by Lord Thomson, the Canadian newspaper magnate.

Founded under Thailand's military dictatorship, The Nation immediately took an active pro-democracy stance, rallying support for student protesters in the bloody uprisings of 1973 and 1992. Largely thanks to the novelty of its irreverent and independent editorial stance, The Nation grew from a 24-page paper printed on a rented Chinese press into Nation Multimedia Group, an empire that now includes real-estate projects, educational publishing, a Thai-language daily business newspaper and radio and television programming. Soon it will add a Web site: <www.thailand.com>.

"The people in power now were activists during the student uprisings, and they want to support a responsible media," Mr. Suthichai said, insisting that there is potential demand for a channel with an almost exclusively Thai focus. Cable subscribers in Thailand and

viewers across most of Asia can already see several 24-hour English-language news channels broadcasting from Asian studios, including CNBC from Singapore and CNN from Hong Kong.

Starting in September, the Singapore-based Channel News Asia plans to start a 24-hour regional broadcast of news in English and several local languages. "These 24-hour channels follow a global trend we already see going strong through Europe," said Ken Herron, managing editor of <TVnewsweb.com>, a London-based Internet site focused on the broadcast television news industry.

"Media companies feel they need to prepare for the convergence of Internet and television," he said. Though analysts express doubt that the Nation Channel will soon turn a profit, Mr. Suthichai is optimistic, saying he believes that the service can generate sufficient revenue from corporate sponsorships despite a ban on advertising on Thai cable television.

"They said it would never work when we launched the first Thai-language business newspaper," Mr. Suthichai said, "but we broke even in just three months." The Nation will keep the cost of the news channel to a minimum by relying heavily on news-gathering teams from the company's two flagship newspapers. The total cost of TV equipment has been about 100 million baht (\$2.6 million), and 100 new staff members have been hired for dedicated work on the channel. The channel will be broadcast to cable subscribers who opt for premium service offered by UBC, Thailand's only cable operator, which claims 300,000 subscribers. The Nation Channel should break even if it gets 120 million baht in revenue a year, Mr. Suthichai said, and about 30 percent of that total has already been pledged for the coming year. — Thomas Crampton, *International Herald Tribune*



CPJ Report on State of Press Freedom Worldwide

Most of the journalists who were murdered for their work in 1999 were directly "targeted for assassination by factions eager to suppress reporting on their misdeeds," states the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) in its recently released Annual Report on the State of Press Freedoms Worldwide, "Attacks on the Press in 1999".

The comprehensive report, which CPJ released on 22 March, records that violence against journalists increased in 1999, with 34 journalists murdered for their work.

In addition to the 34 murders that the report documents, CPJ notes that another 19 journalists' deaths in 1999 are still being researched. This marks a dramatic increase from 1998, when 24

journalists were killed for their work. The worst death tolls were reported from Sierra Leone (10), Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (6), and Columbia (5).

CPJ's statistics account for journalists who are killed because of their work and do not include other media workers. With journalists killed in every region that CPJ monitors, the 435-page book "documents the perilous state of independent journalism, and democracy, in most regions of the world." "Attacks on the Press in 1999" reports on more than 500 cases of violations perpetrated against journalists, examines media freedom in more than 120 countries and includes special reports on Pakistan, Sierra Leone, and Central America.

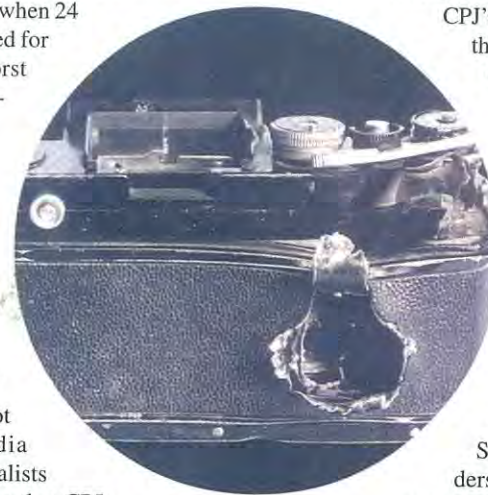
The report details a "wide range of other abuses, from the torture of journalists in Zimbabwe, to the kidnapping of reporters in Chechnya, to the increasing use of bureaucratic harassment to shut down newspapers and broadcast outlets that offend presidents and dictators worldwide." In particular, the report notes that "in countries where democracy remains an elusive goal, press freedoms are disarmingly precarious."

CPJ's vice chair Terry Anderson states that the increased number of journalists kidnapped "is a strong indicator that in recent years journalists have become specific targets." Anderson, the former chief Middle East correspondent for the Associated Press, was "the longest-held American hostage in Lebanon," says CPJ.

While the number of journalists killed for their work increased in 1999, there were fewer journalists in prison at the end of 1999 (87)

than in the previous year (118). CPJ qualifies, however, that this number is only a "snapshot of those behind bars on December 31," and that it does not reflect the large number of other journalists who were imprisoned but released before the year's end. Moreover, imprisoning journalists serves as a "short-term warning" that has "a deeply chilling effect on independent journalism."

The report points to the Democratic Republic of Congo, where President Laurent Kabila has detained at least 60 journalists in the last two and a half years since he came to power. "Kabila's devastating use of incarceration to silence critical journalists earned him the dubious distinction of being one of CPJ's Ten Worst Enemies of the Press in 1999," says CPJ.



The report also considers the more "subtle" ways that governments silence media. CPJ Executive Director Ann Cooper says, "Sophisticated despots are adopting more subtle methods to muzzle the press....

Some wily leaders understand that regimes can pay an international price for routinely jailing journalists. So instead, they drive independent media out of business by harassing them with tax laws, levying crippling fines, or cutting off access to state-controlled newsprint and printing presses."

These methods have been employed by many countries such as Algeria and Pakistan, and their use is becoming more widespread in countries such as "Yugoslavia, Ukraine, Belarus and other countries of central and eastern Europe."

With its goal of shaming "governments into changing their behavior by giving wide exposure to their abuses of press freedom," CPJ hopes that its report will "encourage all journalists to support its work on behalf of press freedom."

The annual report was officially released at a press conference at the National Press club in Washington DC on 22 March. A full copy of the report can be viewed on CPJ's website at <http://www.cpj.org>.

For further information, contact Judy Blank at CPJ, 330 Seventh Ave., New York, NY, 10001, U.S.A.; Tel: +1 212 465 1004; Fax: +1 212 465 9568; E-mail: jblank@cpj.org; Internet: <http://www.cpj.org/>.



In Faint Praise of the Internet

The Internet is a wonderful treasure trove of information. But if we're not careful, it could mean bad news for our democracy. writes Ed Fouhy in the May issue of the American Journalism Review.

Fouhy, 30 years a television news reporter and bureau chief and now editor of Stateline.org, an online news service covering local governments, says "There is no question that the Web has become a wonderful tool for reporters. But what will the Web's impact be on traditional journalism? And what might it do to the conversation journalism fuels in a democracy?"

In the article "Which Way Will It Go", Fouhy cites a number of worrying trends in the development of Internet journalism, including the personalization of news. "Now that we can be our own editors and choose to read about only the issues that engage us, who will participate in public debate?" he asks.

Fouhy talks about a number of websites that encourage users to design newspapers geared to their own quirky interests. The Wall Street Journal Interactive Edition, for example, offers a Personal Journal: clip folders and personal portfolios that aggregate information tailored to one person's taste in news, technology, sports, personal finance and weather.

He then cites an essay called "The Rutabaga Man" that Buzz Merritt, then editor of the Wichita (Kansas) Eagle, wrote for a 1995 book called "Public Journalism and Public Life." This fictional man was interested only in rutabagas — their cultivation, marketing, preparation and consumption. He tailored his Web surfing to that one topic. This character withdrew from any role in his community to pursue his passion.

Fouhy says Merritt's vision is reality. "He overstated his case, of course, but he does pose a paradox: it's possible for a large group of people, including some of our brightest minds, to indulge their anti-social selves. They may develop information-averse tendencies not out of ignorance but out of opportunity, and we may miss them when we debate the big issues."

Social isolation is part of the online culture, and there are other dangers, too. "Independence, another bedrock principle, is hard to see on the Web," Fouhey says. "The ownership hand behind a site is often hidden. There's not much disclosure in cyberspace, unless it serves a purpose."



Reporting Awards

Do you have outstanding reportage you want to show off? Try your luck at:

Reporting on Public Health

The PAHO Awards for Excellence in International Health Reporting 2000 will honour reports focusing on international public health issues that appeared in a daily U.S. newspaper, U.S. magazine, or broadcast report in the United States from July 1, 1999 to June 30, 2000.

For more information look at: <http://www.paho.org/english/DPI/dpiaward.htm>

Reporting on Refugees

To be honour outstanding media coverage

of refugees and displaced persons, the International Migration Commission, the G.B. Scalabrini Federation of Centres for Migration, the Pontifical Council for Social Communications and the International Catholic Union of the Press have created the International Award for Solidarity with Refugees.

Entries can be print or broadcast reports that appeared in English, French, German or Spanish during 1998, 1999 or 2000. (Other languages may be considered.)

The awardees will receive a certificate and US\$500. Contact FCCT member Dennis Coday (djcoday@yahoo.com) for details.

The Money in Indonesia

Hoesin Kalhatan thought that an independent small-town newspaper could make a difference in the new Indonesia. So with a group of friends, the 40 year old editor went back to journalism in 1999 as the managing editor of the new weekly Tabloid Menara in Samarinda, the capital of the remote Indonesian province of East Kalimantan on the island of Borneo. With the press freed from the constraints of the Suharto era, Hoesin wanted to investigate local corruption, speak his mind and go back to the work he had left almost a dozen years before.

Things haven't gone quite as planned. Before a year had passed at the newspaper, Hoesin's reporting made him the victim of three progressively more brutal kidnappings, the last of which resulted in his being tortured and held prisoner for a week. His family has been forced to flee Samarinda for the relative safety of Jakarta and Hoesin has no idea when he will be able to return to his paper and his life. He survives now through the assistance of a network of Indonesian journalists dedicated to defending their colleagues from assault and threat.

Follow the Money

It all started because he was trying to follow the money. Hoesin received a tip that a Rupiah 27.5 billion (\$US3.5 million) "reforestation fund" provided by the central government from taxes imposed on timber firms and intended to be used to plant new trees in the province had gone missing.

"I had data and documents on the fund and I wrote a story asking where the money went," he said. "I did not accuse anyone, I just wanted to raise the question." Within days of the story running in the January 21 edition of Menara, an anonymous caller told another editor at the paper that one of the tiny tabloid's journalists was going to be killed. "I dismissed the threat. It didn't seem serious," said Hoesin, who worked for a daily paper in the province until he quit in 1988 because he was frustrated with the restrictive press of the Suharto years.

On February 21, the kidnappings began. Hoesin was walking near his house in Samarinda at about 9:00 AM when he was forced at knife point into an Isuzu Panther four-wheel drive vehicle. The men warned him to drop the missing funds story, Hoesin says. "They told me not to give the documents I had found to anyone else." After an hour, he was pushed out onto the street with a sharp punch to the stomach.

Hoesin's article, however, was taking on a life of its own in the province. The office of East Kalimantan Governor Suwarna Abdul Fatah, which is responsible for the disbursement of the funds, was unable to account for the money and a quiet investigation was begun by the "State Secretariat" in Jakarta, the agency responsible for the money, according to Hoesin. Other journalists became interested in the missing money and a national magazine, Forum Keadilan, ran a story in

its March 6-13 edition accusing the governor by name of mishandling the funds.

With the provincial government by now in an uproar over the well-publicized scandal, Hoesin was en route to the governor's office for an interview on March 9 when he was again abducted. This time two men accosted him on a public bus, sticking a knife in his belly and forcing him off the bus and into the same dark blue Isuzu Panther used in the first kidnapping.

Five men forced Hoesin to lie down on the floor of the vehicle and pummeled him with their fists, accusing him of leaking information on the scandal to Forum Keadilan, a charge he denies. He was again warned to stay away from the story before he was released. His face bruised, he returned to the offices of Menara and then went to the local police to file a complaint.

The next day, March 10, a man telephoned Hoesin at his office and asked him why he had gone to the police. "Maybe I just beat you," Hoesin recalls the man saying, "but my friends will kill you." Hoesin again went to the local police, who placed a guard at his house. He also contacted local media and a brief mention of his story appeared in a Jakarta newspaper.

Jakarta Tries to Help

"We heard about his case and we contacted him, to see if we could help," said Solahuddin, a journalist who works with the an independent press association in Jakarta, the Alliance of Independent Journalists (AJI) and the Southeast Asian Press Alliance, a regional press advocacy group. Fearing for his life, Hoesin accepted AJI's offer of help and left at the group's expense on March 14 for Jakarta, leaving his pregnant wife, Nuraina, and five year old daughter behind.

Cases like Hoesin's are becoming increasingly common in Indonesia, as a loosening of central authority after Suharto resigned in May 1998 allowed the press to become free for the first time in more than a generation. AJI has documented 21 cases in the first four months of this year where journalists have been harassed, threatened and damaged, despite having a press-friendly central government. "It is really true that media in Indonesia are free from the State and the government, but they are still threatened by the crowd," newspaper publisher Jakob Oetama of Indonesia's largest daily, Kompas, told a conference on press freedom recently.

Provincial reporters are at particular risk and many say that death threats and intimidation are a fact of life, especially when newspapers touch on corruption and the actions of local authorities who aren't used to the give and take of a free media after years of dictatorship.

Hoesin's ordeal is one of the worst. After staying with his parents in central Jakarta for a couple of weeks, Hoesin thought he might be safe; he made plans to return to his family in Samarinda by April 4. It is a trip

he is still waiting to take. On April 3, someone claiming to be from an East Kalimantan opposition political group called him in Jakarta and requested a meeting. The caller had additional documents about the missing money, Hoesin was told. He agreed to meet the man, whom he knew only by the name "Suriadi."

Hung Upside Down and Beaten

On the way to the meeting, as Hoesin was walking from his parents house to flag a taxi, he was met by another man who convinced him to get into a car. The man knew of Suriadi and the details of the meeting. Hoesin believed the man was telling the truth and he went along. He would not see the light of a day for another week.

Once he was in the car, a Mazda, three men grabbed the startled reporter, blindfolded and gagged him and threw him to the floor of the backseat. For several hours he had no idea where he was; he assumed the men meant to kill him. Finally, the car stopped in an area where the weather was cooler than that in lowland Jakarta and Hoesin was taken inside what he took to be a warehouse.

His hands were bound behind his back and he was hung upside down, still blindfolded. The angry questions came in rapid succession as a series of men interrogated him. "Who pays you to write these articles about the governor?" "Why are you attacking the governor?" "Who supports you to do these things?" As they shouted questions, his accusers beat him on the head, arms, stomach and legs. He tried to tell them he had no intention to hurt the governor. Finally, the torture ended and he was let down.

A pattern of beating and interrogation began. Every evening the men would come to hang him upside down, beat and question him. Cold and weak from injury and being fed just once a day, Hoesin became convinced he would die. He prayed that his wife and child were safe and thought constantly about their welfare in Samarinda, afraid they might also be at risk. Finally, on the fourth day, Hoesin had reason to hope. He overheard one of the men say they had received orders not to kill him. His treatment improved slightly as the beating and questioning continued but with less intensity.

On the seventh day, another man said Hoesin could be released because "the target had been reached". Hoesin was relieved but had no idea who the target was or what the enigmatic statement meant. Finally, on April 10, Hoesin, still blindfolded, was taken by car to the Palomas district of Jakarta and released. He found a taxi and returned to his parents house.

Meanwhile, activists and reporters from AJI, SEAPA and the organization KONTRAS (Commission for Missing Persons and Victims of Violence) had been

meeting to discuss the case. Alarmed that Hoesin had not been heard from, the group had made plans to call a press conference for the next day to announce Hoesin's disappearance. But once he was released, Hoesin's mother contacted AJI immediately and the group rushed to see him. "We saw that his face was swollen and his hands and feet bruised and scraped from the torture," said Solahuddin. "We felt badly because he should have been under our protection at the time." The decision was made to take Hoesin to a safe house in Jakarta while arrangements were made to fly his wife and daughter to join him in Jakarta.

The groups working on the case held a press conference the next day after reporting his abduction to the police, calling for an investigation. Once Hoesin was treated for his injuries, he also made a full police report to both the national police and the Jakarta head-

quarters. Hoesin had overheard a name being used by one of his torturers and the police thought the name, which was of someone employed by the government in Kalimantan, might be a clue.

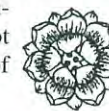
Eventually phone records were tracked and

the name led police to the town of Bandung, a chilly, mountain city in the highlands several hours north of Jakarta. But failing to coordinate their search with police in Bandung, the trail went cold, according to AJI. No arrests have been made in the case.

Fortunately, Hoesin's injuries did not require extensive treatment and his family safely joined him in Jakarta. With the glare of local publicity on the case, Hoesin and AJI feel that he may be safe from further attack. But no one is sure. "We cannot say who did this," said Hoesin. "It may not be the governor at all. It might be people just trying to make the governor look bad." Solahuddin of AJI said, "We believe that the third attack, the one in Jakarta, may not be the work of the same people who kidnapped him in Samarinda. But we have had very little news from the police about any of this."

Meanwhile, AJI has given Hoesin a job in their Jakarta office in order to help his family make ends meet until the ordeal is over. Hoesin says he wants to go back to his newspaper in Samarinda. With his wife expecting to give birth in July, he will likely wait until after the baby is born before returning. AJI, SEAPA and KONTRAS have written again to police authorities demanding an update on the investigation but so far have not received any response.

"I can't say who did this," said Hoesin, whose voice rarely rises above a whisper. "It must involve the political elite. But we do not know who exactly. I am not the enemy of anyone. I was just being a reporter."



A. LIN NEUMANN is a committee to Protect Journalists, Southeast Asia Press Alliance.

"It must involve the political elite. I am not the enemy of anyone. I was just being a reporter."

FCCT Executive Trip to Sri Lanka

August 10 - 14, 2000

For further information, please contact FCCT office at Tel.: 652-0580-1 Fax: 652-0582 Email: fcct@asiaaccess.net.th

Welcome to Sleepy Town



were being evacuated to Thailand for medical treatment. Seven other foreigners, mainly tourists were making their way to a medical clinic.

The police had by now emptied the restaurant. Local residents and shopkeepers had begun pulling down their shutters minutes after the blast. There were few local onlookers. Most had ducked for cover. No-one wanted to be implicated.

Our refusal to hand over our camera and film resulted in both of us being detained.

In the hours we were held, all evidence of the impact of the explosion was cemented over. The wall of the restaurant was patched up; the only visible sign that remained of the blast the following day was a broken lamp.

"If there is no evidence, there was no blast," a diplomat said, referring to the secrecy which normally prevails in Laos.

Five days after the explosion, the official media, acknowledged a bomb had been thrown into the crowded tourist restaurant. Unnamed "terrorists" were accused of being responsible. While a public admission took time in this highly secretive nation it's been hailed as a first.

"To me this is, well the event was tragic but the fact that it is covered is encouraging and I hope it is a signal that Laos press will be more open in the future as well," said Kari Nordheim-Larsen, United Nations Development Program resident director.

Ultimately our attempts to keep hold of the film failed. After hours of questioning over two days, the faceless,

nameless, "Settling Committee" determined that as we had not requested permission to film bomb blasts while in Laos, so we could not keep the evidence.

But all was not lost. We had photographs taken moments after the blast and an audio recording of our detention. The authorities attempts to cover up the incident also failed. While in detention, I was able to file for radio and print using my mobile phone.

In the past month there have been two more explosions. No one is certain who is responsible for any of the incidents, no arrests have been declared. Maybe the warning should be, while you may find out about events if you see them happen, chances are you will never know why.



"Nothing ever happens here", we were told prior to our arrival in Vientiane, the capital of the landlocked South East Asian Nation. The general consensus, from diplomats, journalists and aid workers alike, was that if on the very rare occasion something does happen, you will never find out about it. That may normally be true, but being first hand witnesses to a bomb explosion in the capital the night we arrived, cancelled that argument.

From our outside table at a cafe in the heart of Vientiane, just fifteen metres from the restaurant, there was no mistaking the sound of the explosion. It sounded like a bomb. AsiaWorks cameraman David Leland and myself had only just arrived in Vientiane earlier that day.

We had come in the official route, paying US\$100 each to become accredited visiting correspondents. But an official media pass did not prevent the authorities taking a dim view of our filming of the aftermath of an explosion, which wounded at least thirteen people, two of them seriously.

Stopped as we walked back to our hotel, we were asked to hand over our camera. I refused, hoping, without much expectation, that our press passes would allow us to keep the film. My polite refusal and the authorities equally polite demands resulted in a stalemate. Producing my press pass, only seemed to compound the situation.

While our negotiations were taking place, the Kop Chai Deu (Thank you very much) restaurant was being sealed off. The two most seriously injured foreigners

Our refusal to hand over our camera and film resulted in both of us being detained.



GINNY STEIN is a South East Asia Correspondent for Australian Broadcasting Corporation.

In Pursuit

The question was innocent enough, but the lady in the gun-shop looked startled. Was it normal, I'd asked, for people in Zamboanga to carry guns? This naïve thought elicited a guffaw of laughter. She paused for a moment, then explained: "Put it like this: To me, going out without a gun would be like going out without my brassiere...."

Welcome to the Philippines' Wild South, a scattering of exquisitely beautiful tropical islands inhabited by macho gunmen and gun-ladies, Islamic militants, nervous soldiers, and – since the kidnapping of 21 tourists and other people in late April – a posse of foreign reporters.

I'd flown down to Zamboanga (an exotic name for a scruffy town) on a battered Boeing belonging to Cebu Pacific. Local airlines in the Philippines have a justifiably dubious reputation, after a number of crashes in recent years. That was probably the reason nobody aboard objected to the daft party games organised by the cheerful cabin crew during the flight – any distraction from nervous thoughts of disaster was welcome.

Zamboanga is a predominantly Christian settlement on the geographic fringes of the battle by Islamic separatists for a state of their own. Increasingly, though, the town is finding itself sucked into the war. Bombs go off sporadically. Rumours of Abu Sayyaf guerrilla raids abound. No wonder the army mounts checkpoints at night, and everyone's armed to the teeth.

But it was the hostage drama we were interested in, and that was being played out further south, on the volcanic island of Jolo. Its a three-hour journey by boat, less than an hour by plane. In a hangar near Zamboanga airport, we found a little charter company ready to take us. The price was good, but the weather reports were worrying. The misgivings deepened when we saw the elderly, single-engine Cessna parked on the tarmac. In the shade of a drooping wing, a dog sat gnawing a bone. What I would have given for Cebu Pacific's Boeing.

So it was with some trepidation that I, my cameraman Joe Phua, local fixer Sabina Lacson and our ITN colleagues, Ian Williams and Julian Hadden, squeezed ourselves and our gear into the Cessna's tiny cabin. Our pilot looked back over his shoulder and grinned from behind his aviator shades. I wished I could have shared his confidence.

As it turned out, my fears were groundless. We flew low over a placid sea, neatly dodging some nasty-looking storm-clouds, and skirting the looming mound of Basilan island (scene of a separate mass kidnapping by Abu Sayyaf guerrillas) to the east. Soon, the jungle-shrouded slopes of Jolo appeared ahead, then the low tin- and thatch-roofs of Jolo town.

On the ground, the military and police were everywhere. So were the rumours which – in the early days of the hostage crisis – were about all the assembled foreign media had to go on. The foreign hacks had found lodging in the Peacekeepers' hotel, a one-time police guest house where a mattress on the floor counted as

comfort. The French and German television networks were here in force; with five of their nationals held hostage, this was very much "their" story.

Apart from the difficulty of reporting a story taking place in impenetrable jungle more than twenty kilometres away, the electronic media had technical problems to deal with too. APTN had managed – with some ingenuity – to rig a satellite phone dish to the Peacekeepers' roof, allowing them to transmit Toko-quality pictures to London. A dish owned by local TV channel ABS-CBN was the only other option for the various networks.

Given such frustrations, it was only a matter of time before the hacks took matters into their own hands. The weekend after our brief visit to Jolo, a dozen or more French reporters and cameramen were reported missing, after setting off on their own to try and find the Abu Sayyaf kidnappers and their captives. It was a risky venture which might easily have ended in the hacks themselves becoming part of the kidnapping. The police chief said he'd warned them against it.

By this time, I was back in Manila, the result of a cynical editorial decision which went along the lines of: if there aren't any Brits, we don't much care. Others made similar calculations.

We spotted an American television reporter in the hotel lobby. He'd come to town not for the hostages, but for the Love-Bug computer virus yarn. A much bigger story for our people, he sighed.

More than a month after the hostages were first

seized, few could doubt that this will be a slow-burner of a story. As time passes and the negotiations meander, the attention-span of the international media will be strained. At first, amid the headlines and the fevered coverage, Philippines sensed an irony. This lawless region has seen many previous kidnappings. The Basilan hostages included dozens of children, their teachers and a priest, and left four people dead.

Yet it wasn't until a group of western tourists were abducted from their idyllic Malaysian diving resort that the world took notice. If the westerners' kidnap ordeal drags on for months, as is quite possible, it'd only be natural if the foreign media ended up ignoring their story as it did all the others.



"To me, going out without a gun would be like going out without my brassiere...."



SIMON INGRAM is the BBC South East Asia Correspondent.



Tabloids of the Steppes?

There she was, naked as a jaybird except for a pair of high-heeled shoes, pouting defiantly at me from the pages of a Mongolian newspaper. At her bare backside was the looming parliament building in the capital city's main square. And lest you think the picture was a fake, a caption explained that the model and photographer were arrested and released.

The paper called it an issue of press freedom.

Surely, this was not the type of problem I was prepared to deal with when I arrived in Ulaanbaatar in the summer of 1998, sent as a Knight International Press Fellow to train Mongolian reporters in basic journalism methods.

I'm no prude, by the way, and buxom page three girls I expected. But this photo held the prized top-of-the-fold spot on the front page — bumping off even the big news of the week, that the Mongolian prime minister and cabinet had resigned for the second time in three months. It was later explained to me that all independent jour-

nals survive not on advertising but subscription, so selling that extra 1,000 copies can make or break a newspaper. Once one periodical started printing nude photos, the others had to follow.

In many ways, Mongolia appeared ready for hard-hitting journalism. The country had experienced an explosion of independent press outlets since it had bloodlessly thrown off its Communist mantle in late 1989 (only months after troops fired on protesting students around Beijing's Tiananmen Square, the Mongolian government capitulated and resigned when faced with its own student protest). In the decade since free elections had been established, hundreds of independent publications and a handful of independent radio and television stations had sprung up to compete with state-run media.

But while the transition to a free press was fairly easy, the move to a responsible press was not so quick. This was a lesson I learned at my very first journalism workshop where the country's top newspaper editors, both state- and privately run, were gathered. A session on coaching reporters was interrupted by Bayermonkh, the jolly editor of the country's most popular newspa-

per, a tabloid weekly called "Alarm Clock."

"I used to use professional reporters, but now I use untrained staff — the cleaning lady, or the street sweeper," he said through an interpreter. "I like to keep their self-esteem low and tell them they will never make it if they leave my paper. If I train my journalists, they will quit, start another newspaper and compete with my paper. The market isn't ready for that."

Poor management skills weren't the only problem facing the burgeoning media industry. The media often played fast and loose with the truth — and transgressions which would have cost the job of a U.S. reporter were nothing to get excited about. At a monthly meeting I held for journalist who had graduated from a six-month reporting course, one journalist proudly told the rest he had printed a story about a controversial, secret "letter" supposedly sent by four Mongolian politicians — without ever having seen the letter. "Only one of the four parliament members claimed the story was untrue. wouldn't they all have done so if it was false?" he surmised.

But as I went along, there were things I began to appreciate about the Mongolian style. Some descriptions could be eloquently and exquisitely rendered, particularly if the journalist was moved emotionally. At a feature writing workshop in Choir (pronounced Choyer), a desolate town at the edge of the Gobi desert, we asked reporters gathered from four provinces to list observations when arriving in the town. Top on everyone's list was a little homeless boy we'd all seen sleeping on a hard station bench as we'd arrived on an early morning train.

"In Ulaanbaatar, we'd expect such things, but not out here in the countryside," they all said, shaking their heads sadly.

So when we went them out to record and describe one of their observations, one journalist came back with a heart-wrenching passage about the little boy, who had walked up to him with a challenge in his eyes and asked for a cigarette. Too bad it wasn't true.

"The assignment was supposed to involve something you actually saw," I said.

He shrugged his shoulders unconcernedly. "I only had an hour, and I couldn't find him. But I felt he had to be written about, so I just made up a composite in my mind of all the street kids I'd ever seen."

Metaphor, in fact, was the most powerful form of communication. With a history of repressive leadership, whether it was high-up party cadres of the oft-arbitrary and cruel religious and warrior leaders that preceded them, it's not surprising that people learned not to state things directly.

At the same feature workshop, one group of reporters presented a television description. It consisted of three shots — a still photo of a stand of trees, fading out to a shot of wood planks on a train, and then fading back to the same stand of trees, but this time turned upside down. Everyone oohed and ah-ed and looked at me expectantly.

"Ummm, I'm not sure I understand," I faltered. My friend and translator, Monim, explained: "Oh yes, you see, they are saying that all the trees are being cut down

and taken to China."

"Oh," I replied. "What about showing pictures of stumps, where the trees had been cut down?" This suggestion was met with blank stares, followed by a discussion in which it was decided that the first way communicated the point much better.

The narrative, story-telling format was often used by Mongolians, who had a wealth of sayings for every situation. "No dirt after hot water, no fault after it is discussed," wrote one, in introducing a story on problems at a local hospital.

And what was wrong with that? Mongolia journalists, like journalists everywhere, are storytellers, and story-tellers is cultural. As an American journalist, I was trained on the mantra of the inverse pyramid. But isn't putting the most exciting, conflict-oriented information its own form of story-telling?

True, there may not be anything factually incorrect, but might it not also skew a reader's view of events?

There had to be a way, I thought, to harness the Mongolian's narrative descriptive style with fact-based reporting to create something new and more importantly, accessible to Mongolian readers. The answers came to me in the unlikely guise of Vaancherai, an old Mongolian writer with whom I was working to help cover the country's health care problems. I'll admit his rheumy-eyed countenance and first draft article — a story about liver disease, not health care social problems — gave me pause.

But he soon proved me wrong. Vaancherai spent a weekend in a poor district in Ulaanbaatar interviewing people about the quality of their health care, unearthing some incredibly moving stories in the process. Most horrible was the story of a baby girl who had died partly due to lack of preventative care, and partly because she was admitted but then bounced between hospitals. There was no ambulance and the fa-

ther, who was too poor to afford even the bus, had to carry her in his arms several kilometers between each waiting room.

I showed Vaancherai some writing and reporting techniques to ask the right questions of government officials and to organize the information. He started the story off with a proverb: "Mongolians say that 'If you have no debt, you are rich, if you do not have sickness, you are happy'" and continued with a narrative description of the poor family's neighborhood before launching into the little girl's tragic story. Not exactly the model of an American lead sentence, but it worked; every Mongolian who read it was hooked into reading further. When we finished, we looked at each other in amazement: Vaancherai had learned that fact can be as exciting as fiction; and I learned there is more than one way to tell a story.

Speaking of good stories, the Mongolian woman with a penchant for posing nude in front of historic monuments continued to make the rounds. I met her once, in the Alarm Clock

newspaper office, where she'd just been featured in a full-length article to follow up her parliament escapades — complete with pictures of her clad only in a g-string. The editor sighed, patted her hand and said to me in English "Mongolian Madonna," adding in Mongolian that "she's going to star in a movie where she has sex with men."

I thought about Britain's Fleet Street, about Monica Lewinsky, and about my country's penchant for scandal and gossip news, and said nothing. It seems the Mongolian media, far from not understanding the ways of so-called "developed" nations, are learning their lessons all too well. — *Reprinted from The Asian Wall Street Journal* © 2000 Dow Jones & Company, Inc. All rights reserved.



In many ways, Mongolia appeared ready for hard-hitting journalism.

IN ACTION

Vietnam Blues

I am certainly not the first nor the last journalist to be expelled from Vietnam. But as far as I am concerned, this misadventure taught me more than any report I could have read about the liberty restriction by Hanoi regime.

In the hand of Cong An (political police), a person is dehumanized. A person has no rights, those of the Vietnamese citizen are already very scarce.

All along my detention, I was arrested in front of Dr Nguyen Dan Que's house on Wednesday May 12 around 4 pm and deported from the country on Friday 14 around 1.30 pm, the right to give a call to the French Embassy was denied.

The interrogations followed one another, days and nights. According to elaborate techniques, lies and threat were both used. In civilian clothes or wearing uniforms, the Cong personnel, men and women alike, take turns to psychologically pressure the detainee. The role are well divided: some pretend that they are trying to shorten the ordeal underlining

thought that it could be worst if you do not followed their 'advises'. Others treat you as criminal, make up accusation. For example, they pretend that they had the proof that I had spend one night outside of my hotel, which was a gross lie. As far as the plain cloth police, they simply act as thug. One of them threat to put some drug in my bag; "And then..." he added, finishing his sentence by grimacing with his hands a revolver put on my head.

This short experience is not much comparing to what the Vietnamese citizen endure once in the hands of Cong An. Or the Vietnamese, citizen from another country, when they are arrested.

One of them who was detained during 12 days a few years ago, told me he was beaten every day. The political or religious prisoners, Hanoi maintains they do not exist, but we know that they went through tortures, brutalities, famine, lack of basic treatment and detention in obscurity. Two of them who were detained between 1993 and 1998 especially

in A 20 disciplinary camp by the Lao border described their conditions of imprisonment.

Those who decide to stay in Vietnam after their liberation de facto switch from one form of detention to another, as it is the case for Dr Nguyen Dan Que. His house, as I was able to witness, is under high surveillance and he is deprived of his right of communication and displacement. In fact the Cong An gave me a professionally valuable service.

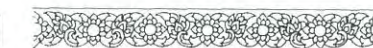
The time I spend in the Cong An offices has been a very informative experience and an irreplaceable awareness process. Moreover, I had access to testimony and contacts I was not able to get access to before.

Last but not least, the Cong An agents are paid overtime in case the interrogation last in the evenings and at night. With me, they certainly made extra money.

By SYLVAIN PASQUIER is a senior reporter with L'Express, a French weekly magazine.



LEAH KOHLBERG is a Seattle-based writer for The Asian Wall Street Journal.



The Untold Story



Photo: Bangkok Post

Perhaps you had more important things to do over the weekend – everyone needs to floss some time – and were unable to keep up with the news. Luckily for you, our research staff have been monitoring developments in the world's hot spots.

What follows is a credible reconstruction of events surrounding a confrontation in northern Thailand, where a series of peaceful protests almost got out of hand:

Chiang Mai - Heavily armed riot police ringed the Westin Hotel yesterday in a desperate attempt to prevent a group of bankers from disrupting the monthly meetings of NGO International taking place in the streets outside.

Shouts of "Hands off our Benzes!" and "Hey! We hate poverty too!" could be heard from open windows on the upper storeys of the deluxe hotel.

"Why don't you get a real job?" another man screamed at a group of activists, three of whom fainted at the prospect.

A police spokesman said some hors d'oeuvres were thrown at the NGO delegates assembled below. One

man was treated for caviar stains.

Journalists who were allowed into the hotel reported the atmosphere inside to be calm. Several of the protesters had loosened their ties, and some sipped wine as they described their frustrations.

"We have as much right to the streets as anyone else," said a protester in his fifties, who claimed to be a member of a group called MiS - Men in Suits.

"We simply want to warn the world about how the public agenda is being hijacked by the global forces of academia, research-grant junkies and professional cranks," he said as he reached for some more sushi.

Security officials in Chiang Mai said they were well prepared to deal with any possible disruptions caused by MiS. The group first came to prominence last November in Seattle, where it commanded several hotels to discuss world trade in an attempt to frustrate the thousands of NGOs who were attempting to get arrested outside.

"We have to accept the fact that wherever NGOs meet now, potentially dangerous MiS protesters will not be far behind," said one senior police officer.

"Our intelligence reports indicate that this group is very well financed and capable of marshalling hundreds of members on short notice to travel to any place where law-abiding advocacy groups are meeting.

"The protesters have been galvanised in recent months by a growing sense that many of the NGOs are arrogant, unaccountable to the people who fund them and out of touch with the people they profess to help.

MiS members claimed that they had sought a meeting with some of the NGO leaders but had been rebuffed. "They said they were too busy – first they had marching practice and then there were solidarity and struggle workshops," said a banker. "It just shows that these people don't want to listen."

Wally Bellow, a Manila-based anti-poverty commentator, denied the allegation. He said he had invited representatives of MiS to join him at an anti-dam teach-in on the banks of the Ping River but had been turned down. "One of them said he hadn't packed any casual shoes."

The protesters' demands were not immediately clear. However, if their behaviour follows previous

form, they may threaten to disrupt the NGO proceedings by staging a cocktail reception followed by a half-day seminar on macroeconomic policy.

"It's the seminar that has us worried," one police officer said candidly.

"The NGOs can put up with a lot, but making them listen to facts could be asking too much. "A more radical, banker-led faction of MiS is said to espouse more direct action, including cancelling the NGO members' credit cards.

A government spokeswoman said steps were being taken to reassure both sides in the confrontation that Thailand valued freedom of expression.

"Under no circumstances will anyone be compelled to engage in any kind of mature dialogue," she said.

Wherever NGOs meet no potentially dangerous MiS protesters will not be far behind

The Insider column appears four days a week on the backpage of the Business section of the Bangkok Post. It is written by TONY MCAULEY, who is also the section's chief sub-editor, with generous assistance from readers and other people who get the joke.

English Gin, Cambodian Tonic

No matter how chaotic Southeast Asia becomes, there is one bar that offers refuge from your days of loafing dangerously. At the FCC, the drinks are cold and the women are lean and tanned by the tropics. Don't feel intimidated. If you are here, you are worthy of their company.

Here is Phnom Penh.

Cambodia isn't the first place you think of when you think of great bars. But then, the FCC is unique. The walls are ocher and covered with hundreds of gravity-defying geckos. There is no eliminationist air-conditioning on the second floor of this old French-colonial building; ceiling fans spin overhead, respectfully stirring the humid heat. The bar, open to the monsoon breezes, is a hot and sweaty place where every beaded-glass reminds you where you are and, more important, where you are not. Another good thing about the FCC: It is all right to sweat here. Even the beautiful women are sweating. Nobody cares.

You can smoke a joint at the bar, and nobody cares about that either. You sit in a deep, brown leather armchair of a vaguely mission style and order drinks from the sweet-voiced Khmer waitresses. Their lisping mispronunciations – "You wan' gi' en tonic, OK" – are to be cherished, not corrected.

Over the banister, scooters and pickup trucks braid down the road. An elephant walks by every day around 5:30 P.M. – worth the wait. Out in the distance, the Tonle Sap River folds into the vast Mekong beneath thunderheads fleeing toward Vietnam. Dusk is the time to be here, of course, the moment of transformation when the blinding daylight bleeds away.

Like the ice it serves up, a really great bar is permanently disappearing. The FCC feels as if it could melt away at any moment, perhaps because it's in Phnom Penh. The capital is a seething cesspool; the nation is fucked in the extreme. A lot of terrible things have happened here – you'll inevitably discuss them while drinking – but, it has to be admitted, this too makes the drinks somehow colder.

The name is ridiculously pretentious – FCC stands for Foreign Correspondents Club – but thrilling, in an embarrassed J. Peterman kind of way. It doesn't hurt if you are a foreign correspondent, but that isn't required.

The people make this bar what it is. Good drinks are good, but they don't make a bar. The Floridita in Havana makes the best daiquiris in the world but is almost ruined by the hordes of German tourists rhythmically bused in to photograph where Hemingway's ass wore its impression into a barstool.

Those people don't come here. Cambodia is still slightly forbidden, although not enough to stop you. This is why you belong here, of course. Since you came all this way, you deserve a half-decent drink (half-decent because, frankly, the G&T needs work).

This is the center of expat social life in Cambodia, a bar worthy of the people who inhabit it: Aussies brought here to clear the country of its millions of land mines, Swedish famine-relief workers, backpackers

and photojournalists. They are all here, loitering over the Bangkok newspapers and watching one another like people anywhere, which this isn't.

There is community here – a shared experience and mutual risk. The NGO idealist and the washed-up expat and the Frenchman who wanders off in mid-conversation to shoot heroin are all your companions now. You have been promoted out of the ordinary. It won't last, so enjoy it.

I met the perfect woman here, several times. Most of them were great, but one was really something. (Yes, you, who showed me where the bandit's muzzle-flash singed your jet-black hair. I know you aren't perfect, but that was enough.)



Out

back, past

the dining room, the sun sets over the tiled roof of the National Museum and its 900-year-old relics covered in bat shit. The darkness comes with merciless tropical regularity, and the other walls glow. There is usually lighting off toward Vietnam, and the ceiling fans stir, and the drinks are cold. The pool table is new.

So you fall in love, with the place or the woman or the moment. But in order for this day, this bar, to be perfect, you have to go home alone, already remembering the way it was. The moto-mafia, with their

Honda Super Cubs, are lined up outside, right past the one-legged beggars, and for 50 cents you can whiz through the dark city to your hotel, hoping you don't get mugged by off-duty cops and passing the thousands of cyclo drivers who sleep in their rigs each night beneath the new streetlights.

There is the sense, common to every great bar, that this place will exist only here and only now. Once I met a silly woman at the bar who wondered why we couldn't have a place like the FCC in New York. The people, I wanted to answer, the land mines, the coups, the rickshaw drivers, the twelve-hour time-zone difference, the elephant that walks past at 5:30 every day. You can't have a bar anyplace but where it should be, I wanted to say. But I didn't say anything.

By PATRICK SYMMES



Red-Light Realm of Bangkok



It's the weekend at the Nana Plaza, Bangkok's notorious fleshpot where girls can be picked up for the price of a bottle of Johnnie Walker Black. This three story mezzanine complex starts to fill up with barflies from around the world. Inside the bars - with names like Voodoo and Rainbow - the dancers are putting on their make-up and bikinis oblivious to the cat-calls of punters sitting on stools, some with paunches that have downed more beers than the local Shingha brewery.

"Check that one out with the Pamela Anderson knockers," says one red eyed middle aged man in an East Ender accent to a guy sipping an espresso next to him.

"She's a katoey (ladyboy)," says Christopher G Moore, demurely taking another sip from his espresso.

The forty something Bangkok-based novelist's soberly takes in the scene with nonchalance of a silent voyeur as goggle-eyed Caucasians leer at the writhing flesh around chrome poles on a stage surrounded by mirrors.

This scenario isn't surprising; the Canadian expatriate has explored the seedy underbelly of southeast Asia in 12 novels. His earthy prose narrates the dark side of Cambodia, Thailand and Vietnam through the eyes of private eye Calvino.

These books consist of The Land of Smiles series (4 novels) and the Calvino private-eye series (6 novels) which chronicle Southeast Asia over an entire decade, narrating the dark side of expatriate life in Cambodia, Thailand, and Vietnam.

Moore left a successful career writing scripts for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation when he moved to Bangkok over 15 years ago. He received critical acclaim for his script 'Sticks and Pucks' about hockey from Toronto but is reticent to go into his past as if the years in voluntary exile have eroded away his

Canadian identity.

Moore has established himself as one of the most prolific expatriate writers of the Far East even though the "mythological North American reader" still eludes him after literary icon Barney Rosset who published the beatniks like Henry Miller and William Burroughs failed to secure a deal to publish his books in the States. Still, the demand for his novels in other countries has not abated.

Moore reasons that he "doesn't try to tone down or come up with a homogenized vocabulary of Thailand for the mythological North American reader.

"What's interesting is that it's been easier [to sell] in Japan and Germany than in North America," says the novelist who meditates every morning before he writes.

Zurich publisher Unionsverlag bought the rights to all of Moore's books last year and plan to release Spirit House, a book on the Thai supernatural, in German this March. A Japanese version of Spirit House is due out in June. Following the well-received translation of Cut Out in Thailand, a Thai version of Spirit House is currently being translated.

His background in law at the University of British Columbia was an important influence for his first two books written outside of Asia, says Moore. His Lordship's Arsenal, re-released last year, was his first book written almost autobiographically in style about a judge's psychological probe into identity, not unlike Moore who gave up a career as a law professor to become a full time writer in the Far East.

Moore's second book Saint Anne, is a deftly woven tale that examines the microcosms of individual

lives, while simultaneously addressing the larger social, political concerns of the world like immigration. The book focuses on Vietnamese refugees who immigrated to North America. Both these books were set in

Vancouver, and the geographical elements of sea and mountains seep into both of them.

His only non-fiction book is Heart Talk, a English compendium of Thai "jai" (heart-love) terms first published in 1992 by White Lotus, a German-run publishing house in Bangkok, and re-released by Heaven Lake Press last year, with the addition of 250 more 'heart terms' expressions. Moore said this book was conceived "as a labor of love"

Moore has a penchant for marketing with inventive gimmicks. On the toilet walls of go-go bars owned by the King's Group, a large Thai company that runs many of the bars in the Nana complex, are posters advertising Moore's books. Punters can buy a signed copy of his books over the counter with a round of beers. For last Valentine's Day he wrapped up a thousand copies of Heart Talk in a red ribbon with a plastic heart attached to it saying 'Happy Valentine's Day' Like his other books, autographed copies of Heart Talk are on sale at the bars of Nana. And for Christmas and New Year he

was flogging off 'Calvino' coffee mugs for his fans.

The front cover of his latest novel Cold Hit released in November has a photograph of the Therae coffee shop, an institutional expatriate bar on Bangkok's main drag, Sukhumvit. Known as 'headquarters' in Moore's novels, this meat market for expatriates has provided the inspiration behind the creation of many of his characters. He once called Therae the "cross roads", where he met diplomats, business executives, English-language teachers, adventurers, drunks and con-artists and those living on the margins of Bangkok's nightlife who converged there for late night drinking sessions.

Another inspirational den of iniquity is the notorious Nana Plaza red-light complex on Sukhumvit soi 4, "a two car-wide esophagus leading into a U-shaped gut that had swallowed more than it could... three stories of esoteric possibilities" writes Moore in Cold Hit.

This go-go bars features in the six novels of the Calvino private-eye series, of which Cold Hit is the latest. The protagonist is a half-Jewish, half-Italian Mekong whisky-swigging detective from the Big Apple, who untangles hard-boiled cases in the tradition of Raymond Chandler's Phillip Marlowe.

The tales are told with the absurd and caustic humor of Jim Thompson who integrated dark humor in the detective genre.

Moore has been compared by many critics to Raymond Chandler. In this respect, the genre and cities link the two authors as kindred spirits. Los Angeles and Bangkok both mean the city of angels. And both cities are flat, urban sprawls built on pay-offs, says Moore.

"Chandler lived in Los Angeles in the 30s and 40s when there were all kinds of bogus land schemes and some fraudulent oil deals and corruption in the police department. So he was able to draw upon those elements and come up with various Phillip Marlowe books. I'm trying to do something similar with the Vincent Calvino books. My Calvino series are of a hard-boiled private eye who is living in a chaotic place where there's corruption and social dysfunction around. And Bangkok makes a very creative environment for a writer because there are lots of very interesting things happening."

Moore's characters are often unsavory stereotypical types who represent the antipathies of PC values in the West. He sees fiction as the last refuge for truth and prefers characters that are non-political, gritty and real.

Crosby, for example, is the salesman in A Haunting Smile who comes up with T-shirt slogans like the "Y-Not Bar", which Moore says represents the fear of foreigners "copulating with old meat." Or another cynical old timer called Snow, a reporter covering the May 1992 street massacre in Bangkok - the theme of A Haunting Smile, and an event some journalists claim may have outranked Tiananmen Square as the bloodiest massacre in Asia in recent years. Snow says that having sex with a white woman is "a step away from

homosexuality."

In defence of his out-there stance, Moore says "there aren't editors who say, 'Oh, you can't have a character saying that, even if people say that in real life.' Why not allow people say in books what they say in the street and inside bars? Non-fiction is truly distorted by all kinds of constraints such that most of the time you know what you are reading is a swindle."

Much of what he is writing is based on reality he says. "The precise circumstances where events are played out are made up, but the core of the experiences are real. One reason why the books have been a success is the characters are a mirror that allows others to recognize aspects of their own life." Or maybe his own?

And his catch phrases recount the classic features of the surreal expat life in Bangkok: "short-time hotels" (hotels where sexual transactions take place), 'the sickness' (men addicted to the sex-on-tap lifestyle), and 'the packaged falange' (foreigners working in Bangkok for multi-nationals on high salaries).

Local writer Berand Trink who writes about the Realm in the Bangkok Post says that Moore has fully explored the detective genre with the exotic sleazy East



as a backdrops for his novels. He deals insightfully with the foreign Diaspora that came to Thailand because they had trouble getting laid back home.

And at times it seems the author is more concerned exposing the moral vacuum of Bangkok, than private-eye Calvino is in solving cases for a financial pittance. Rather than a deep revelation on the psyche of mainstream Thais, Moore focuses largely on the microcosm of the red-light realm.

It is little wonder that Moore's largest following, almost verging on cult worship - the patrons of Bangkok's red light district - are the whore-mongers he writes about living on the fringes of Bangkok.

Moore's fan clubs is growing at his web site cgmoore.com. One letter from a Canadian gentleman in his 70's who divorced his wife and moved to Thailand to live with prostitute half his age wrote: "The reason why I'm writing to you is simply to say thank you for writing these kinds of books."



THOMAS BRECCEL is a Bangkok based correspondent.

Colours in Action



Thongsuk Suwatnatee's water colours capture the serene beauty and light of the countryside of Thailand as well as the bustle of the city streets and market places. He is equally at home painting the lively activity of Thailand's khlongs and harbours as in depicting the tranquil charm of temple cloisters.

Thongsuk Sawatnatee was born in Roi Et and grew up in Nakhon Sawan. After completing his education at Somdej Chaopraya Teachers College in Bangkok he quickly became one of Thailand's foremost cartoonists. His skill in portraying people of every generation engaged in all walks of life, refined during his time as a cartoonist, gives his paintings an exceptional liveliness.



THONGSUK SUWATNATEE

The 'Note-taker'



My notebook computer is a fine companion indeed. Versatile, it can play audio CDs, deliver high-quality music right off the Internet and can display photographs taken with my digital camera. It is also fine for playing "Need for Speed III" and it can do some mean number crunching, updating a large database in a fraction of a second or doing a complex spreadsheet recalc in the blink of an eye.

A true jack-of-all trades, it also serves as my word processor and is the device that I can use to take notes in real time during interviews, seminars and presentations. If I can be bothered to take it with me, that is. For, the problem with this and almost all other notebook computers is the weight and size of the beast, and the functionality. For, in one sense there is too much, while in another, it is lacking.

Perhaps I should explain.

My need of a computer as a working journalist is for something lightweight, such that I should hardly notice the extra weight should I care to take it with me "just in case" I might need it.

The feature of being able to play a CD is overkill, while I could easily get by with a monochrome screen. Most of the software that fills up the hard disk and an operating system that never rests (Windows 98) is unnecessary, and as it is, simply wastes the battery power.

Typically, I should be able to load an application (such as a word processor) into memory and then all the system need do is to run the display and keep the memory refreshed.

The hard disk and other peripherals can sleep or be in standby mode, saving wear and tear on them and extending the life of my battery.

For the battery life is important, very important. At the very least, I need to have my notebook "alive" for an entire morning or afternoon (with the ability to recharge during lunch), and the one hour and something that most notebooks today offer (with new, "fresh" batteries) is simply not enough.

Besides, I need the extra power for a few additional features and functions that I would add, if I could. These would be a built-in digital voice recorder, so that I could throw away my cassette tape recorder.

Why not integrate the recording feature into the notebook itself? These recordings could be saved in memory, or written to disk, but the idea of having this on the computer leads to my next wish. This is for voice recognition software that could be quickly trained to recognise a new speaker, and which, after a few sentences, could be left to transcribe what had been said.

Perhaps this is wishful thinking at this stage, but I am sure that this capability will come with the advent of faster processors and with better speech-recognition algorithms and DSP chips.

As any journalist knows, while it is fine to have a tape recording of an interview or presentation, searching back through the tape and trying to find a specific quote can be time-consuming and frustrating.

Wouldn't it be nice if the notes you took were linked to the recording itself? So when, in a meeting, you jot down "says he will sell at 40,000 baht!" (or whatever) and you want to hear the full context, you simply highlight this phrase with the mouse and you can hear what was said again. No fiddling with rewind buttons, etc.

This would not be difficult to do once the recorder and notebook were integrated into the same unit with appropriate software. I heard that the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) has already come up with a prototype along these lines.

All the user would need to do would be to click on a specific word of notes taken, and the relevant recorded passage would play back.

And, I would also venture that not only journalists would find this helpful. Any secretary - or indeed anyone who needs to take notes in a meeting - should find such a feature highly useful and productive.

When designing such a device, I would suggest that the CrossPad <<http://www.crosspad.com>>, which is a notepad computer designed for handwriting input, would make a good model to start with.

Indeed, if the notebook I imagine - let's call it the "Note-taker" - offered handwriting recognition and was combined with an external keyboard, perhaps with a wireless link to the main unit, you would have the flexibility that would allow either for handwritten or for typed notes that would be linked to a speaker's words (in a meeting or interview).

While speaker-independent voice recognition that could be trained on the fly is probably a few years away yet, the ability to provide the voice recording feature, the keyboard and handwriting input (Crosspad style) is certainly achievable today - and I believe such a device would have a ready market.

There would certainly be an army of journalists around the world who would be ready to give this productivity tool a good write-up if a manufacturer delivered on this wish of the "Note-taker" that I outlined here.

Wanted: a 'for the record' device that links what was said to your notes



TONY WALTHAM
is an Editor of Database,
Bangkok Post.
Email: tonyw@inet.co.th

Money Politics, Globalisation, and Crisis

Is the global economy in its present form basically unsustainable and headed for an almighty crash this century, fuelled by a deteriorating global environment and a commercialised, consumptive economic philosophy that seems to debase everything in its path?

Will Thailand's new constitution and attempts at political reform be able to punish the corrupt and undo decades of neglect that has wrought destruction on the country's environment and left millions in poverty, particularly in the arid northeast?

What are the lessons of Thailand's 1990s consumptive binge, its obsession with money and status, and its disregard for the rule of law which largely brought on the Crash of 97?

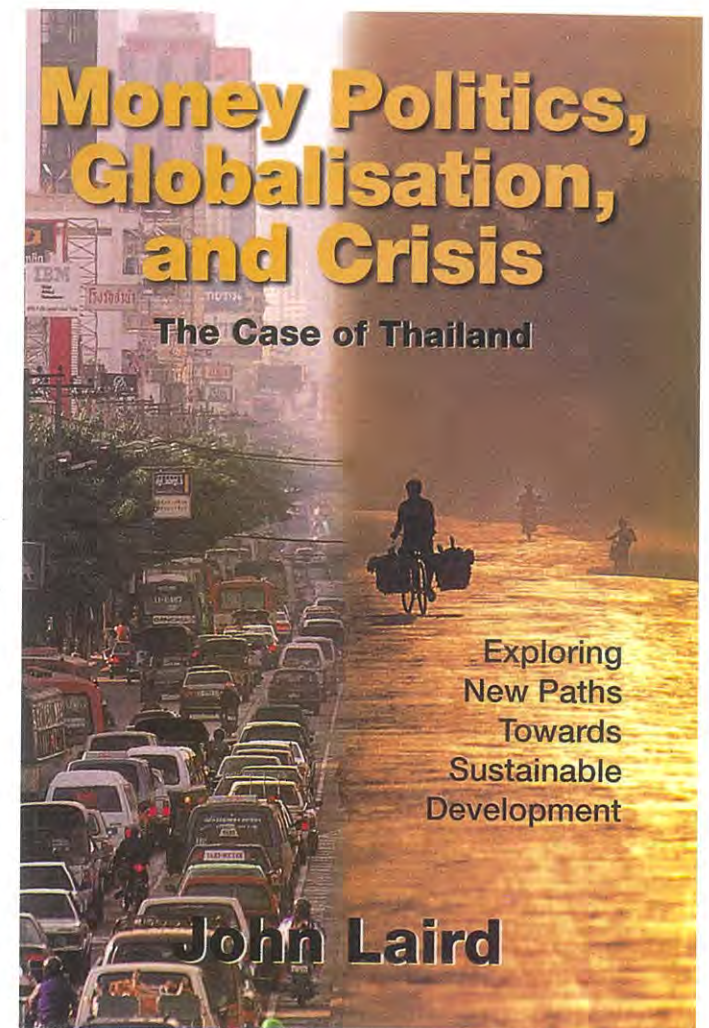
John Laird, a long-time member of the FCCT, attempts to answer these questions and suggest major solutions both on a global scale and in Thailand, in his just released book, *Money Politics, Globalisation and Crisis: the Case of Thailand* (Asia Books, Bangkok), selling at 495 baht.

John Laird has spent more

than 23 years in Asia and Africa working variously as a foreign correspondent, a United Nations official, and as a writer and consultant specialising in sustainable development. In Bangkok he reported for Reuters and subsequently was a correspondent and news editor for The Associated Press, during the late 1970s and early 1980s.

He has covered such headline-making events as the attempted military coup in Thailand in 1981, the fall of the Marcos regime in the Philippines in 1986, the Rio de Janeiro Earth Summit of 1992, and the process of Cambodian peacemaking and reconciliation leading up to the UN-supervised election of 1993.

Most recently, he has worked as a writer and consultant from his residence in Hua Hin, where his interest has turned to the question of promoting sustainable lifestyles and the need to harness politics, economics and the mass media to bring about global, sustainable consumption that does not threaten the diversity and balance of the global ecology.



MONEY POLITICS, GLOBALISATION, AND CRISIS: THE CASE OF THAILAND
By John Laird
Graham Brash Singapore, 2000

Having the Times of His Life

Max Frankel started to write for "The New York Times" as a student at Columbia University in 1949. During the next half century he held just about every important position on the paper - foreign correspondent, Washington bureau chief, editorials editor, and executive editor.

"The Times of My Life" is his memoir. The book begins with Max Frankel as a boy in Nazi Germany. He describes the terror of his wartime escape with his heroic mother, their immigrant lives in New York, and a teacher's inspired decision that he could belatedly learn to read English if he learned to write it.

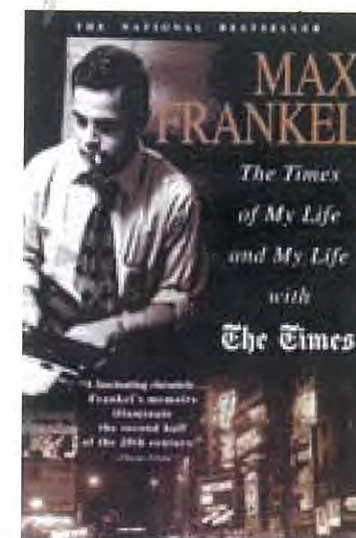
Thus writing became his profession and his ticket to the stage of world events. His life stories run in tandem with the big news stories of our time. His book, like his life, moves through Hitler's Berlin, Khrushchev's Moscow, Castro's Havana, and the Washington of Kennedy, Johnson, and Nixon, from the peak

of the Cold War to its end.

In the introduction Frankel writes: "The journalist's press pass sent me vaulting across borders to gain a spectacular perspective on our era. Like the astronauts floating in outer space, I've had a rare glimpse of the earth in my times, and it gave me an irrepressible urge to record the journey."

Frankel says his mother tried to dissuade him from writing his memoir as "vainglorious." He continues, "Nonetheless I dredged her memory over the years, and Pop's, and finally my own, for the simple reason that our predicaments conspired to make me a professional witness to the times of my life. A paid teller of stories, I judged my own as worth adding to the many I had already spun.

We can be thankful this time Frankel did not listen to his mother. Read the first chapter of this book at <http://www.wnyc.org/musicculture/shorts/chapters/frankl.html>



THE TIMES OF MY LIFE and MY LIFE WITH THE TIMES
By Max Frankel
Random House, 1999

Are YOU a Foreign Correspondent?

Find out instantly, with this handy test.

1. Approximately how long do the doors stay open on Bangkok's Skytrain carriages as they stop at a station?
2. The recently removed Minister of Agriculture in Thailand, Ponpol, is the author of what English language novel named after a river?
3. The city of Juarez, Mexico is located opposite what Texas city on the other side of the Rio Grande?
4. The American, Rick Maynard, ran a bar on Pat Pong for many years. What was the bar called?
5. Who ran Lucy's Tiger Den in Bangkok and died in the Republic of the Philippines?
6. Who was the last foreign correspondent for Izvestia in Bangkok?
7. What former governor of California presently serves as the mayor of the city of Oakland, California?
8. In which state of the United States is the White House located?
9. If you were in Alice Springs or beyond the Black Stump in which country would ye be?
10. On what island have Norwegians and Russians worked and cooperated for decades? Its leading city is Nyyearbyen.
11. The infamous religious leader, Jim Jones, led many followers to their deaths in what country?
12. What is the capital of Zimbabwe?
13. On what continent is Little America?
14. When the comet Hale-Bopp was visible in the sky what was the name of the small group of fanatics who committed suicide?
15. Who is the Chairman of the Federal Reserve Board, or "The Fed," in the US.
16. What US corporation has been under attack by the US government for violation of the Sherman Antitrust Act?
17. In South East Asia who was the king who became prince who became king?
18. In Thailand what governmental administrative agency is known as "Eye Eat?"
19. In what European country did Pol Pot attend university?
20. What was Fort Bonifacio in Manila formerly named?
21. Other than Bangkok what other cities lay claim to be known as the "city of angels?"
22. What would you associate the name Kalashnikov with?
23. What were the ancient capitals of Japan and Viet-Nam?
24. Where is Cap St. Jacques?
25. Where would you find the majority of Shia or Shiite Muslims?
26. In what country were the Dead Sea Scrolls found?
27. In 1776 what was the first foreign entity to recognize what became the United States?
28. What country in Africa has a US flag but with one star instead of fifty? Its capital is named after a US president.
29. Ghana was a British colony but what was it called as a colony?
30. Britain flooded China with opium from India as a response to something it wanted. What was wanted?
31. During the US occupation of the Philippines after 1898 an Army general ordered a Marine Corps major to carry out mass killings in retaliation for the deaths of US soldiers. Where did this occur?
32. What country is promoted as the "land of the midnight sun?"
33. If you were looking for Mount Rushmore or the "Petrified Forest" in what country would you be travelling?
34. If you were invited to speak at Simon Frazer University where would you go?
35. Is Paraguay or Uruguay landlocked?
36. If you were looking for CINCPAC where would you find him?
37. The South East Asian Treaty Organization (SEATO) was disbanded in 1976. Where was its headquarters?

Your Career (According to Correct Responses)

26-37	Quiz show winner - You're really smart, but probably don't have much social time.
10-25	Doctor, Lawyer, Broker, etc - You could qualify for one of the paying professions.
1-9	"expert" or "analyst" - You are clearly qualified to be quoted widely in leading international publications.
Zero	You are well suited for a career as Foreign Correspondent, swanning the globe on a limitless expense account. (A knowing nod is worth more than knowledge.)

1) 15 seconds, 2) Maekong, 3) El Paso, 4) The Grand Prix 5) A.J. "Tiger" Rydberg, 6) Eugene Belenky, 7) Jerry Brown, 8) It is in Washington, District of Columbia, which is a federal district not part of any state., 9) Australia, 10) Svalbard or Spitsbergen., 11) Guyana, 12) Harare, 13) Antarctica, 14) Heaven's Gate, 15) Alan Greenspan, 16) Microsoft, 17) Norodom Sihanouk, 18) The Industrial Estates Authority of Thailand, 19) France, 20) Fort McKinley, 21) Los Angeles and Angeles City, 22) military rifles, 23) Ito and Hue, 24) Viet-Nam. Also known as Vung Tau, 25) Iran, 26) Israel, 27) Croatia, 28) Liberia is the nation-state and its capital is named after President James Monroe, Monrovia., 29) The Gold Coast, 30) Tea plants, 31) Samar, 32) Norway. Some say it is the land of midnight fun., 33) The USA, 34) Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, 35) Paraguay, 36) Oahu, Hawaii, 37) Bangkok



Hangin' out with the chicks



The unique strength of Asia

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