

LIFE

VIETNAM: BLOWS, COUNTERBLOWS, TENSE WAITS



NORTH VIETNAM STAMP

Showing machine-gunning
of a U.S. helicopter, this Communist
postage stamp honors Vietcong attack
on a South Vietnam village

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FEBRUARY 26 • 1965 • 35¢

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Two 'square' denizens of the junkie world

In this issue there is a picture essay and article about the life of two young drug addicts—as they themselves see it. This is the first of a two-part series on narcotics in the U.S.; the second part, which appears next week, will deal with what is, is not and should be being done about it. Jim Mills (an Associate Editor of LIFE) wrote both instalments. The pictures were taken by Bill Eppridge.

Mills spent two weeks making the rounds with detectives of New York City's Narcotics Bureau. Then, having learned some of the ropes, he made contact with two addicts, Karen and John, and for two solid months he and Eppridge spent virtually every waking hour with them. "When I say 'solid,'" says Mills, "I mean something like 20 hours a day, seven days a week. Junkies never seem to sleep." All this depended, of course, on winning the addicts' confidence. Mills and Eppridge found, for one thing, that addicts have no desire to be bothered by "squares" (nonusers). The addict is always high on heroin or obsessed with getting more, and squares simply waste his time. They also found that the addict loses all respect for a square he can "con" out of something. Mills could be "conned" out of nothing, and after a time he and Eppridge gained their respect.



JAMES MILLS

Once accepted, Mills and Eppridge became denizens of the junkie world. They learned the language, which they had to speak with meticulous care or be branded as outsiders. They picked up some of the junkies' uncanny ability to spot a "narco" (narcotics detective). They talked for hours on park benches and street corners with addicts waiting to make "connections," and they frequented fleabag hotels, three of which unceremoniously threw them out. Eppridge, in fact, came so much to look the part that he was picked up by the narcos in a hotel lobby; they thought he had stolen both his cameras and LIFE credentials and were about to haul him off when Mills (who looks more like a cop) came up to straighten things out. But never in their adventures were they troubled by the junkies themselves and both became good—if sad—friends of Karen and John.

Not one of Eppridge's pictures is posed. Why did John and Karen act so freely in his presence? The answer, says Mills, is that "they enjoyed their role. For once they could savor the reversal of the teacher-student, judge-defendant, do-gooder-addict relationship they had always known. For once, they were the figures of authority. For the first time, they were the front end of the hyphen, and the squares were the students."

Another question: would not these pictures betray them to the police? They are both known addicts with jail sentences behind them. That the pictures would be seen by police bothered them not a bit. Their only worry was that the pictures might bother "pushers" who might then hesitate to sell them drugs.

George P. Hunt
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 Managing Editor

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versity is depriving them of a worthwhile education. These dissidents soon organized as the Free Speech Movement and found an eloquent spokesman in 22-year-old philosophy major Mario Savio, a native of New York. His own views—excerpted here from a lengthy

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The university is a vast public utility which turns out future workers in today’s vineyard, the military-industrial complex. They’ve got to be processed in the most efficient way to see to it that they have the fewest dissenting opinions, that they have just those characteristics which are wholly incompatible with being an intellectual. This is a real internal psychological contradiction. People have to suppress the very questions which reading books raises. ’

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objective research but rather of contracted research, the results of which are to be used as those who contract for it see fit. . . . Why should the business community . . . dominate the board of regents? The business of the university is teaching and learning. Only people engaged in it—the students and teachers—are competent to decide how it should be done. ’

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STUDENTS NOW FACING TRIAL

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¶ They can only try us in several ways—a mass trial, a group trial, individual trials, or some combination. None of these four ways can give us due process. Even individual trials would be held before different judges and juries. In earlier civil rights cases here, we've had different verdicts handed down for the same offense.

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Urge your congressman and senators to vote for Eldercare (The Herlong-Curtis Bill, H.R. 3727)

The American Medical Association

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02/26/1965
pages 100-101

EDUCATION

ANGRY WORDS FROM MARIO SAVIO, SPOKESMAN FOR CALIFORNIA'S STUDENTS NOW FACING TRIAL

'The university has become a factory'

Jack Fincher

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