

# Many Experiences—Good, Bad And Indifferent

## Indian Hardship Is Challenge To Peace Corps Worker

Editor's Note: Gary R. Lowe, Peace Corps Volunteer in India, was a Political Science major, a member of Student Legislature, and active in campus politics at the University of North Carolina where he received his B.A.

By GARY R. LOWE

NOWGONG, India — The plane began to settle gradually. The jet engines became quieter. Everyone was talking nervously, expectantly. The realization that India was actually below was silently spreading from one to another. The lights of New Delhi appeared and grew in the darkness as we lost altitude.

All 100 passengers were awaiting the same moment. Then it happened. The landing gear struck the concrete with a thump and a deep, brief scream of rubber, and the inside of the plane erupted into cheers, clapping, yells, and whistles.

The 16th group of Peace Corps Volunteers to India had arrived. They were overjoyed,

and secretly scared. It had taken three months of rigorous training and an unscheduled six weeks detour to five Israeli kibbutzim (as a result of the Indo-Pakistani conflict) but finally — and that's how most Volunteers felt: finally — they had arrived.

That was one year ago. Since then much has happened — good, bad, and, of course, indifferent. I was trained in poultry development, a major undertaking by the Peace Corps in India. Beforehand, we were all warned that the poultry situation would not be as good as it had once been because of the poor monsoon and the exist-

ing possibility of famine. The people would be more concerned with feeding themselves than some chickens.

### ACQUAINTANCE

Getting to know your Indian co-worker proved to be quite a task — your understanding his Indian-British English and his getting used to American English (especially my North Carolina brand.) When this was overcome, the job was to discover what you were actually supposed to do.

Slowly, which is the only way things are done in India, you become accustomed to the

ways of surviving from day to day. You learn to eat extremely hot curried food with your right hand — no knives or forks, just your right hand. You learn to go without beef for months. You learn to relish boiled water stored in clay jars, the coldest drink available. You learn the secrets of an Indian-style latrine, an absolute necessity.

You eventually learn each long, red-tape procedure involved in mailing letters to America and after three months you are able to post a registered-Air Mail letter home in a record time spent at the post office of 30 minutes. (Amazing!)

Most important, you finally learn after many exasperating encounters with the official-government minds of Indians that a smile and immense patience are the only solution to maintaining sanity and establishing rapport.

You try to establish a foothold from which you can work and, hopefully, accomplish something. You slowly realize the immensity of India's dilemma and your own fantastic smallness. Through all of this, you try to maintain reason and balance which enable you to remain effective and a Peace Corps Volunteer in the true sense of the words.

### FREE TIME

But there is free time, and you may begin long periods of introspection. You look at yourself, perhaps, for the first time. And you look at your country. Over and above the encounters with an alien culture, it's a real challenge because for the first time you have to live with yourself — without television or football or a date every weekend.

For most Volunteers, as re-

cent college graduates, the opportunity to stop and take a look comes at an important time in their lives. And, of course, you look ahead to that day when you will return to "The Land of the Big PX," our endearing term for home.

I've seen the Taj. It was not disappointing. I have visited Benares and seen the burning bodies on the holy Ghats of the Ganges. I have seen a man die, on Christmas night, while a fellow Volunteer and I tried to rush him to the hospital in time on a slow, rickety bus. I have travelled third-class unreserved (like cattle-cars) on Indian trains, and each journey is a unique experience in itself.

I have lived through one hot season and dread the coming of another, 118 degrees in

the shade. I have cycled miles into the interior to visit villages, just like the Madison Avenue Volunteer should do. At 22, I am embarrassed when a man twice my age addresses me with the title of "Doctor Sahib." I am in the midst of a second poor, and therefore disastrous, monsoon.

### FAMINE YEAR

Another tense famine year, the second in a row, stares India's already starving five hundred million in the face. Having visited many villages and eaten and talked and worked with villagers, having played and laughed with their undernourished but still smiling children, I begin to feel the helplessness of the "trap" many of these simple but wonderful people are caught in. I

find it hard to remain optimistic or hopeful.

I then ask myself just what I can do.

It has taken me a year to learn that the Peace Corps Advertisement showing an inch on a ruler and proclaiming, "Peace Corps measures progress inches," is more than a slick slogan to draw attention and amused smiles. It is the simple, frustrating, too-real truth.

### PLAIN PEOPLE

The Volunteers I know are just people. They know how to enjoy themselves when the opportunity presents itself, but they are dedicated. Not missionaries, but just a bunch of people who think they can do a job — any job. The job of a Volunteer is a

hard one. Not hard in a physical sense, but in a more abstract sense. I don't regret it. I'd do it all again. It is a unique challenge. You gain greater insight into all that surrounds you, all that has gone before, with a chance to glimpse with more maturity what you would like to follow.

That is the key: the confidence that we can do any job we want to do. Once we convey this to the Indians and get them to believe it about themselves, then we will have accomplished something of a modern day miracle. Then India, along with the other countries we serve will begin to move.

And then we won't be needed because these countries will be doing their jobs themselves.

## Iowa Student Wins Fight For Lower Tuition Rate

A University of Iowa student who challenged the system of non-resident tuition won his case, but the scope of the federal court is uncertain, the Iowa State Daily reports.

George Clarke, 22-year-old law student, claimed he should pay lower resident tuition fees because he had married an Iowa woman, pays Iowa taxes, votes in Iowa and testified he would practice law in Iowa when he graduates.

The three-judge federal court ruled that the university tuition system is legal but is perhaps too rigidly enforced.

While the decision in Clarke's test case did not upset the tuition system in Iowa's three state-operated schools, it is expected to spark comment and possibly changes at the October meeting of the State Board of Regents.

The court panel decided that Clarke, who moved from Elwood, Ill., in 1965, had presented a sound case for resident status. Current policy governing residence determination, set solely by the Regents, says an out-of-state woman who marries an Iowa resident becomes a resident herself for tuition purposes, but the same does not apply to an out-of-state man who marries an Iowa woman.

University registrar W. A. Cox has testified that as far as his office is concerned, once a non-resident enters school, he

must remain in that classification while a student. The judges said, however, that if this is a definite rule, "it would probably constitute a constitutional violation . . ."

Clarke's plea for lower tuition had earlier been turned down by the school's tuition review committee. The court said the review committee "should be given an opportunity to reconsider Clarke's classification."

Either Clarke or the university may request further action from the court after the committee acts, the judges ruled.

## Every Nation Wants To Keep Most Of Its \$\$

Every nation, including the United States, is anxious to hold fast to its dollars.

This can affect tourists in varying ways.

The recent imposition of a \$140 limit on the amount of dollar exchange Britons could take out of the country with them for pleasure travel focused attention on a problem faced for some time by nationals of other countries.

The amount of dollars permitted for foreign pleasure travel varies considerably — from zero to unlimited — throughout the world, with the United States currently in the unlimited category.

Morocco, for example, allows its nationals \$5 in dollar exchange for pleasure trips outside the country — but they can have it only every six months.

Among the countries which bar their citizens from taking any dollars out for vacation jaunts are Cambodia, Ceylon, India and Nepal. The "unlimited" countries, in addition to the United States, include Belgium, Germany, Luxembourg, Portugal and Australia.

The formula can sometimes be complex. In many countries, application can be made for amounts over the formal limit, but this usually applies to commercial travelers. One of the complex formulas is that of Iraq, where adults are permitted \$840 a year without previous approval of the Central Bank of Iraq.

The United Kingdom, before the imposition of the \$140 limit, had a limit of \$70, of which \$70 was to be in British currency. This plan seems to have been followed in former British colonies, since Barbados, the British Leeward and Windward Islands, Jamaica, Nassau and Trinidad and Tobago generally have a \$700 limit.



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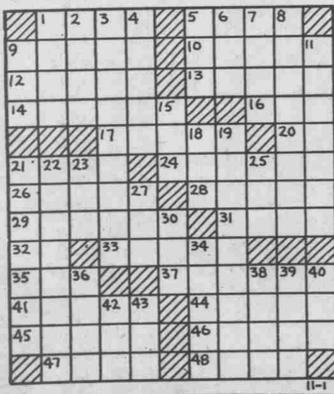
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