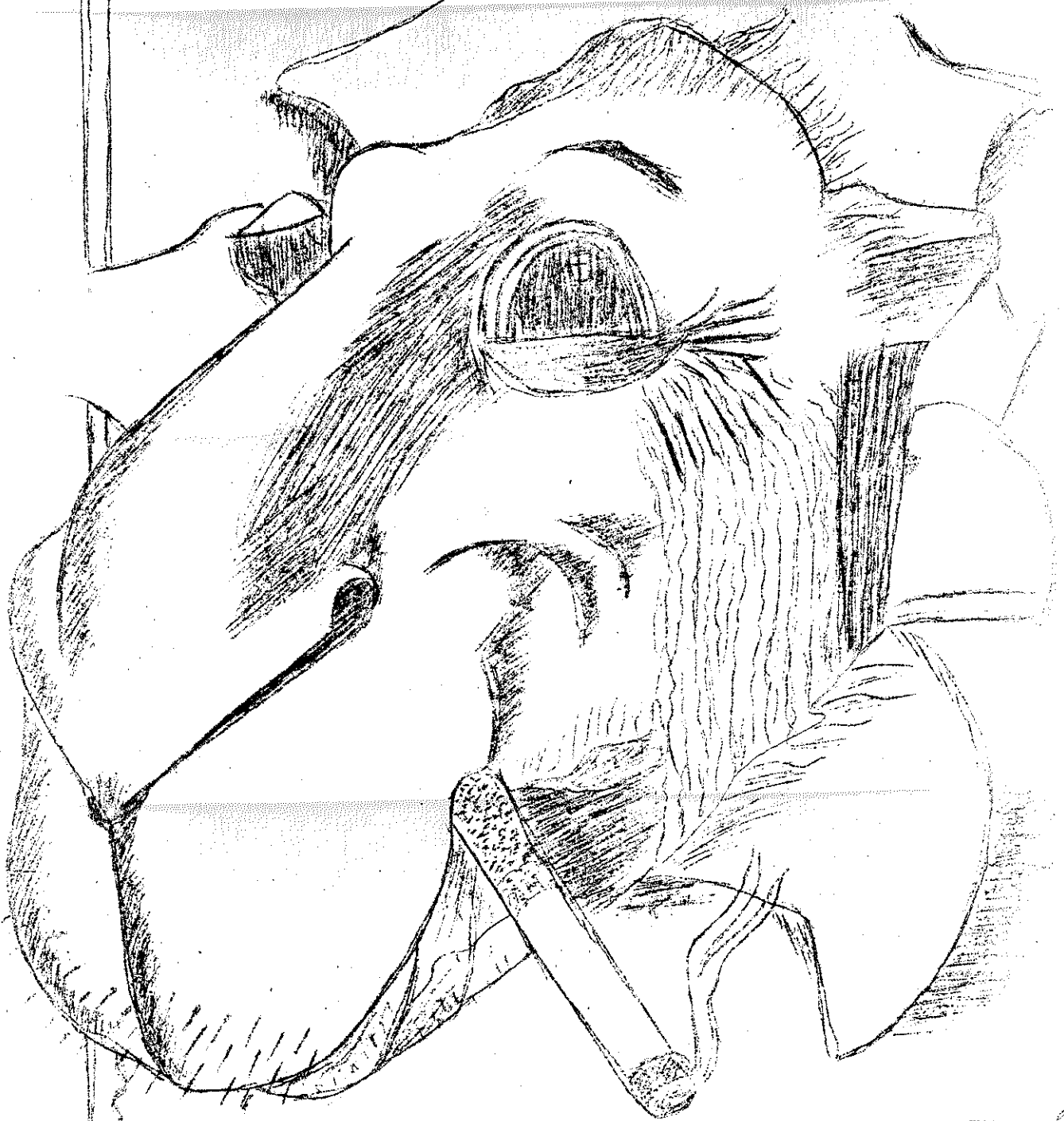
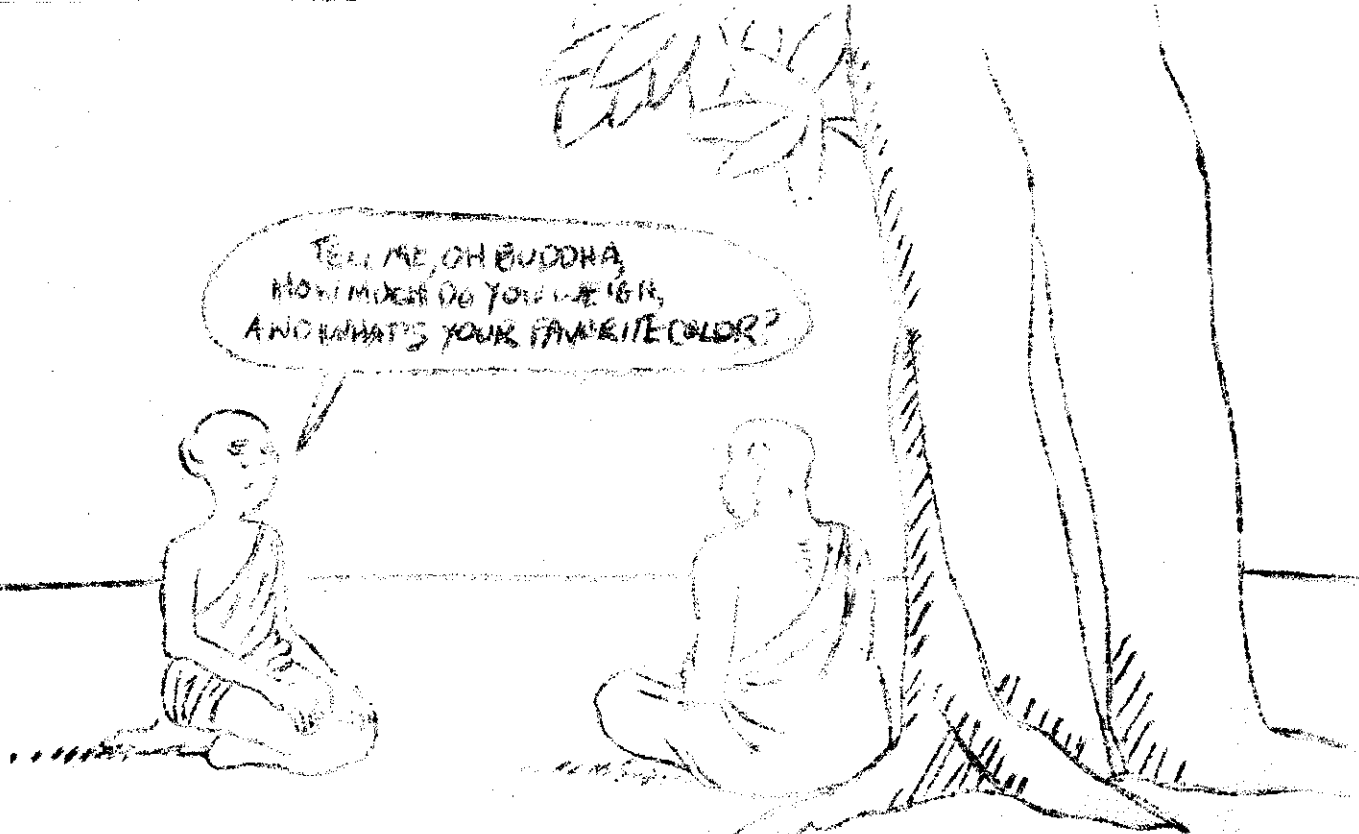


CAMEL

EXPRESS





- KLIBAN, from Whack Your Porcupine

I remember in stage (my own) one of those people finishing up telling me that my second year would be a snap and slide by with lots of free time - lies, all lies. Witness this, your October-November-December Camel Express! I honestly can not explain it, especially considering that more help is available now. I even offered the position of Editor to Clarke (Bob) Blair in the hope we could get back on the road to regularity. As coveted as the post is he somehow managed to turn it down. Maybe next year, but in the interim we'll share the honor. I must admit that we can no longer promise a monthly issue in your mitts with any punctuality - once every two months is more realistic considering our workloads around here these days. Also, you'll see an additional reason for taking so long to get this finished - artwork by Mary Pat Champeau, late of American Greeting Cards. A nice touch, don't you think?

A double congratulations to Steve and Debbie North for the addition to their family (did you decide on Steven Paul?) and the assignment to Gabon as Country Director. A replacement should arrive soon.

Because of the scheduled siege of Zinder (a.k.a. in-service training

for TERE and YD) in December, my previous and much balley-headed plans for Christmas in Zinder, although a sure blow-out, seem fruitless now. While to me, the thought of staying and getting some work done is attractive, who out of the other people will want to stay for two weeks? So I'm up for grabs - get your bids in quickly. Cass and Mike have already made Maradi sound pretty darned attractive, plus the knowledge that Mary and Keith will also be there amkes most other places suffer from comparison. You've got your work cut out for you; may the best man win.

Zinder, or Little America as we call it, is thriving. What? 12 volunteers too many? Au contraire we have enough for three tables of bridge, a softball team with a coach, two basketball teams and two cheerleaders, an unbeaten American football team, quite a varied book exchange and literary discussion group, a wine-tasting society AND a mobylette gang - The Yéyés. There's romance, pathos, bathos, sweat, love, hate, dedication - and when vols come in from the outer limits, we really swing! The pool's being dug now and we're taking bids for the tennis courts - You're always unpleasant the Day

Center East, for a price of course depending on your place of residence. It's great here. Just ask Nancy Olinger, she comes here every Tabaski for the cure.

Sorry to miss Dick Celeste's visit, but he kindly took the time to answer a few questions which I sent him in a letter. Unfortunately, there was no time for transcription or space this time, so it will be included in the next issue (January - February - March?). No problem as his answers are timeless. It will be interesting to see if the Ad Hoc Committee get an advisory council going strong. It will be equally interesting to see the role they make for themselves in PC/Niger. There's a need for it so give them any help they request.

The stylized cover can be attributed to Madame Djibo, she's really taken an interest in us. Thanks again.

THE CAMEL EXPRESS

ZINDER

REPUBLIQUE DU NIGER

OCTOBER/NOVEMBER/DECEMBER

EDITORS: Earl Bricker, Clarke Blair

TOKEN EDITOR FROM THE WEST: MONTY FUSCO

ART EDITOR: MARY PAT CHAMPEAU

ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE: TERRY HANSON

FACULTY ADVISORS: PHYLLIS DICHTER, SID BLISS

* / * / * / * / * / * / *

The most beautiful thing we can experience is the mysterious. It is the source of all true and art and science. He to whom this emotion is a stranger, who can no longer pause to wonder and stand rapt with awe is as good as dead: his eyes are closed. . . . To know that what is impenetrable to us really exists, manifesting itself as the highest wisdom and the most radiant beauty which our dull faculties can comprehend only in their most primitive forms;

this knowledge, this feeling is at the center of true religiousness. In this sense, in this sense only, I belong in the ranks of devoutly religious men.

- Albert Einstein

* / * / * / * / * / * / * / *

- from GAMES Magazine

A Tom Swifty, as you may know, is a line of dialogue ending with a whimsically appropriate adverb. For example, "I read Games from time to time," Tom said periodically. The following Tom Swifties are lacking the all-important adverbs. We've given you the first letters to help you come up with those we had in mind. "Okay, get your pencils out," Tom said pointedly.

(answers next time)

1. "I just bought a foreign car!" Tom announced T_____.
2. "Nyeah, nyeah, let's have some turtle soup," Tom said M_____.
3. "I forgot what my wife wanted from the store," Tom said L_____.
4. "I'm so happy that I can float," Tom said B_____.
5. "Block that kick!" Tom said D_____.
6. "I've got a code in da nose," Tom said S_____.
7. "Did YOU ever fly a plane?" Tom asked A_____.
8. "My paint canvas is blank," Tom said A_____.
9. "I hate quizzes," Tom said T_____.
10. "This cream is bad," Tom said S_____.
11. "Better order 12 dozen of the blasted things," Tom said G_____.
12. "I always shop here," Tom announced P_____.
13. "Columbus, you were wrong," Tom said F_____.
14. "I prefer unposed photos," Tom said C_____.
15. "It's a copy machine; it's a copy machine," Tom said R_____.
16. "Try on this negligée," Tom suggested T_____.
17. "Let's not cut the Valentine," Tom agreed W_____.

LES YEUX ET LES OREILLES DE NIAMEY

par Mme. Djibo, Secrétaire de Direction

Cher Nouveaux volontaires,

Ici le bureau de la direction que bien d'entre vous connaît ou en parle. Mais comment allez-vous, comment vivez-vous, je n'en sais rien ou plutôt oui : je vois seulement passer des enveloppes fermées de vous avec des écritures nerveuses ou appliquées selon ce qu'il y a sur votre vie dans cette lettre que seulement les directeurs voient. Il y a aussi un Post près de mon bureau avec beaucoup de papiers qui changent tout le temps mais les plus rares sont les cartes de bonjour des volontaires en brousse / voyage. Pourtant, à part la curiosité, il y a ma sympathie, mes tendres sentiments pour les jeunes filles et mon inquiétude amicale pour les volontaires garçons. Comment êtes-vous installés, comment faites-vous vos repas? Peut-être que pendant que les bonnes odeurs s'échappent des cuisines des volontaires-filles, on entend des grands bruits des cuisines de garçons qui essayent, à coup de marteaux, de rendre les aliments plus tendres. . . ? Ou bien je me trompe - une coopération dans ce sens existe au départ peut-être? Les produits alimentaires nigériens sont très variés, vitaminés, puisqu'ils sont consommés tout frais, alors que les autres achetés dans les grands commerces peuvent dater de plusieurs mois. Les idées pour la cuisine ne manquent pas dans le manuel pratique "Cook Book". Même s'il y a un malheureux mélange de recettes, le docteur est là.

NOTES
from
NIAMEY!



Ma vie au bureau de la direction est mouvementée, variée et bien remplie. A part les vases et vases des volontaires il y a aussi "la course aux papiers" anciens ou nouveaux. Les besoins sont différents, nombreux, mais il faut que tout le monde soit satisfait. La directrice est compréhensible, aimable, sévère quand il faut, mais souvent, pour les petites choses, une discussion avec un bon café règle tout. Il y a aussi 4 autres directeurs avec les 4 autres caractères. Les humeurs sont changeantes. Heureusement qu'il y a également les 4 portes de leurs bureaux qui se referment rapidement après que le sourire a disparu. Tout le monde me commande ici mais personne ne donne des ordres - je suis toujours aimablement priée de faire ceci ou cela. Les bureaux de la direction accueillent avec plaisir tous les volontaires et cherchent les solutions possibles aux nombreux problèmes. C'est si agréable de voir les volontaires arriver soucieux et les voir repartir avec les yeux brillants, satisfaits, comme la plupart du temps. Espérant que je pourrai toujours bien faire mon travail, je vous salue toutes et tous très cordialement. A bientôt pour les visa-forms!

Mme Djibo

£ £

One learns of the pain of others by suffering one's own pain. By turning inside oneself, by finding one's own soul. And it is important to know of pain. It destroys our self-pride, our arrogance, our indifference toward others. It makes us aware of how frail and tiny we are and how much we must depend upon the master of the Universe.

FROM THE DOC...

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Respondents - Thirteen persons responded. Nine are female, two male, and two cannot or will not tell.

Time lost due to illness - Four reported no time lost due to illness. Seven reported one or two illnesses causing them to miss work. Two reported three or more episodes.

Antimalarials - Ten reported always taking them. Two usually take them. One takes them only during the rainy season. Five have had what was probably malaria (including the two who occasionally forget).

Slow or irregular supplies - noted by 6 of the respondents

Lack of on-site visits - " " 4 " " "

Infrequent health education - " " 2 " " "

Lack of PC nurse

Birth control pills

Birth control pills . . . 3 Just if group advised, aldamin, aldamin

Condoms

One said he was a kid from One also

44-38861-10000

CONCLUSIONS: The results of this study suggest that the use of a single, standardized, and validated instrument to assess the quality of life of patients with a specific disease can be a valuable tool for the clinician and the researcher.

- with only 13 responses.

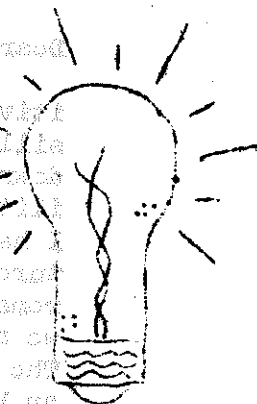
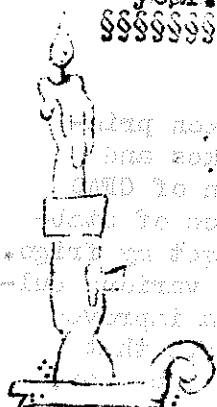
with only 13 responses.

More notes from the good doctor:

1. Since three Niger PCV's had what was probably meningitis last year, we're vaccinating for it this year. The vaccine is single dose, relatively painless and free of side effects, and is good for at least two or three years. Since it does not travel well, it will be available only in Niamey. Yearly epidemics occur every springtime, so you should get your vaccination before the beginning of the new year.
2. Schedule of schistosomiasis skin testing: Volunteers in fisheries and those regularly exposed to lakes and rivers should have a preliminary (baseline) test when they arrive in country, then follow up tests every 6 months. Volunteers with occasional exposure should be tested yearly; those with possible exposure at end of service.
3. If you obtain medical care up-country, you are reminded to send a note describing the episode to the doctor so that your medical records will be complete.
4. Immunization reminders were sent out to all volunteers in Sept. These list the shots you will need between now and the end of the year. If you have not yet received one, please contact the office.

~~~~~

Since the CE is deluged each month with witty and philosophical diatribes of all varieties, we've found it necessary to found a new column in which we can share the thoughts of our more profound thinkers. We've edited out all the swearing and cursing and rude comments about the administration, but even the G-rated stuff that's left is somewhat entertaining.



FROM EN BROUSSE

FROM EN VILL

Dear Earl:

Well, how's choses? I hope things have gotten back to normal for you and that all your extended family have found homes. . . . I rolled into what will be my home for a while on Sunday the 30th after a 30 hour taxi brousse ride to Niamey which offered many cross-cultural experiences. I have Kathy's old house, which looks like a tornado hit it. I'm not sure if it hit before or after the thief stole all the furniture. En tout cas, I did bring some paint from Niamey so I'll give it a shot at making it a house. Actually all goes quite well although Tilabery turned off the water this week. I do have a lot to be thankful for. I've got Jesse Colin Young on the tape deck, good food on the stove, a good job and a nice town with lots of possibilities for secondary projects. . . . Say hello to all your kids in Zinder. . .

- George -

Olé Olléléwa!

Olléléwa, 12 k's across the sand off the road to Tanout, truly knows how to welcome a PCV. After dinner at my chef's house my first night in town, I was escorted to the large myrna tree at the center of town under which virtually the whole town had gathered. I was offered a comfy chair in front of the crowd and after seating myself, the chef, dressed in his best baby-blue boubou and purple turban, introduced me as an American who would be working in the dispensaire, especially with malnourished babies. That, at least, was all I understood of his ten-minute talk in Hausa.

more. . .

En brousse-En Ville cont.

At intervals, the crowd responded with a collective "To". Then I was asked to say a few words. After two minutes of awkward silence, I thought of something to say and how to put it into French. After each short sentence of mine, the chef translated at length. I managed to explain the schedule of the P.I. and the importance of slow weaning of babies and how happy I was to be working in Olléléwa. The town meeting ended with an hour of handshaking, sanning and ina-ini-ing.

The next day we went to nearby Guezzewa to meet the chef de village. After much hand shaking and baby-holding the chef dragged me away to the land rover in which I was whisked off to the tiny brousse village of Gangara. Feeling very much like a presidential hopeful, I was again greeted to a round of handshaking and baby-holding by a crowd of eager mothers. . . . By the time we left for home, driving into the setting sun, my dress was soaked, but my spirits were high. Thus ends another day in the life of Maggie, the brousse volunteer.

- MAGGIE -

Dear Bob and Earl:

I hope you're happy having left us in this god-forsaken primitive cultureless hole with only 4 places to buy cold cokes and silly beignet ladies on every corner and a mere extension of CFAO down the street. Lord, en brousse is trying on one's sense of stability not to mention taxing on the brain. I have yet to get my frigo. I have been too busy absorbing local color, assimilating various cultures and frequenting the "kasuwas." Oh yes, my Hausa has improved remarkably since you left. We have a "garçon", imperialists that we are, and he speaks no French, it is like working with the deaf. The sign language ceases to be effective and becomes tri- to after an hour or so, so I have picked up a few key phrases like "here", "there" and "come early tomorrow- ko?" However, I feel the impending need for a frigo-- as we discussed (Bob), I can't palate gin and tonics sans ice. I do have this idea, it came upon me in a moment of intense cultural sensitivity, to freeze the gin and disguise it as ice cubed. When the numerous Al-hadjis come to faire the old visite, I can appear to be drinking tonic on the rocks. C'est bien ça, huh? . . . . Well, as I sit here by the light of the lantern (good night John Boy) I will close by saying that we shall soon return to the big city seeing as I have no gas bottle. I ask you, how can I make rice and sauce and quelque choses comme ça without a gas bottle? So fret not, it won't be long. Please say hi to the gang if they're still fixtures chez-vous. Please tell Clement he must come first chance he gets. I spotted a herd of tired looking cows this morning. To, Sannu (I'm so brousse.)

- MARY PAT, HATAIYE -

Dear Earl: . . . . Why is B.P. 2, CEG N'Guigni, not bursting at the seams with mail from Zindor? Why hasn't a ton camel caravan arrived from the West bearing incense and myrrh and wise men and letters? Has an epidemic of writer's cramp affected your arrondissement? ANSWERS! I want ANSWERS! . . . . N'Guigni is far out (some would have you believe at the ends of the earth. . . .) - a sandy white town with insufferable daily temperatures and balmy evenings that make you gald you're alive. We arrived here via your splendid abode and the road cast held innumerable wonders. We stayed in Diffa long enough to pick up two funny creatures named Paul and Dave, and then hightailed it for the Dunes of Tal where we spent a lovely evening getting



En Brousse-En Ville more yet

drunken guitar, snakes slithering in the sand, (me slithering in the sand-old ways die hard.) . . . Steph and I are holed up at the CEC- in big dirty houses with splendid views of the director's house in front of us and a Toubou encampment behind. The town is a potpourri of peoples and languages- Kanowis, Hausas, Arabs, Toubous, Chadians; a trip to the market might entail using currencies and languages of three different countries. It's exotic as hell.

Hope you're settling back into the swing of things- helping all these neo-Zionites adjust to the demands and delights of cosmopolitan living. Out here we sit around a lot, and sweat, and search the sand for viable cigarette butts with which to clog our lungs and while away the hours. . . . The cherubim return to school next week- a phenomenon I anticipate with less than unbounded glee. But they're purportedly hard working little people so I guess I will give them a chance. ( I'm really excited. ) Be very well. Write me a long letter with all the gossip you can possibly get your hands on. Start a couple rumors even, see if I care. (Wanna come out to N'Guigni for New Years? Take your reservations early.)

Dear Earl:

. . . I was really glad to hear from Nina, although I think the moon would be more accessible than N'Guigni for her New Years party.

Dear Earl:

Thanks for visiting, it was nice to have you at Tabalac if only for a short time. . . I've not been able to go to Tahoua and see the gang as I'd like- too much work being the headman. I don't know if I like being the headman- too many responsibilities and and headaches and worries. No wonder I have a receding hairline. . . Housing has worked out excellently. We are in a large concession of a man, Yacoubu, who is related to one of the fishermen. They gave Guy and I a two room small banco house to put our belongings in. Other fishermen also store their belongings in our hut so it's communal, but what the hell. I came here to live with the natives, didn't I? . . . The lake at Kao is quite different from the beautiful sandy clear water at Tabalac. Here the lake is covered with lily-pads and large white flowers opening in the morning and closing in the afternoon. Actually, that plus the large diversity of birds makes my biology half jump for joy. (trite) The water is full of dead trees, grasses, microbes etc. Mariana tells me they're treating a case of schisto at the dispensaire now. So I'll not enter the water here if possible. Guy bathes in the lake water. I think he's trying for a U.S. Government paid trip to Miami or Frankfurt. Hmmm, excuse me, I'm going for a little dip. That Guy, wiyo garo shi. . . The old cocktail question "read any good books lately" I just finished a simple adventure book called Imperial 109. Full of excitement, hero figures, bad guys get their just dastardly ending, hero gets girl etc. I don't recommend it.

The other day I was napping under a tree near the lake and something fell on my chest. I opened my eyes to investigate and there was a snake. It was only a harmless tree snake, and very small so it didn't fluster me. It surprised me how casually I reacted, I should have been full of shock. ( I don't think that's the real word I want to use but it'll do. ) . . . As always,

- TERRY -



It has been my feeling for sometime that sports-minded American poets living in the third world have been shunned by an unappreciative literary world. It is with those thoughts that I am asking for space in each month's OE entitled simply "SPOR-E S OF THE DESERT."

It is also with the above thoughts that I created the first "SPOR-E". I would like the first "SPOR-E" dedicated to all the Y.O. volunteers who are giving their time and effort teaching the shot-put in order that we all may have a happier and safer environment in which to live.

Voici le SPOR-E:

### CRAM-CRAM DEFENSE OR WINNING IS EVERYTHING

Cram-cram in particular  
is pretty bad for sports,  
Just running down an errant pass  
and they sauté upon your shorts.

At first their not offensive moves,  
Their quick offensive moves,  
But when you mount your own attack,  
Your defense vous behooves.

A patterned desert sand-like stance  
Their sticky zone defense,  
Good Lord, they're in your jock strap  
A weak spot for us gents.

You try and pick apart their wall  
But their tenacious little hands  
Have signaled for the half time show  
On your socks are the half-time hands

As you parade across the court,  
Vous faites une strategic plan,  
Vous essayerez remove them  
avec your shooting hand.

Not to be outdone by force,  
The 2nd half begins anew,  
Their game plan now is obvious:  
They're out to embarrass you.

They're sticking to their game plan,  
Their staunch defensive set,  
They're crawling up your tricot  
Just to defense your tote.

The score has become so lopsided,  
You fear the end is near,  
It calls for drastic action  
But you've got to persevere.

You call time-out pour dicuter  
Une bonne idée vous avez besoin,  
For when the whistle blows again,  
Doux minutes doth remain.

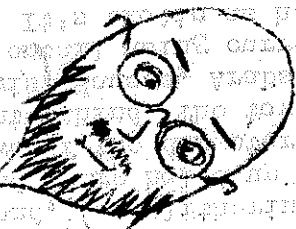
You cautiously move on the court  
and prudently remove,  
A tricot full of zone defense  
And now you're in the groove.

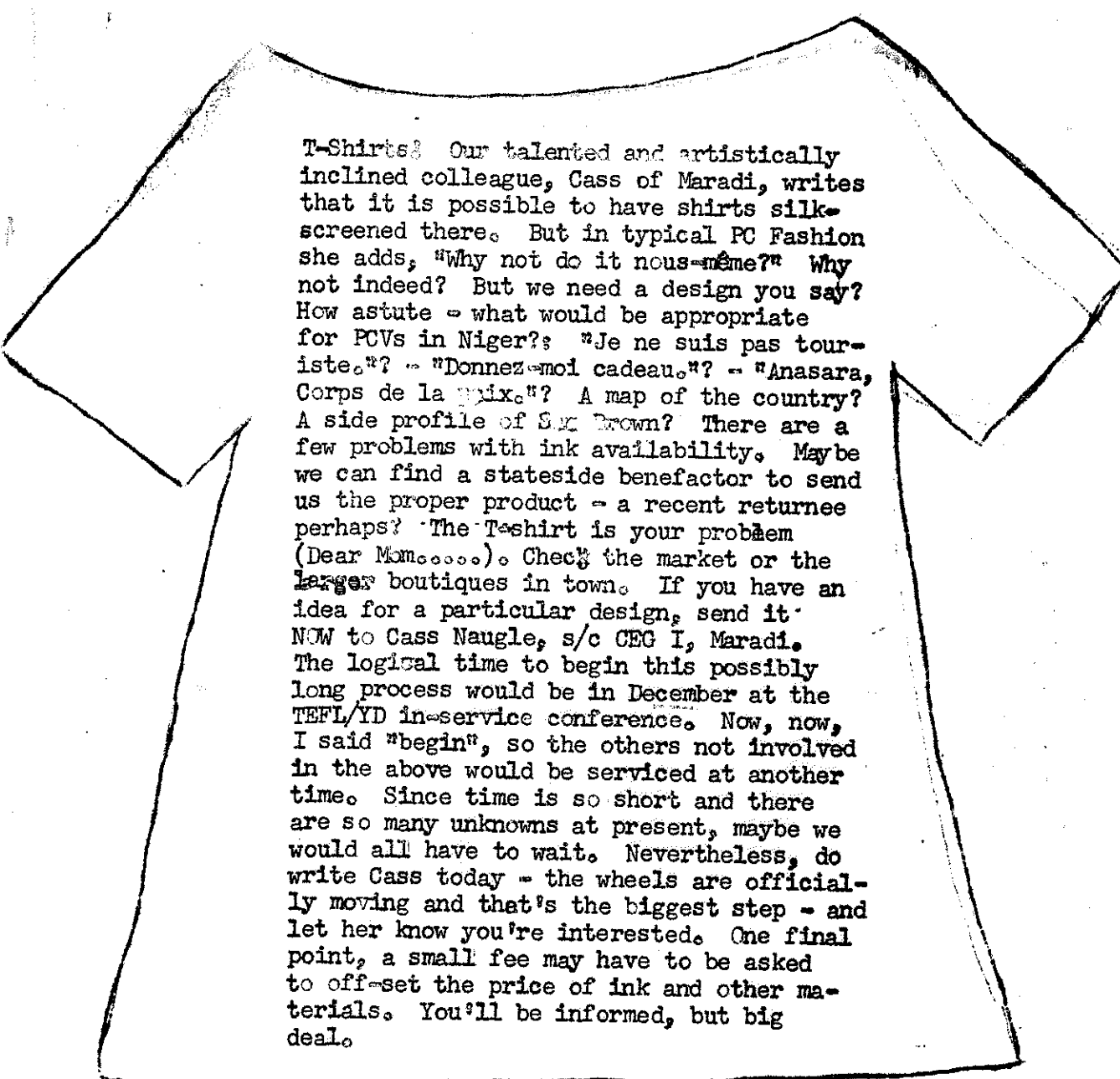
The Cram-cram calls a time out  
To complain to the referees;  
But when the game begins again,  
You feel like Lloyd Free.

Your movement Now are graceful  
A rare moment in modern sports,  
As you glide feint and move with ease,  
Without your prickly shorts.

Now granted there are sideline clowns,  
Who are laughing at the sight,  
But, Hey! I take pride in knowing Cram  
That I won my game tonight.

- Mike "Dad" Laugle -





T-Shirts? Our talented and artistically inclined colleague, Cass of Maradi, writes that it is possible to have shirts silk-screened there. But in typical PC Fashion she adds, "Why not do it nous-même?" Why not indeed? But we need a design you say? How astute - what would be appropriate for PCVs in Niger? "Je ne suis pas touriste,"? - "Donnez-moi cadeau,"? - "Anasara, Corps de la paix,"? A map of the country? A side profile of Sgt Brown? There are a few problems with ink availability. Maybe we can find a stateside benefactor to send us the proper product - a recent returnee perhaps? The T-shirt is your problem (Dear Mom.....). Check the market or the larger boutiques in town. If you have an idea for a particular design, send it NOW to Cass Naugle, s/c CEG I, Maradi. The logical time to begin this possibly long process would be in December at the TEFL/YD in-service conference. Now, now, I said "begin", so the others not involved in the above would be serviced at another time. Since time is so short and there are so many unknowns at present, maybe we would all have to wait. Nevertheless, do write Cass today - the wheels are officially moving and that's the biggest step - and let her know you're interested. One final point, a small fee may have to be asked to off-set the price of ink and other materials. You'll be informed, but big deal.

Do you see the story? Do you see anything? It seems to me I am trying to tell you a dream - making a vain attempt, because no relation of a dream can convey the dream-sensation, that commingling of absurdity, surprise, and bewilderment in a tremor of struggling revolt, that notion of being captured by the incredible which is of the very essence of dreams. . . .

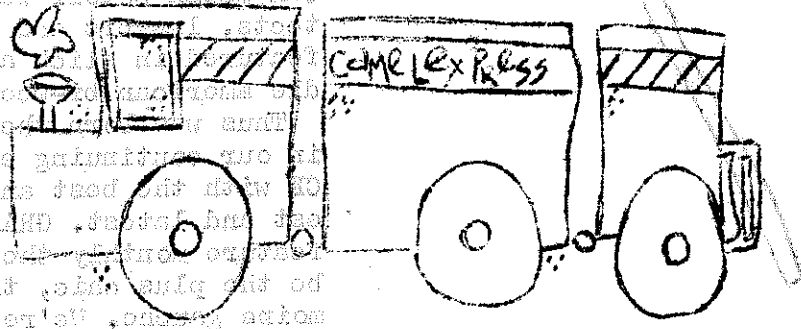
He was silent for a while.

. . . No, it is impossible; it is impossible to convey the life-sensation of any given epoch of one's existence - that which makes its truth; its meaning - its subtle and penetrating essence. . . . It is impossible. We live as we dream - alone. . .

- Joseph Conrad  
Heart of Darkness

How much does it cost to taxi-brousse it around Niger? It's always a good thing to know, and we'd like to have it on record. But as do so many things, it depends on your response. We've restricted ourselves to only the major cities and surrounding towns; usually those where vols are living. So YOU go down to the auto-gard and ask those few questions that will probably take you no more than 15 minutes and then send us the information in time for the next issue. One thing to remember, sometimes the price may go up or down for the return trip, so you might ask to be sure.

- Tessaoua
- Magaria
- Matamaye
- Guidimoni
- Ollielelewa
- Bandé
- Tanout
- Birni n'Kazoe
- Agadez
- Maradi
- Gouré
- Mainé-Soroa
- Diffa
- N'Guigmi



- Tahoua
- Tanout
- AGADEZ: Zinder
- Say
- Téra
- Cethéye
- NIAMEY: Ouallam
- M'Labéri
- Ayacu
- Dosso
- Parc "W"
- Tahoua
- Filingué
- Maradi

- Niamey
- Guidan Roudji
- Madarounfa
- Dakoro
- Mayahi
- Tessaoua
- Aguié
- Zinder
- Madaoua

- Keita
- Bouza
- Tabalac
- TAHOVA: Kao
- Tamaské
- Badaguicheri
- Madaoua
- Maradi
- Guidan Roudji

- Gaya
- Birni N'Gaoure
- Madaoua
- Dogondoutchi
- Birni N'Konni
- Tahoua

- N'Guigmi
- Mainé-Soroa
- DIFFA: Gouré
- Zinder

There's been interest expressed in compiling a Niger Travel Guide. Well, why not? It couldn't be an overnight affair since there's so much to say. This is serious even if the tone implies otherwise. A PCV from Niamey has offered to do that city up right, but the rest of our country is up to you - those who live there. So, now just pre-

pare for the eventual request. The following items should be considered: market day(s), transportation costs and availability, unique products, sights & sounds, neighboring villages and day visits, hotels, restaurants or lodging, entertainment, ethnic make-up and history or the area. Think about it - it's as much for you as for anyone.

How much does it cost to have a book done with  
a cover design? I'll be glad to do it  
if you want. A FARGE IS BORNE  
What is the cost of a book?

Last week, while thumbing through the latest issue of "Pipe, Tube and Floatball" ( a respected plumbing trade publication ). I happened onto a "DEWAR'S PROFILE", complete with dashing young renaissance woman and a list of her accomplishments, favorite colons, fluencies, etc.

Well, I thought, these sporty people don't have anything on a progressive, development minded Peace Corps Volunteer. Surely an upstanding American youngster slobbering over a beer at the Hotel Central can match savoir faire with these architects, lawyers and hommes des affaires featured in slick ads on the pages of middle american bi-weeklies.

Thus was born the latest monthly feature in our continuing effort to embellish the CE with the best and brightest, the greatest and latest. GRAND FLAG PROFILES will feature monthly the person we consider to be the plus chic, the tres au courant, the moins gauche. We're sure you'll see a little of yourself in these exposés and we're sure their recent accomplishments and personal philosophy will inspire you to more meaningful secondary projects.

Grand Flag "Non-Doors" Profile

BORN: Dumptruck, Utah 1956

HOME: Zindor, Niger, Afrique de l'Ouest

FLUENCIES: Muckleshoot Indian, Hausa, English (of sorts)

Hobbies and Interests: Finding ways to have an "African Experience", going to the french store for canned tunafish, waiting for mail from home.

RECENT ACCOMPLISHMENT: Worked two days last month.

CURRENT PROJECT: Working three days next month.

RAISON D'ETRE: To be the eyes and ears and conscience of the American ideal and Peace Corps/Niamoy.

FAVORITE PLACE: Hotel Central Zindor. "The brochettes are yummy."

SPARE TIME: Avoiding TEFL conversations, lifting 66 centilitres.

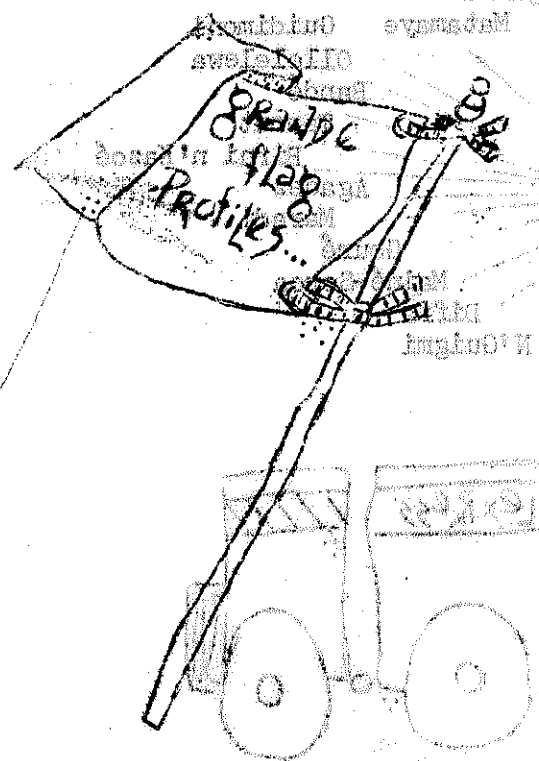
LAST BOOK READ: Essential French Grammar by Seymour Resnick.

Memorable Quote: Hurzy doots and doazy doats and little lambsty divey; Kiddly divey too, wouldn't you?

BOISSON PREFEREE: Grand Flag. "Grand Flag is definitely a philosopher's beer . . . a person reflective, Kierkegaard reading beer."

NAME: ( Ed note: Do you think we're crazy enough to print this hoople's name? Hey, I have an idea. Let's have a "guess the slug's name" contest. Send entry and 5000CFA to Camel Express and we'll print the winner's name in our next edition. Until then--To Madallah.)

that city up right but the rest of our country is up to you - those who live there - so now just pre-



## GRE Exam - Any Takers?

GRE Exam - Any Takers?

There are always some Niger ICVs who have not yet taken the Graduate Record Exam and need to do so. The exam is offered in Niamey five times a year, but that test center isn't always convenient for all concerned. So, a letter has been written to the company requesting a supplementary test center be established in Zinder for the April 26 test date only. No response as yet, but a precedent was set last year so why wait? The man with applications is Donn Burleigh at the Cultural Center. The easiest form of payment is probably a blank check from Mom and Dad - cost: \$74 for the aptitude test. If you do want to take it in Zinder in April, include a letter of explanation so you can be assigned properly.

Test Dates: Jan. 12, Apr. 26,  
10 June 14  
Final Registration Deadline:  
(corresponding to above order):  
Dec. 8, March 17, May 5

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... (and others) ...

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| Year | Percent |
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| 1950 | 7.0     |
| 1960 | 8.5     |
| 1970 | 8.0     |
| 1980 | 12.5    |



48  
from the  
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\_\_\_\_\_

## PEACE CORPS FELLOWS

To date, eight returned PCVs have been selected to participate in the 1978 Peace Corps Fellows Program. Three of the eight began training last October.

The Program is designed to identify, recruit and train former volunteers for overseas PC staff positions. Following selection, 12 months of on-the-job training is given in Washington followed by 30-month overseas assignments as associate Peace Corps Directors. Training is tailored to individual needs and may include working as a country desk officer, programmer, trainer, placement/recruitment officer, or administrative officer. While in Washington, Fellows may also elect to take special courses in renewable energy, health education, auto mechanics, forestry, agriculture, or in other appropriate technologies.

The original Fellows Program began in 1966 and ran until 1970. During those four years, 40 RPCVs worked as management training interns in Washington for 12 months and then served for 30 months as APCDs. Of the 40, 22 extended for second 30-month tours; seven became country Directors. The new Program, which was revived in 1977, has placed a special emphasis on identifying minorities and women for positions of potential leadership.

Something to think about if you're COSing and would like a career in Peace Corps.

//////////

A recent study has shown that the USA is way behind the rest of the industrial nations (and others) in its study of foreign languages. Today, only 15 o/o of US high school students study another tongue, and a much smaller fraction attain any degree of mastery.

==/=/=/=/=/=/=/=/=/=/=/=/=/=/=/=/=

- A Rebuttal to the Unknown Author Of Okra Which Was Contributed by Eileen Peca -

In less than a week, I learned to properly prepare three delicious okra dishes, better known as gumbo. Let me suggest a few things. Fried okra in butter is unbearable because the ultimate is one slimy greasy mess. A good knife or vegetable grater should be used to slice and cut the okra into smaller digestible pieces. This will minimize any possibilities of death from choking. What did you boil the okra with, "d'eau simple"?

Listen, the next time you visit Niamey, feel welcome chez moi. I will share with you and the unknown author my recipes for FETRI DETSI, GUMBO SOUP, and CHICKEN, FISH AND SHRIMP GUMBO. You may be clever enough to coax me into the kitchen!

- Ruth-Marie Chambers

& & & &

WANTED: Unfortunately my old camera broke down during my vacation. It was an old friend I hated to lose. The Kodak 126 Instamatic was purchased in 1971 for less than \$10 - a machine way ahead of its time. PLEASE, if anyone has one let me buy it from you. Help... Ruth-Marie

Important Info: Did you know that there is a charter flight out of Air Benin which leaves Parakou for Cotonou for a nominal fee of 6,750 CFA? You may want to consider your options the next time around - the train or a comfortable 45-minute ride. Bien sur!

Ruth-Marie

NOTHING TELLS US MORE ABOUT THE CHARACTER OF A MAN THAN THE THINGS HE MAKES FUN OF.

- Goethe

## THE NOT-YOUR-USUAL VACATION



Imagine it, a few points up in the eastern sky is the last sliver of the moon surrounded by just the slightest pink glow which tells you that the sun will soon be in the moon's place. In the midst of a dry river bed and some trees and shrubs which in turn lie in the midst of great, boulder-strewn, Saharan nothingness, a figure stirs, relighting last night's campfire and "putting the water on".

Soon his three companions and he will be eating a corn meal gruel, coffee and tea and preparing themselves and their camels for the day's journey. The faces of the two white men are sunburnt red, and their diet of late hasn't strayed much beyond dates, *bonks* (goat cheese - ed. note, Thanks, Ray, for the explanation.), corn and wheat gruel, rice and macaroni. There has been no ice cream, movies, music, watches, border guards, bosses, little kids, masses of people, hurricane lamps or motor vehicles. It's just been them, Mahmoud, the guide, Adams, the Camel-driver, Acura, Azunkit and Ngilimas, the camels, some wild monkeys, gazelles, rabbits, damans (French for I don't know what), the usual dogs and donkeys and a few Tuareg villagers.

Doesn't sound like your usual Lomé, Abidjan, Ouaga vacation junket, does it? Well, it wasn't. There were no late parties, we were in bed an hour after sunset and up before the sun. We didn't ride any trains or walk the beach, but we did climb the highest peak in Niger (Indoukal-N-Taghès) and had the time of our lives riding camels across a small section of the Sahara desert. There were no great African cities or the throbbing of people in the streets, just the wind serenely blowing through our clothes, making the only noise for miles around. AND WE LOVED EVERY MINUTE OF IT!! We wanted an unusual, restful, exciting, thrilling vacation - one we could remember with satisfaction - and we got it!

At the beginning we weren't so sure. We got to Agadez, not sure if we could make it to Tabelat (a Tuareg village about 75 miles NE of Agadez) because there are no taxi brousses that go up, just occasional trucks for one of the services. Fortunately Hans (you from the summer '78 stage will remember him from Dosso) was in Agadez and told us that the UNCC truck would be going up in a few days and that he had found a guide for us. GREAT, until we met him, a 16-year-old boy no bigger than a Geme student. GREAT, until we got into the truck to find it had no starting system, just a clutch that could be popped. We were able to continue only by repeating the immortal words of Paul Holmes. . . .

"GO FOR IT."

We arrived in Tabelat and to the Northwest about 7 or 8 k's away was the fabulous Bagzane. The Bagzane seems to be a giant cliff stretching STRAIGHT UP about 500 meters out of the desert floor. . . just like in the movies about the lost civilization - absolutely stunning. And when there was a sunset. . . GODDEDD!!

In a few days our 16-year-old camel-driver (our luck was improving) arrived and off we went to climb the Bagzane. There are only three "doors" up into the Bagzane and none of them are accessible to motor vehicles - only to man and animals. The door is a sort of cut in the cliff which starts at the base of the Bagzane and ascends the 500



around a natural spring called Ighalabelabene.

Once at the top, the Bagzane is covered with hills and small mountains, all of which are completely barren, and covered with rocks and boulders. In between the hills are little valleys and dry river beds, called Koris, which run only after a rain. On the edges of the koris and in the low-lying plains where water collects are trees, scrub-brush and grass, and the contrast between the green and barrenness is striking. Occasionally too, along the koris, are gardening villages which use camels to draw water from the wells to irrigate the fields.

We spent three days going north into the Bagzane, in order to reach our "final objective" - Indoukal-N-Taghes, at 2,022 meters the highest peak in Niger. On the third night we camped by Eghar Ghar, a seasonal lake which has been without water for three years now. This lake is just south of the mountain and made a good launching point for our assault. As we were already at an altitude of about 1,500 meters it wasn't much of a climb up, but the climb was difficult in that there really is no path for the climb - just rocks and boulders everywhere.

Most of the other nights we spent camping near Geltas, Geltas are pools of water which last year round, and which are often tucked in between cliffs and rocks in areas which might be called grottos.

The gelta I found the most attractive was one at the foot of the Bagzane called Amalaka. This gelta was perhaps 150 yards long and about 5 yards wide and the deep cold water was collected in between two sheer cliffs which rose up about 500 feet on each side. The water was plenty deep enough for swimming, and if you make it to the other side, you climb over some boulders and then there is another giant pool - FANTASTIC!

Our whole trip in the Bagzane was six days. Each day was similar in that we got up at sunrise, ate, hiked and/or rode camelback for a few hours, made camp, ate lunch, siested, a few more hours on the road, and then another camp for the night. The best part of each day was the peace, quiet, serenity, lack of pressure, bosses, responsibilities, not knowing what day or time it was - just moving and feeling the moment.

Of course for six days of camping we had to spend almost 5 days in Agadez and 4 in Tabelat coming and going, waiting for rides and such - and we were lucky. We had written friends up north in advance and told them we were coming, but I'd plan on 3 to 4 weeks if you can, and that way you don't have to rush or be in a quandry about getting somewhere at a certain time.

As far as cost was concerned, the camels and guides were 1,000 cfa per person and camel per day, which meant we spent 5,000 cfa a day for six days. We were told by some French people to only go with the camel driver and not with the guide, but we hired both and were glad we did. They were much happier the whole week having a friend along (By the time we finished we knew a little more Tamachek and they a little more English-especially Kristie Martin's FAVORITE word.)

We bought all the food for us and the guides. For the trip we bought a sack each of corn meal and wheat meal (the guide made us bread) salt, two tins of coffee, 1 large can of Nido, 4 packets of macaroni, 2 kilos of rice, several cans of canned mackerel and sardines, tomato sauce, a sack of dates, four cans of corned beef, and sugar and tea (the camel-driver had the pot and glasses). We also brought 4 5-litre water jugs, sleeping bags and blankets (we used them; it gets cold at night in the mountains), iodine (we boiled or treated all our water as it came out of the geltas), medical kit, one spare change of clothes, turbans (or hats), pots, pans, glasses, utensils, etc. and a few other things. Most of this MUST BE BOUGHT in Agadez. We also got cheese and once some fresh corn and tomatoes in the villages. You can now see why we rented two riding camels and one pack camel. (Oh, don't forget the camera and PLENTY of film - I went through four rolls in no time.)

Air Niger. I've done the Zinder road enough to be smart enough to fly.) and all the jewelry we bought in Agadez (Dare I say it's the best in West Africa.) Counting those expenses and a few others, I guess we went through about 75,000 cfa in three weeks- a lot of money, but it was vacation, and who was counting?

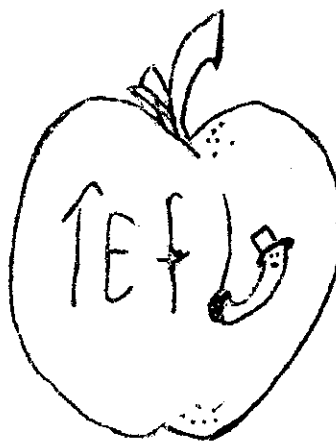
In conclusion I'd say it's not a trip most people would like, because it takes a lot of physical effort and patience, but those of you of adventurous heart will love it. We heartily recommend writing one of the Agadez volunteers in advance so you'll have a head start - and what else can I say but GOOD LUCK!!

~ Ray Jussaume, Dosso ~

\* / \* / \* / \* / \* / \* / \* / \* / \* / \* / \* / \* / \* / \* / \* / \*

From a PCV teaching at the ENS in Abidjan, Ivory Coast:

"...there is too much of a tendency to fall into the 'model trap' - beginning teachers are shown a model and led to believe that it is the only way to teach languages. This leads rather quickly to an intellectual rut which I think ultimately causes many good teachers, or potentially good teachers, to leave the profession. What I think we can train teachers to see... is that teaching EFL can be a very dynamic process; one through which the teacher can grow continually and modify his teaching behavior."



What interests me most from this letter is the "intellectual rut" when teaching becomes nothing other than drudgery and classes resemble more ritual than learning.

Why is it that we fall into these ruts? Perhaps it is an inability first of all to realize that any alternatives exist, and then to see the ones which are possible. Maybe we feel that we have little spare time to devote to this process of change and fall back on what we already know instead of trying to tap that potential unknown.

How can we grow continually and modify our teaching behavior to keep from falling into this rut? In a book called Discovering Your Teaching Self, the authors identify seven stages in what they call a "process for change".

#### Stage One - Self-awareness

This stage refers to your understanding of your "real" and "ideal" teacher - the teacher you are and the teacher you would like to be. Then comes an awareness of the factors which determine your behavior in the classroom and prevent you from achieving your ideal: past experiences, feelings, values, beliefs, attitudes, perceptions of your teaching self, goals, aspirations and outside influences.

#### Stage Two - Data collection

You need data for comparing your ideals and your actions. Evaluations of the kind we used during stage which are objective and do not attach values are useful. Also at the end of this section is an activity which could be helpful in collecting data.

#### Stage Three - Data interpretation and Pattern identification

The data must be examined with particular attention to identifying patterns in your teaching. Once patterns have been identified, you can begin to look at what the patterns mean in terms of effects and

#### Stage Four - Generating and choosing alternatives

Once you discover areas in which you wish to implement change, you need to identify the possible alternative behaviors and then choose one for experimentation. You can then draw up a "self-contract", or a resolution that you write for yourself to try new behavior.

#### Stage Five - Experimenting with the new behavior

Try the new behavior to see if it is comfortable for you and to see if the alternative meets your needs. Try the behavior long enough so that it is given a fair chance.

#### Stage Six - Adoption or rejection of the alternative

After trying the alternative, you are able to adopt it because it is congruent with your ideas and comfortable for you OR reject it as not beneficial.

#### Stage Seven -

A behavior is not permanently adopted or rejected. A decision may be reconsidered any number of times. To take into account these changes, you can begin stage one over again and repeat the cycle.

It might be useful for you to ask one of your colleagues to observe you while you are experimenting with your new alternative. Tell them what you are doing and ask for feedback on how the lesson went.

In this way the teacher becomes an experimenter, trying out different things in the class and checking their effects. As an experimenter, the teacher is less likely to take classroom successes or failures as a reflection upon his/her personality and will attribute these more to the nature of the behavior experimented with.

The following is an activity from Discovering Your Teaching Self which is designed to: 1) gather data over a significant period of time concerning your thoughts, feelings and actions in teaching; 2) discover areas in your teaching that call for change; 3) begin to take the necessary steps for making the indicated changes.

The directions are to complete the following sentence stems, leaving out ~~any~~ that are inappropriate for you. Be concise and to the point.

1. I feel good about myself when my students.....
2. I feel bad about myself when my students.....
3. I feel good about myself when other teachers.....
4. I feel bad about myself when other teachers.....
5. I feel discouraged about teaching when.....
6. I feel encouraged about teaching when.....
7. I feel I have been successful when.....
8. I feel I have wasted students' time when.....
9. I feel the students trust me when.....
10. I feel the students are learning when.....
11. I feel I am learning when.....
12. I feel the students are not learning when.....
13. I feel in a rut when.....
14. I am glad to be a teacher when.....
15. I lose my temper when.....
16. I know it's time to put my foot down when.....
17. I feel used when.....
18. I like having classroom visitors when.....
19. I am threatened when.....
20. I am most patient when.....
21. I am least patient when.....
22. I am most at ease in school when.....
23. I am least at ease in school when.....
24. Students make me nervous when.....

25. I react to other teachers.....
26. I react to authority.....
27. When I am in authority.....
28. When people agree with me.....
29. When people disagree with me.....
30. Two things I can improve on as a teacher.....
31. Three things I do exceptionally well as a teacher.....
32. My students would describe me as.....
33. My students' description of me makes me feel.....
34. The student I like best.....
35. The student I like least.....
36. I listen.....
37. I learn from my students.....

Once you have completed the sentence stems, you can code the sentences into one of the following categories: those that make you proud (P), those that make you comfortable (C), those that make you uncomfortable (U), those that you feel you have control over (CO), those that you feel you have no control over (NC), and those that you wish were different (D).

Repeat this activity at least four or five times over a period of a month or two. Do not read your past responses before you repeat this activity since that might influence your responses. Then you can read all the responses, looking especially for similarities, differences, what areas are most satisfying, least satisfying, and which ones appear to be in need of modification.

- thanks for the above article to the TEFL ..  
Editor of the Gabon Gab -

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### STAGEFRIGHT

Well, it's been over for almost a month. I don't know how many times I thought it would never end. At times it was so pénible. I know I could never live through another one.

Philadelphia--nervous as shit. Is everyone else as excited and unsure as I am? If they are, they sure don't show it. Enough--no more forms, no more lectures, no more talk about about wellness and coping with stress. I love you Lola, but you talk too much.

So we're at the airport, sitting in the bar, catching the end of my last televised ball game until I terminate, and a rerun of F-Troop of all things. 747--large enough for the collective craziness of 65 PCTs. Crazy Dave, heavily under the influence, gets down and boogies, in spite of the efforts of all the hostesses--Sir, the seat belt light is on!


Paris, why did I bother? I should have slept. DC-10. Hooch-boy. Safe take-off and landing (twice.) Arrival in Nismey to the cheers of the real PCVs. (I later found out it was the women they were applauding for.) Sweat--it is hot. Bussed to the Uni--first impressions--g oats everywhere and lizards doing push-ups. Introductory remarks by the directors and a whopping two hours asleep before more lectures. What am I getting myself into?

Then the routine--French classes ad nauseum. Cross culture. And my favorite village technology, making low cost energy bars, by hand, out of cow shit. Walking 45 minutes to that stupid farm, grubbing around with hoes and rakes, getting blisters and dehydrated. But in spite of all that, having a good time, albeit not wishing to admit it. Lee, touched perhaps too much by the sun, singing "Jingle Balls."??

And the routine set in--you went to French at least one hour a day and skipped VT and XC as much as possible. Around then the faces started becoming people--what a goldmine. On my floor alone we had Dave Gibbs, Wayne Butscher, Pete Cowan, Klinger (eek-eek, ungh-ungh), Frankis Lusby, and Kevin King (not a stogaire, but he fit in well.) It was like freshman year in college all over again--the same stupid shit we all thought we dumped years ago--leaving your door open while you "study", ready and waiting for anybody to stick his head in. The usual ca-ca--fed up with studying, lackanookie, and a new one--illness!! Our champs were Pete and Wayne. Pete for his 100 decibel attack of the dry heaves at 6 AM. Better than a Baby Ben, and more than one fellow I know of got sympathetic vibes. Wayne, maybe he wasn't the sickest, but when he got it everyone knew about it.

So in spite of the the heat we continued struggling--never enough money or free time and the food consistently awful. Couscous, rice spaghetti with peanut oil sauce, couscous, couscous, couscous. Then 1. French stage was over. We did our live-~~ins~~ and started technical stage. I don't know about the other programs, but TEFL stage was a bitch. And then that was over.

T. Doneker



DECEMBER: Eileen Peca (7), Jan  
Turner (12), Carol Pint (19),  
Clark Fleege (21), Becky  
Raymond (25), Paul Larnier (27),  
Robert Taylor (27), Katie  
Rorison (31).

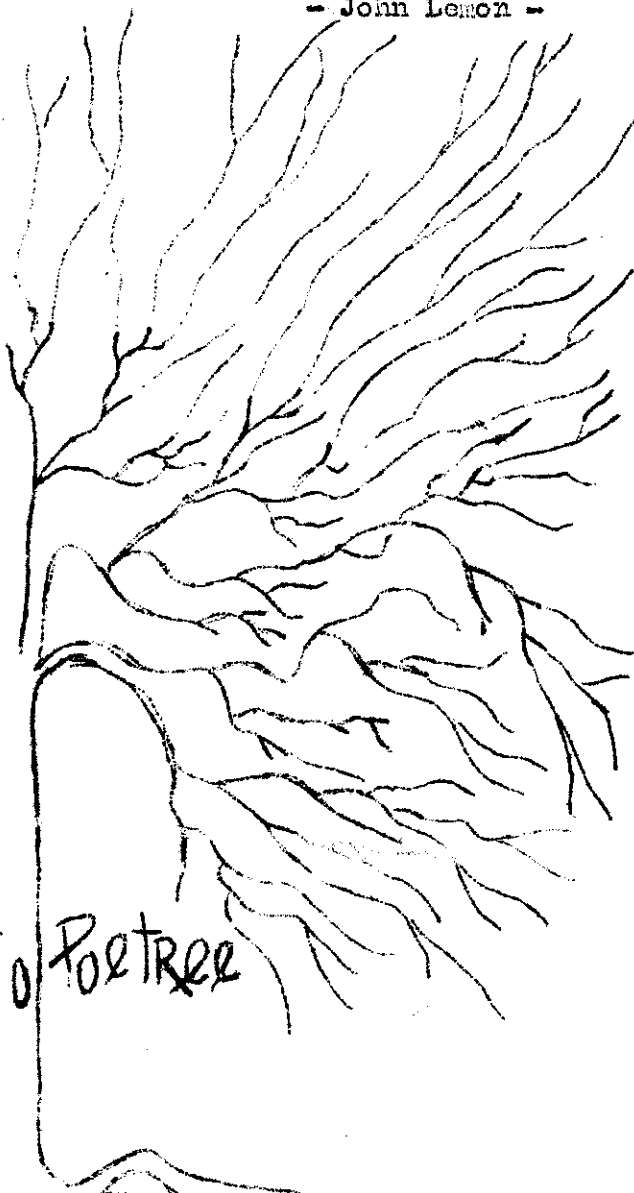
To A Departing Volunteer

Yesterday we met,  
Tomorrow you'll be home.  
Our paths once crossed,  
Parted,  
And now you're gone.

Today I hear the wind  
Singing, laughing,  
Ringling the sounds of your voice  
With the rustling of the leaves  
Of the tropical trees;  
And wiping the prints  
Of your footsteps  
From this shiftless African soil.

Your name in time will be forgotten,  
As will the names of many others,  
But the moments  
Of your friendship  
Will always  
Be a part of me.

- John Lemon -



For Cass and Mike:

That was the Stage

Once upon a time there was a  
stage, <sup>Dr</sup>  
Who wondered just what he <sup>Gm</sup> was  
doing here,  
He prayed that he would some-  
how last through training, <sup>Dr</sup>  
And get to be a Peace Corps  
Volunteer.

His teaching made his students  
swear off English,  
Anebas made him give up wine  
and beer,  
No water in the bathroom made  
him dirty,  
All this to be a Peace Corps  
Volunteer?

That was the stage, <sup>Dr</sup> my friend  
No thought would <sup>Gm</sup> never end  
He'd bitch and moan, forever  
and a day, <sup>Gm</sup>  
The hours that we'd keep,  
much talk and little sleep  
That was the <sup>Dr</sup> stage, oh yes  
that was the stage.

His French resembled English  
and Pig Latin  
His Mausa was calamitous to hear,  
So he was quite surprised to hear  
Somebody,  
Say that he'd make a model volun-  
teer.

He took a taxi-brousse ride for  
his live-in,  
And nearly died from nausea and  
from fear.  
So his mother's sending him a  
Masorati,  
The hell with being a Peace  
Corps Volunteer

---

From "Don't put my name on it, I  
have enough problems."

October 22, 1979  
14 Fairmont Ave.  
W. Sommerville, MA.

I ask myself: is it only months since I've been back? And back from where? Niger? That's right, Niger. West Africa. I was there - two years I was there. Me? Well, I must have been somewhere.

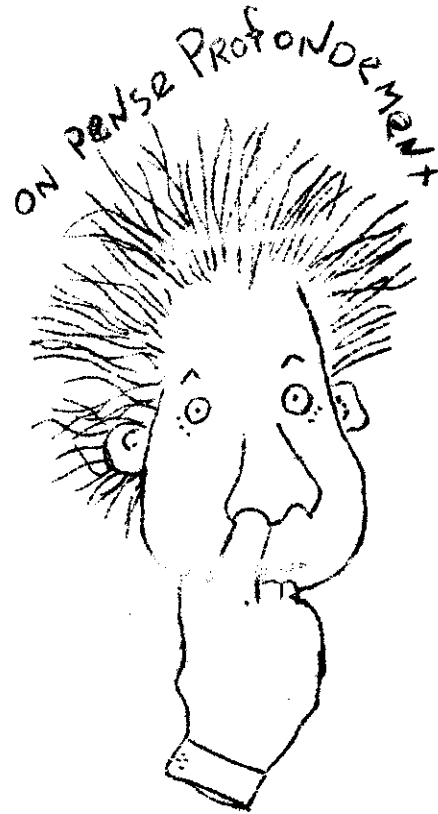
It is very, very far away from me - yes, already. The unreality of it all - Niamey, Zinder, Magaria. Just names, just sounds, that's all. The sand, the heat, the sixtiemes: images in my mind, but I'm not quite sure of the source. A movie? A dream? A memory. . . ?

As a volunteer, I would crave information from those who had "been back home". I wanted to know what "the states" were like - how "readjustment" was - what one did once one was "back". It seemed like such an awesome gap, this psychological chasm between Niger and "the states". Well, now I've crossed that chasm, and the takalmi is on the other kafa. Permit me to convey my feelings.

Out there, where you are now, Niger became my reality. I worked there, slept there, laughed, cried and bitched there. My life was Magaria - thoughts of "home" were mere ideas, fantasies. It became difficult not imagining myself going to school every morning, taking my sieste, and jiving in Hausa. Now, however. . .

You, my friends, are the Unreal. Or let me be gentler and say that you are fundamentally ephemeral. You probably don't realize the extent you're in this never-never land. I certainly didn't. But when you're back, in no time at all you'll realize how anomalous your time in Niger - that time you are experiencing NOW - has been. Because readjustment is, above all, this realization: it's over. Gone. Forever.

So amidst the wahalla, the kvetching, the chefs and the students, the zow and the zahi, just whisper to yourself - "When this is over, it's over for good. It's temporary. And I am but a transient." Because even in the comfort of your bed, listening to that stereo, with or without that one person you yearned for years to



see again, you might well discover that you've forgotten why you wanted to leave Niger in the first place. And you might even wish you were back.

- Bill Miles, RPCV  
Magaria

(\*)\*(\*)\*(\*)\*(\*)\*(\*)\*(\*)\*(\*)\*(\*)\*(\*)\*(\*)\*(\*)

November at last! But where are the crisp mornings filled with light mists, cool air and the sparkling promise of excitement in the day to come? I miss the reds and the golds and browns, wool sweaters, socks and leather shoes. Yes, even the football games - at least one or maybe two. Scuffing my feet along the sidewalk, kicking piles of dry leaves. Heading to class and my first cup of tea in the morning. Or hiking in the hills taking in the view - serene cow pastures, the woods running down to the cornfields; streams to jump over, getting so much fresh air that my body feels new and really alive.

Here the heat shimmers on the sand as a slight breeze sets the leaves and branches of nearby trees in motion. The flies buzz around my head. Thoughts of Michigan and New York state plague



I watch a nym tree, furtively watch-  
ing for a sign of change, perhaps a  
touch of red or brown? A single  
yellow leaf flutters to the ground.  
Ah well. . .

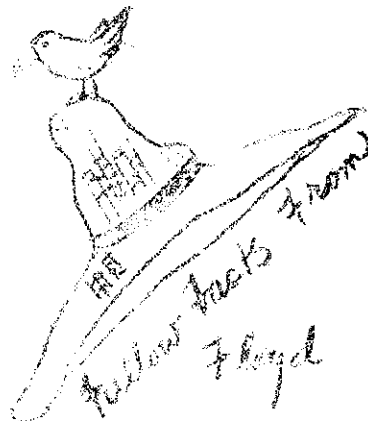
1 qt. Vodka  
1 qt. water  
2 cups coffee  
5 cups (1 Kg.) sugar  
1 vanilla bean (4 fl. oz.)

PINEAPPLE BEER (PC Swaziland)

Boil five quarts water, add 2 lbs. sugar until it dissolves. Remove mixture from heat and leave until lukewarm. Add three unpeeled, cut-up pineapples and one cake of yeast. Put in a warm place and let ferment for 24 hours. When your brew is done, strain it and put it in a bottle. After 3 days you should have an interesting, drinkable concoction. It's not Planter's Punch, but it's refreshing and gets as many miles to the gallon.

Put three cups uncooked brown rice and four and a half cups of sugar into a gallon jug with one package dry yeast and a handful of raisins. Fill with warm water and cover with a cloth. If you prefer a more festive approach, cap it with a balloon which will inflate as the sake ferments.

*/ \* / \* / \* / \* / \* / \* / \* / \* / \* / \* / \**



Niger is a big country and we are spread over it rather well. There are many types of soil, some better than others. Some will have problems gathering enough water, fertilizer and seeds, but I'll give special attention to any spe-

cific problems that crop (ha ha) up. Just send a stamped, self-addressed envelope and I'll answer as soon as I can. For problems that seem to affect people in different areas, I'll try to include it in future Camel Express offerings.

The first consideration for your new gardens will be the location - try to find an area that gets some shade during the day, perhaps under a tree, between the house and fence or around your hangar. The sun is so hot here that you need something so if you don't have it naturally, rig something up using millet, corn or sorghum stalks or even old logs, anything that will shade or partially shade your garden for a few hours each day. Now you'll want to dig up the garden area, spread some old dried manure over it and wet it down for several days - you want to sprout any weeds that are in the soil and lots of seeds are still present in manure. 7-10 days should sprout most of these. Pull the weeds out and you're ready to plant.

Draw up a plan. Run your rows from north to south as this gives you more light. Some vegetables need a bit more light than we get here - average in Niger is 12 1/2 hours per day - but many new varieties of seeds are coming out that perform well under this length of day. Plan on starting small, perhaps a 3m x 3m - you can grow quite a crop in an area this size.

The easiest vegetables to start with (and ones you really can't fail with) include radishes, lettuce, spinach, egg plant, cucumbers, okra, squash and tomatoes. Most people I've talked with have done well with these, so try as many as you can get in your garden. Plant a row of each and see how you do; then adjust your planting so that the quick maturing vegetables will be coming off before one row is eaten. Radishes take only 21-30 days to mature, and some you can eat in 15 days! You can start eating the lettuce and spinach as soon as the leaves are big enough to pick off, about 30-40 days, some earlier. If you take off the outside leaves, the plant will keep replacing them. Okra can be eaten when it's only 1 inch long. Egg plant is delicious when only a

couple of inches long, same for squash and cucumbers. I like green tomatoes either raw or sautéed in butter. So you see, it's only a short wait before you can start eating out of the garden, and it's worth the wait.

In making up a plan for your garden, be sure to leave enough space so you can get between rows to weed and pick what you want to eat. I like to start with a leafy vegetable on each end of the garden. This way you give the lizards a good crop right on the outside and maybe they won't make it to the middle. I usually start a garden with a plan like this:

|                               |   |  |
|-------------------------------|---|--|
| lettuce or spinach            | → |  |
| tomatoes or egg plant         | → |  |
| radish or carrots             | → |  |
| onions                        | → |  |
| okra                          | → |  |
| cucumbers                     | → |  |
| beans                         | → |  |
| potatoes                      | → |  |
| radishes                      | → |  |
| squash                        | → |  |
| peas                          | → |  |
| lettuce                       | → |  |
| cucumbers, squash, or pumpkin | → |  |

The leafy vegetables & beans, peas, spinach, squash, cucumbers, okra, onions can be sown directly in the rows and thinned out when several leaves have appeared on the plants. It is advisable, though, to sow your tomatoes, egg plants in containers and transplant them after they are several inches high. This gives you a chance to keep the lizards off until they are large enough to accommodate the injury inflicted on them by having a few leaves eaten off. Also, you can plant them at random around the house or in pots under your hangar if you like.

If you have a real problem with lizards or lack of water, go to container gardening. You can grow enough vegetables for yourself in a few broken pots, cardboard boxes, empty tins, etc. If the lizards really get on your case, use a mosquito net in an appropriate place and put rocks around the edges. It works really well, and after your plants are up several inches you can transplant and they will be big enough to withstand the pests and then see your original patch. If you get too many insects in your garden, try to get some HCH to sprinkle over the vegetables. It seems to be available in even the small villages. It works well, but don't sprinkle it on vegetables you intend to eat within 3-4 days. It's not supposed to hurt you, but best be safe.

Try to get a good mulch pile going. Dig a pit about 2'x 2'x 2', throw all your paper, garbage, cardboard, grass, weeds, etc. in it. To start the process, throw in some fresh cow/horse/camel/chicken dung and wet it down. Keep adding to it and every week or so, turn it over with a shovel or stick. You can start mulching your garden with it within a month. Throw your dishwater on it if you are using bar soap, it's good for it. If you use OMO or a packaged soap with bleach in it, don't throw more than a few gallons on the pile or in your garden because it could cause problems. I recycle my dishwater and shower water (this is called "grey water"), but it's good, and for some of you, water is a real problem. Just stand in a big wash pan for your shower and when you're finished, throw it on the garden.

For you who are really dry, try burying a tukunya / clay pot in the ground up to its neck. Fill it with water and plant your favorite vegetables around it. Keep it covered so your water won't evaporate out so rapidly. The water will seep slowly out of the pot and you'll be able to grow quite a few vegetables. The water economy is really great. To do this even more efficiently, you could

build up the soil in a mound and then place the pot in the top part. This way you'll get a larger planting area.



Hope this will encourage more of you to start a garden. Don't hesitate to write if you're having trouble. Good luck and bon appetit.

*Floyd*

& & & & & & & & & & & & & & & & & &

La solitude a poussé un veuf et une veuve dans les bras l'un de l'autre. Ils décident de se marier. Hélas, leur nuit de nocces est un lamentable fiasco.

- Tu n'as absolument pas rempli mes espérances, confie la jeune épousée, le lendemain matin.
- Tu as absolument raison, ma chérie, répond le mari, sans s'émouvoir. Mais lorsque je t'ai proposé de remplir le vide de ta vie. Ernestine, je n'imaginais pas le gouffre que c'était!

& & & & & &

- Papa, dit le petit garçon, qu'est-ce que c'est qu'un travelo?
- T'occupe pas de ça, fiston, et dégrofe plutôt mon soutien-gorge!

& & & & & &

Dans la rubrique: la science en marche.

- On sait désormais avec exactitude le nombre de calories dépensées durant l'acte sexuel, confie un adepte du jogging à un ami.
- ?
- Oui! Une fille vaut un kilomètre!

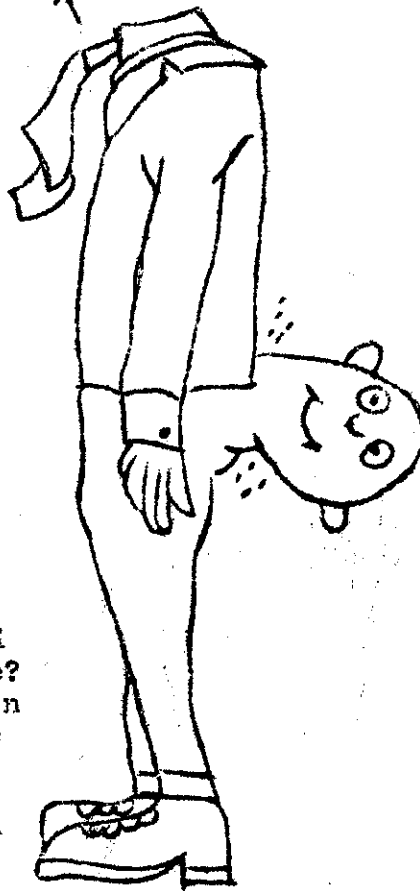
## To The Editor...

Dear Editor:

I would like to know what kind of scandal sheet you guys in Zinder are cranking out on that half baked duplicating machine. Each month I look in vain for the lofty intellectual distiches, the probing investigative reportage, the indelible mark of editorship influenced by monumental cerebral propensity. And what do I find? Crossword puzzles. French Jokes. Grand Flag profiles. Do I have to turn to "Trinity" and "The Drifters" for stimulation of my frontal lobes? Do you think the brüsse volunteers can survive with Newsweek and an occasional baké issue of Jeune Afrique? I've already translated all the Arabic on the Nido cans and the chef of my village has had it up to here with my wanting to discuss Nietzsche contre Schopenhauer.

Therefore I'm requesting, nay demanding, that next month's issue feature a column devoted strictly to the highest intellectual pontifications, pulling out all the stops on existentialism, nihilistic optimism, teleological Zoroastrianism, and raising chickens for fun and profit.

Do you mind?



— THE PERSECUTED

Dear P:

Thank you for a thoughtful, albeit wordy, letter. I must admit it took some time with the dictionary to figure out exactly what you were trying to say, but I think I've boiled it down into a pertinent lexiconic morphogram. Your problem is obvious, as the poster by the same name used to read. Also, I wonder if you're getting enough salt in your diet. The resident "brain-trust" at the CE has decided to assuage your hurt feelings by posting around the hostel here in Zinder to see if we can't find some crossword puzzle magazines with all wrong answers. Why don't you come into our office and lay on the couch and we can discuss this. Perhaps we can arrange a vacation to Germany for you. Better yet, we'll give you a column all your own in the CE.

Editor