

Land Of The Morning, Child Of The Sun Returning—A Sequel

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"Ay Naku!" I cursed to myself in Tagalog. I quickly turned to my companion and shouted (in sign language), "Another leech!" He handed me the matches and I set to work "encouraging" the leeches to disengage themselves from my hairy leg, with the help of a little heat. Nasty thing about leeches is that their "bite" is absolutely painless; only way you know they're tagging along is to pull up your trouser leg and look for them. With this little ritual completed I sighed, looked at my TIMEX Skin Diver's watch (thanking God it was water-proof) and started to trudge my way again through shin-deep mud.

Two hours more, my TIMEX told me. Funny, the things which run through your mind while you plod along aimlessly. I recalled my last trip to the Philippines over a year ago ("Land of the Morning, Child of the Sun Returning," DEAF AMERICAN, December 1970). I vaguely remembered making some sort of a vow when I got back to the States; sort of a cross between "Home Sweet Home" and "Never Again." I recalled the night I got back to my apartment after a three-month absence. Somewhat in a daze I sat on the bathroom floor alternately turning on the hot water and flushing the toilet! Probably the two greatest inventions modern man has devised; hot water plumbing and flush toilets! Now I'm back; no hot water, no flush toilet and all those God-awful leeches!

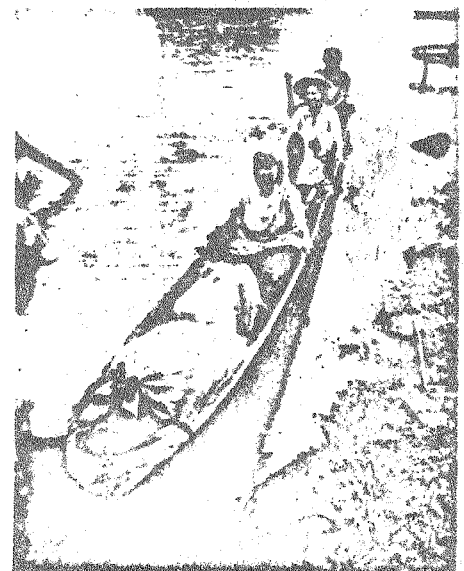
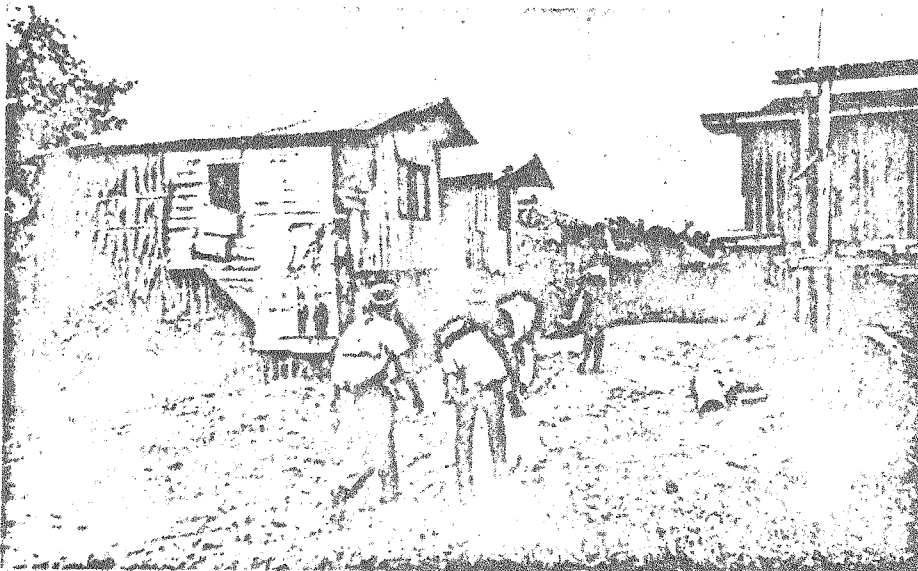
I was jerked back to reality by a sharp finger poking my fleshy side. "We're going to cut across that field; it should be a little shorter." The deaf boy guiding us signed quite well. Amazing thing is he's only known language for just a few months now! He doesn't yet realize how lucky he is to have any language or education at all. He is one of the more than 100,000* Filipino deaf who live outside the greater Manila area; only Manila has a school for the deaf. The state run school for the deaf (and blind) in Manila became an "oral" school about 10 years ago. Since then they have turned out a handful of graduates each year, ranging from illiterate to functionally illiterate. The first school for the deaf in the Philippines was started about 60 years ago by Miss Delight Rice (later Dr. Rice), a young woman from Ohio. Dr. Rice went from province

to province searching for the deaf, bringing many of them to Manila, finally establishing the School for the Deaf and Blind, grandma of what we have today. No one since Dr. Rice's time has ever ventured out into the provinces to locate and attempt to educate the deaf! No one until now, that is.

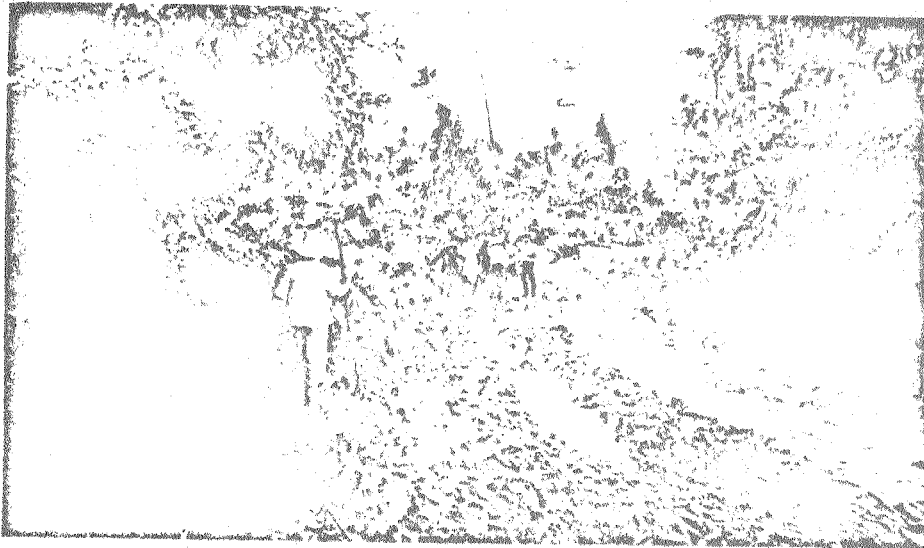
As I stumbled for the umpteenth time, "kissing the mud" as one of the boys would sign, I wondered how Paula could manage so well. Paula Guterrez was the first deaf student of Dr. Rice's. I raced to catch up with her; I don't mind being shown up by a woman, but after all Paula is old enough to be my grandmother (at least!). I guess Paula is the luckiest of all the Filipino deaf. When Paula was born folks thought the deaf should be hidden, as though something to be ashamed of. Paula was "liberated" by Dr. Rice over 60 years ago; she's studied in the United States and has seen the lot of the deaf much improved over the past half century. I'll never forget the glow on her face when she sat down at the first teletypewriter installation for the deaf outside of the United States and typed to NAD President Lankenau "GREETINGS . . ." I guess that's sort of like living continuously from Stone Age to Space Age!

At last a comfort station stop. The comfort room (a clump of banana trees) did not appeal to me as much as a fallen palm tree nearby; somewhere to rest my aching, mud soaked feet (not to mention a quick check for leeches!). Just as I'm about to sit down Paula warns me about the possibility of snakes near the tree. I was surprised to learn that cobras live in this area, I had thought that cobras lived only in India. Oh well, I wasn't very tired anyway! Yup, Paula's quite a gal! Long after most people are resting themselves on their social security, Pauls is going "where the action is." And this indeed is where the action is. I've somewhat slyly neglected to mention the most important member of our troupe, the Reverend Ada Coryell. Reverend Coryell came here eight years ago with her mother, Reverend Aimée Coryell, as missionaries to the deaf. They've founded the Deaf Evangelistic Alliance Foundation (DEAF), Inc., and have established the first school for the deaf outside of Manila. Which, by the way, is where we're heading. DEAF, Inc., purchased 200 acres of public land from the Filipino Bureau of Forestry and is carving out a school which will

* My own conservative estimate; the actual figure may well be twice or three times greater.



Left: The last sign of civilization in a small barrio (village), Paoay. The D.E.A.F., Inc., School is a three-hour hike from this barrio. Our story begins just outside of Paoay. The boys shown in the picture are all students (deaf) of the school. Right: To reach the school a mass-flooded lake must be crossed in a dugout canoe. Seated in the canoe, from front to rear, are Paula, a deaf child, Reverend Coryell and the canoe operator.



Left: The path to the school starts out wide, but eventually narrows to a footpath. The mud (more like quick sand) is leech infested. Right: Paula, splattered with mud, pauses for a moment.



eventually house and educate 1000 deaf. This first school is located in Laguna province, a four-hour bus ride from Manila (after which you know exactly how a jack-in-the-box feels) followed by a four-hour (if you're fast) hike. The hike takes you through lush tropical rain forest, across a moss-filled lake (nothing makes you pray harder than a dugout canoe) and up the side of a mountain along a path which seems to have been paved with quicksand!

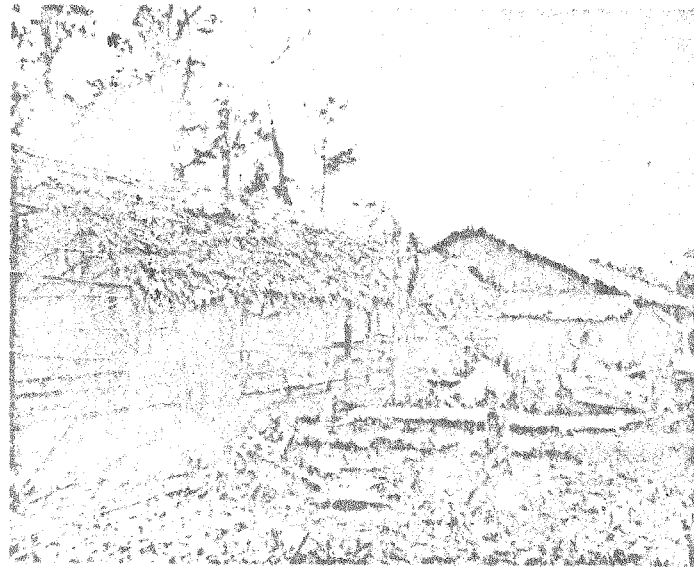
Another finger pokes into my now black-and-blue fleshy side. This time it's Paula. Bless her heart, she's offering me some crackers. Nothing like eating crackers with muddy fingers. I just keep telling myself it's peanut butter (if only it didn't taste like mud!). Speaking of food, every morsel must be carried up by the deaf, the same way we're going up. Every book, every student's desk, every pot and pan, everything had to be carried up on someone's back. There are now about 60 deaf children at the school, the smaller children having been carried up "Japanese style" on the back of an older student. The students have only been at the school for a few months now. Rev. Coryell's four teachers have not yet started regular classes. So much work still needs to be done; buildings more durable than bamboo and palm leaves must be erected; a road must be put in to make the school more accessible to civilization. Considering that most of these first 60 deaf students are "unsolicited," Rev. Coryell may reach her 1000 student quota in the very near future. Rev. Coryell plans

to build similar schools in each of the other Filipino provinces. Each school will have a capacity of about 1000 students; each school will be completely self-sufficient, living off its own land.

Another half-hour my TIMEX tells me. I guess I never mention why I'm back in the Philippines. When I return to the States after my last trip I thought a great deal about what could be done to educate the deaf, not just in the Philippines but throughout Asia. How can we reach the vast number of deaf who live outside of the principal cities? More teachers. Well, if we had 1000 times the number of teachers we have today in the Philippines, we still would not have enough teachers to reach the deaf. Perhaps an intensive program to produce more teachers to educate the deaf? Only the University of the Philippines has a program to train "special education teachers; a few, strictly oral, teachers of the deaf are from this program. Only problem is, many Asians suffer from a malady I call "I-want-go-to-america" fever. As a result many of the teachers are lost to the United States, Australia, Western Europe. So what is the answer? How can we educate vast numbers of deaf without teachers? As soon as funds permit, we will install a shortwave radio station at the Laguna school. Since the school is by, or for the deaf, the station must be completely operable by the deaf. In order to accomplish this we will install teletypewriter, exactly the same as used for telephone communication, only with shortwave



Left: Reverend Coryell and the author pause at boundary line to D.E.A.P., Inc., property. Right: Every morsel of food must be carried up the mountain by the deaf. This boy, Alfredo, carries a coven of rice (50 kilograms or about 125 pounds) and some other things. He balances his load with his hands on his head.



Left: The main classroom building, built of bamboo and palm leaves, will be replaced with a concrete building in the not too distant future. Right: Another temporary classroom building is being built in front of the first to help alleviate the overcrowding.

instead. Now here's the clincher. With teletypewriter available at each school for the deaf we're going to utilize Computer Assisted Instruction for the Deaf (CAID). How does this work? Well, let's say that we want to teach a deaf student basic arithmetic. We sit him down for an hour a day at a teletypewriter machine, which is linked via shortwave radio and telephone to a computer in Manila, and he converses with the computer much as you converse during normal teletypewriter calls. The computer starts him off with a few basic statements about arithmetic. He is then asked questions to see if he really does understand the statement. He then progresses to another item, etc., eventually building up a knowledge of arithmetic. CAID as I've described so far has been used at Stanford University and Model Secondary School for the Deaf at Gallaudet College (DEAF AMERICAN, June 1971) but we hope to go one step farther. Most of the deaf we get at the school do not have even the most rudimentary concept of language (they don't even know they have a name, as Rev. Coryell so aptly puts it). We plan to use CAID to give these students their first language (Basic English); from there they'll progress to more advanced English, sign language and even go on to learn the native languages. (Tagalog is one of the more than one hundred native dialects spoken in the Philippines.) In other words,

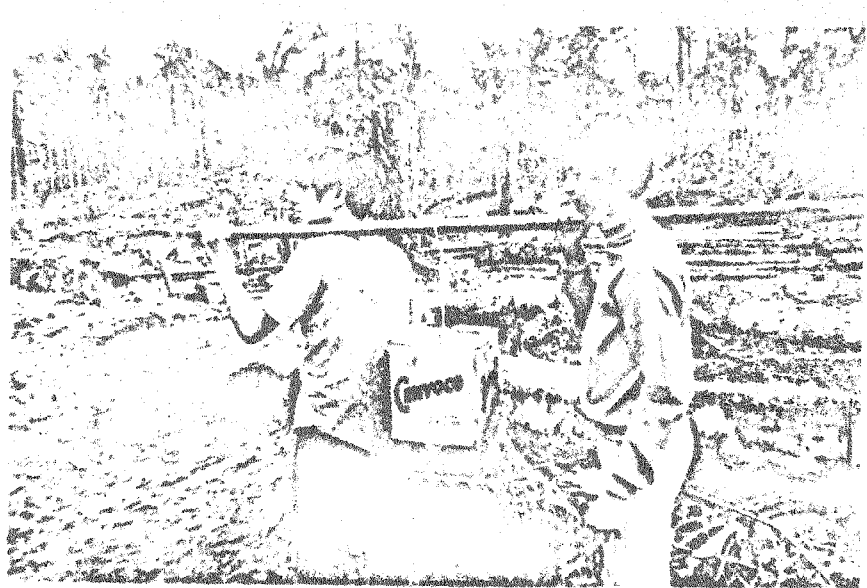
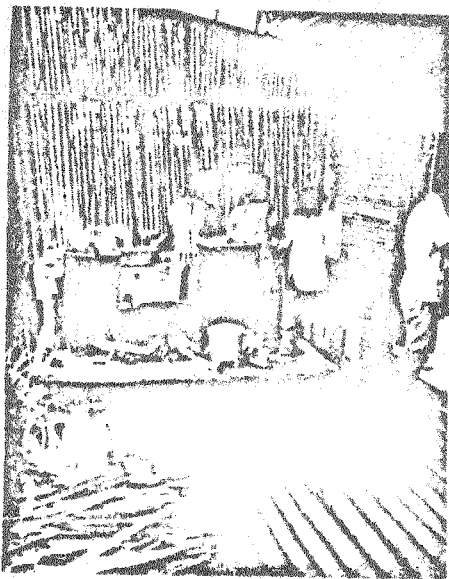
one computer in Manila will substitute for hundreds of teachers all over the Philippines. Wild idea, huh?

A length of wire stretched on bamboo poles with a sign reading "BAWAL PUMASOK" (Do Not Enter) marks the beginning of the DEAF, Inc., property. It certainly seems superfluous to have a sign like that this far from civilization! About another 15 minutes and we'll be at the school itself. As wild as an idea like CAID may sound, surprising how many people want to jump on the handwagon! I've talked with the principal of the state-operated school for the deaf; she's interested in having a machine at her school to help develop language in her students. The Philippine Association of the Deaf (you'll recall they operate a coffee shop run completely by the deaf) wants to use CAID to help train their workers, most of whom can't add and subtract when they apply for jobs!

We first spotted the roof of the main classroom building, brown palm leaves overlapping on top of each other. The children spotted us before we spotted them! A group of them ran out to greet us. I don't recall ever having met any of them before, but lo and behold, if they didn't start using my name sign! One girl ran up to me, noticed the emblem on my Florida State University parka and started to fingerspell "F-L-O-R-I-D-A." I later learned that she had no language, but had begun to



Left: Some of Reverend Coryell's 46 deaf students pose for a picture in front of the main classroom building. Right: One of the classrooms. Each desk had to be carried up on the back of one of the students.



Left: Dinner is being prepared over an open fire in the kitchen adjacent to the main classroom building. Right: Even water is a problem! These boys pump a can of water from a stream about one-half kilometer from the site of the school. After boiling, the water is fit for drinking.

babble in fingerspelling! It's quite interesting to see these children (and some adults too) acquire language almost overnight. Then, like a broken dam, you can't shut them up! When I was here last year I met one small child, the most shy and bashful thing you could ever imagine. She looked to be about four or five years old, but was actually nine! She was infested with worms, in fact virtually 100% of the students Rev. Coryell gets are walking worm circuses! Every variety of intestinal worm available, they have. Anyway, this little girl was the saddest looking thing I've ever seen. I met her again this year; you can't shut her up! I don't know how her hands don't fall off from exhaustion; she talks constantly. The most noticeable change in her is that she smiles and laughs!

Many of the children, when first acquiring language, will start to fingerspell randomly! They see others fingerspelling, and they know how to make the manual letters, not realizing that they don't have any meaning in random sequences. The first time some one told me "uowk meuwjdnf jeep" I felt a bit confused! Another strange thing happens when these students start to learn English. They'll try to make signs for new words from signs for old words with a prefix or suffix added on; for

example when they learn the word "army" some students make the sign for "arm" quickly followed by the finger "Y."

At last, a chance to sit down with a nice steaming bowl of rice! Who's lifting up my trouser leg? Paula her heart, checking for leeches! She should have been a mother. Ay Naku! Another leech!!!

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Author's Note: In order to start our program of C. the Philippines and eventually throughout Asia we must solely on the generosity of our deaf friends abroad. Because of the depressed state of our economy, the purchase of teletypewriter converter is regarded here as the purchase of a new automobile would be regarded in the United States. We need five teletypewriter converters to start CAID here; our deaf friends who would like to contribute any amount may write to me (88-D Kamuning Road, Quezon City, Philippines) or to Rev. Coryell (DEAF, Inc., P. O. Box A-4000, Iloilo, Philippines). Please be sure to state that your contribution is for CAID. You can be sure not only of our gratitude, but of the gratitude of generations of deaf to come.



Left: Standing by the D.E.A.F., Inc., truck is Reverend Coryell, Paula, one of the deaf students from the school (Cortez), and Juanita de Guzman, the teachers of the school. At D.E.A.F., Inc., headquarters in Manila, Reverend Coryell conducts a Sunday school class.