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## Spooky trips through silent, empty landscapes

Two staffers in our Hong Kong bureau worked on this week's lead story on the turmoil in Cambodia—Photographer Larry Burrows, who has probably had more battlefield experience in Southeast Asia than any other journalist in the world, and Reporter John Saar, a tall, loose-jointed Englishman. Saar arrived in Vietnam 18 months ago, and is by now a seasoned war correspondent. But both of them found the wildly unstable conditions in Cambodia a new—and perilous—experience.

"As soon as Larry and I arrived in Phnom Penh," cabled Saar, "press corps friends who had got there before us took us aside to warn us: 'Whatever you do, be very careful. This is not like Vietnam.'"

"Indeed it is not. Officials here do not seem to share the journalists' compulsion to find out what's happening in the countryside, so the rule is 'news-men up front.' There are none of the trappings of security that surround reporters in Vietnam. Ten newsmen have already been captured by the Vietcong, and everyone has tales of narrow escapes which they exchange as they lounge round the pool at Phnom Penh's Royal Hotel in the cool of the evening. There are no front lines and only the vaguest information about which of the roads are safe. You play it as carefully as you can by checking around with friends, watching civilian traffic and talking to villagers. The rest you have to leave to luck. But you have to go, and the long drives through silent, deserted landscapes are sweaty, spooky trips. Each day's pursuit of the news becomes a kind of unarmed reconnaissance—courtesy of Hertz. If that other company is really trying harder, they would find armored limousines with high reverse speeds very popular in Cambodia just now."



*Ralph Graves*

RALPH GRAVES  
Managing Editor



# LIFE

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