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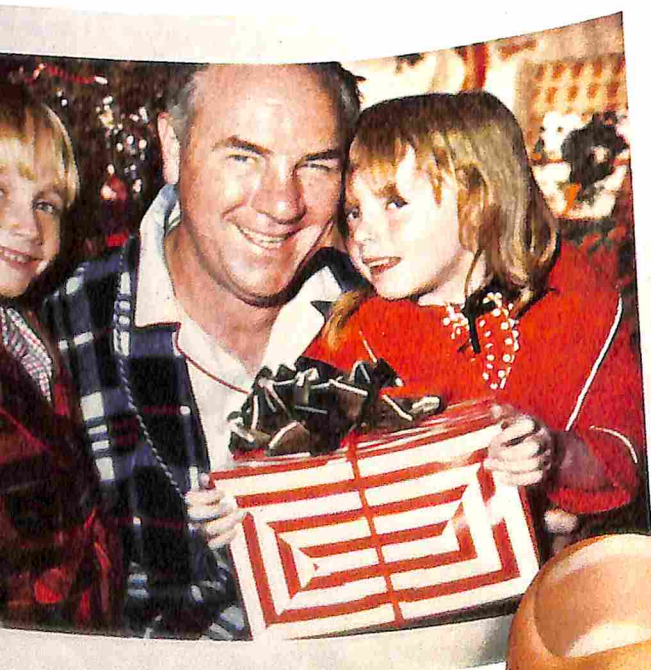
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The Countdown 350.



VOL. 67, NO. 20

LIFE

NOVEMBER 14, 1969

CONTENTS

EDITORS' NOTE

| | |
|---|-------------|
| Colonel Robert Rheault, Ex-Green Beret | 34 |
| How a model officer's career crashed in a shadowy war, by Frank McCulloch | |
| Big Lew Alcindor against the Big Men | 40 |
| Photographed by John Zimmerman | |
| Editorial | 44 |
| Did Mr. Nixon Make His Job Harder? | |
| Sculptor Wraps Up the Cliffs Down Under | 46 |
| The Psychology of Astronauts | 50 |
| In the second part of his moon report, Norman Mailer considers the Apollo 11 crew | |
| Liz's Million-Dollar Rock | 65 |
| The Instant-Minister Racket | 67 |
| How a reporter became a man of the cloth for \$10, by Bill Bruns | |
| A Cube House vs. the Squares | 83 |
| By John Neary | |
| The Threatened Marshes of Glynn | 88 |
| In the fabled Georgia swamps, the developers are on the move. Photographed by John Loengard | |
| DEPARTMENTS | |
| GALLERY André Kertész in Washington Square | 2 |
| COLUMN Look, no earthquake, by William Zinsser | 4 |
| REVIEWS | 8-23 |
| John Fowles's <i>The French Lieutenant's Woman</i> , reviewed by Webster Schott | |
| <i>Goodbye, Mr. Chips</i> , reviewed by Richard Schickel | |
| A book reviewer's choice of six fine sleepers, by Melvin Maddocks | |
| LETTERS TO THE EDITORS | 30A |
| SPECIAL REPORT John Lindsay's victory, by Jack Newfield | 30D |
| PARTING SHOTS | 95 |

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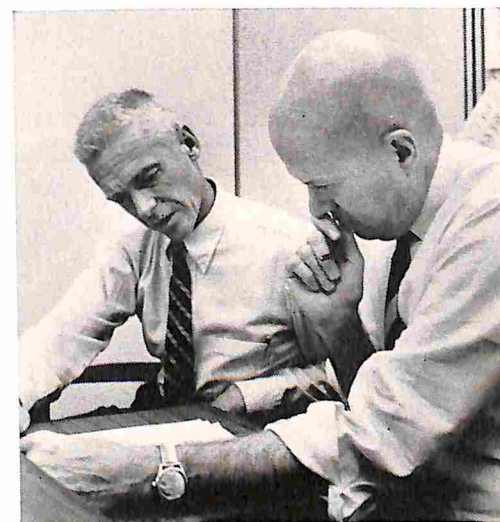
COVER-HENRY GROSINSKY 1-RALPH MORSE 2, 3-ANDRE KERTESZ 4-THOMAS M. BROWN for the ANCHORAGE DAILY NEWS 8-DEREK BAYES for TIME 9-SPRINGER-BETTMANN FILM ARCHIVE, M-G-M 22-H. JIM GERHARD 24-ALAN CLIFTON for TIME-LARRY BURROWS 23-IT. ROY SCHATT 24-ANTHEA SIEVEKING 30A-BOB PETERSON 30D-MICHAEL GINSBURG 34-HENRY GROSINSKY 35-U.P.I. 38-TOM TRACY 39-HENRY GROSINSKY 40, 41-JOHN ZIMMERMAN 44-cartoon by LURIE 46, 47-SHUNK-KENDER 50, 51-ARTHUR SCHATZ 63-U.P.I. 65, 66, 66A-YALE JOEL 66B-IT. SCHUYLER GRAY 74-U.P.I.-ENRICO SANSINI 67-JIM ANNAN 68-JIM ANNAN-RUTH ANNAN 71-ARTHUR SHAY 74-RICHARD PIPES 78-JIM ANNAN 83-JOHN OLSON-CHARLES PHILLIPS (5) 84-CHARLES PHILLIPS 86-JOHN OLSON 95-BOB ROOSTH (2)-PAUL HESTER, RICHARD SAWYER, BOB ROOSTH 96-drawing by FRANKLIN McMAHON 97-ARTHUR SHAY FOR SPORTS ILL. 98-TASS, U.P.I.-A.P.

November 14, 1969
LIFE is published weekly, except one issue at year end, by Time Inc., 540 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago, Illinois 60611, principal office Rockefeller Center, New York, N.Y. 10020; James R. Shepley, President; Richard B. McKeough, Treasurer; John F. Harvey, Secretary. Second-class postage paid at Chicago, Ill., and at additional mailing offices. Authorized as second-class mail by the Post Office Department at Ottawa, Canada and for payment of postage in cash. U. S. subscriptions \$8.75 a year and Canadian subscriptions \$9.75 a year.

A Familiar Face from Vietnam

TIME-LIFE's New York Bureau Chief Frank McCulloch was vacationing in Vermont last summer when he spotted a newspaper picture of Colonel Robert B. Rheault, who had just been accused of the murder of a suspected Vietnamese double agent. McCulloch had known literally hundreds of military men during years spent as a correspondent in Vietnam, Japan and Washington, but he recognized this face at once.

"Back in 1964," Frank recalls, "the Special Forces advisers were the Americans most exposed to the enemy. They were still running a semisecret operation and they weren't accustomed to dealing with the press. So when I went to their headquarters, my request to do a story on the outfit was greeted with less than enthusiasm. I didn't get my story that day, but I was given a brilliant briefing by a young lieutenant colonel. He was Bob Rheault."



Robert Rheault and Frank McCulloch

Later that year Rheault intervened to help McCulloch obtain permission to visit a Special Forces outpost at Buonmiga in the northern province of Darlac. Frank spent 12 days there patrolling the enemy-infested territory with Special Forces advisers. The stay was "moderately adventuresome," he recalls, but the real scare came near the end when a series of typhoons hit the area, threatening to flood them out. "I put in a request to get out with my story," McCulloch says, "but no plane could land in that weather. I was going up the walls when a single-engine plane came in through the clouds to pick me up. I learned later it had been dispatched by Colonel Rheault."

Two weeks ago Frank McCulloch found himself talking to Bob Rheault again. This time the place was New York City, the subject was still Vietnam and the Special Forces. McCulloch's account of the colonel's dilemma begins on page 34.

This week on page 95, LIFE introduces a department called "Parting Shots." It occupies the last four pages of the magazine. Although sometimes "Parting Shots" will be devoted to a single story, it will often cover a variety of current subjects—as it does this week.

Ralph Graves

RALPH GRAVES
Managing Editor

LIFE

Mailer on the Astronauts The Green Beret Colonel

Colonel Rheault
talks about the
end of his career

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