

## CONTENTS

LIFE

## EDITORS' NOTE

## Cover

Psychedelic artist Richard Aldcroft, wearing plastic goggles which force each eye to see independently and thus disorient his brain, takes a psychedelic trip—without the help of LSD—by projecting kaleidoscopic images on surrounding walls, ceiling and himself

## OPINION AND COMMENT

## Editorials

Sorry, General, English is the language  
Hoving is a "happening" in the park  
Inflation is a royal nuisance

## Reviews

Book: H. L. Nieburg's *In the Name of Science*, reviewed by Arthur Schlesinger Jr.  
Movie: *A Man and a Woman*, reviewed by Richard Schickel

## Letters to the Editors

## The View from Here

Joyless rampage in China. By Loudon Wainwright

## THE WEEK'S NEWS AND FEATURES

## The Inflated Economy

Food costs more, money is tighter and the market has the shakes. There's a dash of bitters, but no recession is now in sight. By Walter W. Heller

## On the Newsfronts of the World

A lot of marching in Africa and Asia, for all sorts of reasons. People and events around the globe. A lunar view of a socked-in earth

## The Presidency

L.B.J. populist vs. L.B.J. entrepreneur. By Hugh Sidey

## Close-Up

Riding the crest of surfing's wave, editor John Severson gets rich getting wet

## The Air War

The most controversial phase of the U.S. involvement in Vietnam. How the action looks to the man in the cockpit. Photographed by Larry Burrows. The unprecedented tactics—maligned but effective. By Tom Flaherty

## Psychedelic Art

From LSD and a fascination with mind-expanding visions comes the drugless trip. Photographed by Yale Joel

## Fashion

Luciana Pignatelli, a princess turned pro

## Redemption of the Champion

A revealing personal encounter with Muhammad Ali, once known as Cassius Clay. By Gordon Parks

## Great Dinners

Part 33: grilled shrimp scampi-style—a main course in a meal with pungence and finesse. By Gerry Schrepf

## Miscellany

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COVER-YALE JOEL 3-MAJOR RICHARD HILL 26, 27-ART SHAY exc. rt. HENRY GROSINSKY 28, 29-t. R. DECLAN HAUN from BLACK STAR drawings by JAMES FLORA 30, 31-ARTHUR SCHATZ exc. t. cen. HARRY GROOM 32, 33-PRIYA RAMRAKHA for TIME, BALDEV for TIME-TONY WILLS, KURN P. 34-TED ROZUMALSKI 34A-VINCENT'S STUDIO-AZIZ RASHKI, KEYSTONE 33B, 34C-NASA-CHARLES PHILLIPS 34D-U.P.I. 37-LOUISE SEVERSON-BILL RAY 38, 41, 42-BILL RAY 58B-U.P.I. 69-JOHN ZIMMERMAN 70, 73, 74-LEOMBRUNO-BODI 76 through 80-GORDON PARKS 89, 91-drawings by RICHARD ERDOES 92-THOMAS HOPKER

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## 'He was right up there with the pilots'

In setting out to photograph the story on the air war (pp. 44-59), Larry Burrows determined—by means of photographic technique and at risk of his own life—to put the viewer in the place of a combat pilot in action. It took him eight months to do it. George Weiss, an Air Force major who helped make the arrangements, said, "It is the first time this kind of story has been done under combat conditions. Larry had his neck a long way out. He was right up there with the pilots."

Burrows is a tall, thin Englishman whose bad eyesight kept him out of the British army in World War II (he worked in the coal mines instead). He started working for us as a laboratory assistant in London and soon started taking pictures on his own. He covered riots in Paris and the Congo, wars in Suez and Cyprus and, in addition, taught himself to become a top-notch color copyist of paintings. At first Saigon was, he says, "a quiet and pleasant place. There were about 16,000 American advisers and maybe 30 correspondents. Today there are almost 300,000 U.S. military personnel in Vietnam, and the correspondents are pushing 400." By now he has become something of a legend among the press corps and U.S. troops. "They start out being fascinated with that British accent," says an officer, "and end up with deep respect for the man and what he's trying to do." Larry is the only two-time winner of the Robert Capa Award "for superlative photography requiring exceptional courage and enterprise."

Burrows says that this assignment (which he himself suggested last October) was one of his most exacting. He flew in almost every type of aircraft being used in the war. "The F-4C is the most difficult," he says. "You are locked in by masses of harness with your legs strapped back, and you feel like a trussed turkey." For another picture, he recalls, "I waited for days to get a ride on the top of a Vietnamese armored train. From this position I hoped to show the functions of a spotter plane that would be circling above. But no sooner had I completed the arrangements than the bloody V.C. blew up the train. I wished those chaps would have checked with me on the timing." Perhaps the most difficult picture in the story for Larry to take was of "Puff, the Magic Dragon," an old DC-3, spewing machine-gun fire into the jungle. Larry had to persuade the Air Force to remove the second half of the plane's rear door. Then he lashed himself to the plane, and his camera to the doorframe. "The strap around my waist made me feel a bit like a Yo-Yo," he says, "but, fighting against the tremendous wind, I was able to reach the camera and take the picture while we were circling the Vietcong position."

Burrows has no intention of abandoning the Vietnam war. "Be it exotic meetings with Madame Nhu," he says, "or sleeping on a stretcher on a Vietnamese patrol or sharing a sock of rice with the Special Forces, this strange war fascinates me. My deepest wish is to be around to photograph both South and North Vietnam in peaceful times."



LARRY BURROWS

George P. Hunt

GEORGE P. HUNT,  
Managing Editor

