

# TIME

THE WEEKLY NEWSMAGAZINE

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## A letter from the PUBLISHER

*James R. Shepley*

IN a burrow of tunnels in South Viet Nam, U.S. forces recently discovered the largest cache of Viet Cong supplies that they have ever seized. And among medical supplies they found a roll of gauze wrapped in a page of the July 28 issue of TIME. It was a page from Books, with part of a review of Wyndham Lewis' memoirs and part of one of a novel by William Burroughs. Checking further to see what might have been of special interest to the Viet Cong in that issue, we found it contained a story on the supposed martyr, Nguyen Van Be, who had been eulogized in the North for his heroic exploits before suddenly turning up in the South as a live defector, to the embarrassment of Hanoi.

Thus inspired to imagine guerrillas huddled in a candlelit cave pondering the pages of TIME, we got to reflecting on the effects of stories in the magazine, and decided to pass on a few cases in point.

► Two months ago, Science reported on findings that a major Brazilian river, the Rio Negro, had all the characteristics of a perfect insecticide because, during flooding, it sapped chemicals from neighboring vegetation. Brazil's Minister of Interior said his office had not known of the phenomenon; he encouraged wide publication of the TIME story in the Brazilian press.

► After receiving a detailed, classified briefing on Thailand affairs, a U.S. State Department officer in Bangkok read our May 27, 1966 cover story on the Thai King and Queen. He found the story more comprehensive than the briefing, including much information considered quite inside by Thai authorities. Reports Bangkok Bureau Chief Louis Kraar: "Many military officers assigned to Thailand say they have used the story as orientation because it was just about the only thing that was both complete and current, yet concise."

► On five-acre Pigeon Island in the South Pacific, Tom Hepworth, who

runs a trading post, read in Modern Living of a worldwide vacation-home-exchange service based in Connecticut. He wrote the agency for help in finding someone in New Zealand who would trade homes so he could take his eight-year-old daughter there for open-heart surgery at Auckland's famed Greenlane Hospital. The agency went to work and ultimately our Auckland stringer, Bob Gilmore, joined in. The Hepworths found a place in Auckland.

► When we did our Gemini rendezvous cover at the end of 1965, NASA's Director of Flight Operations, Chris Kraft, found the cover diagram of the maneuver by Cartographer Robert M. Chapin Jr. so exact that he asked us for copies of the original work. He has since been using them to explain the historic mission to NASA's own staff and to aerospace contractors.

► In our cover story on "French Chef" Julia Child (Nov. 25, 1966) we used a picture of her butcher, Jack Savenor, of Cambridge, Mass. A Swift & Co. wholesaler in Illinois read the story, made an arrangement to supply the butcher with meat at a substantial discount so the dealer could put a sign on his plant saying "We supply Julia Child." Since Butcher Savenor was identified in our story his sales have increased tenfold—from 1,500 lbs. to 15,000 lbs. of meat per week.

Of course, the effects of stories sometimes take a wry turn. There is the case of the French scientist whose discovery of a new painkilling drug was reported in Medicine two years ago. Ever since, he has been bothered by letters from all over the world from people who hope that he can ease their pain. The really serious ones make him sad, and the hypochondriacs tend to irritate him. He has, indeed, heard of some strange cases—like the man who wrote that in all his life he has had only one night's sleep, and then he dreamed he was awake.

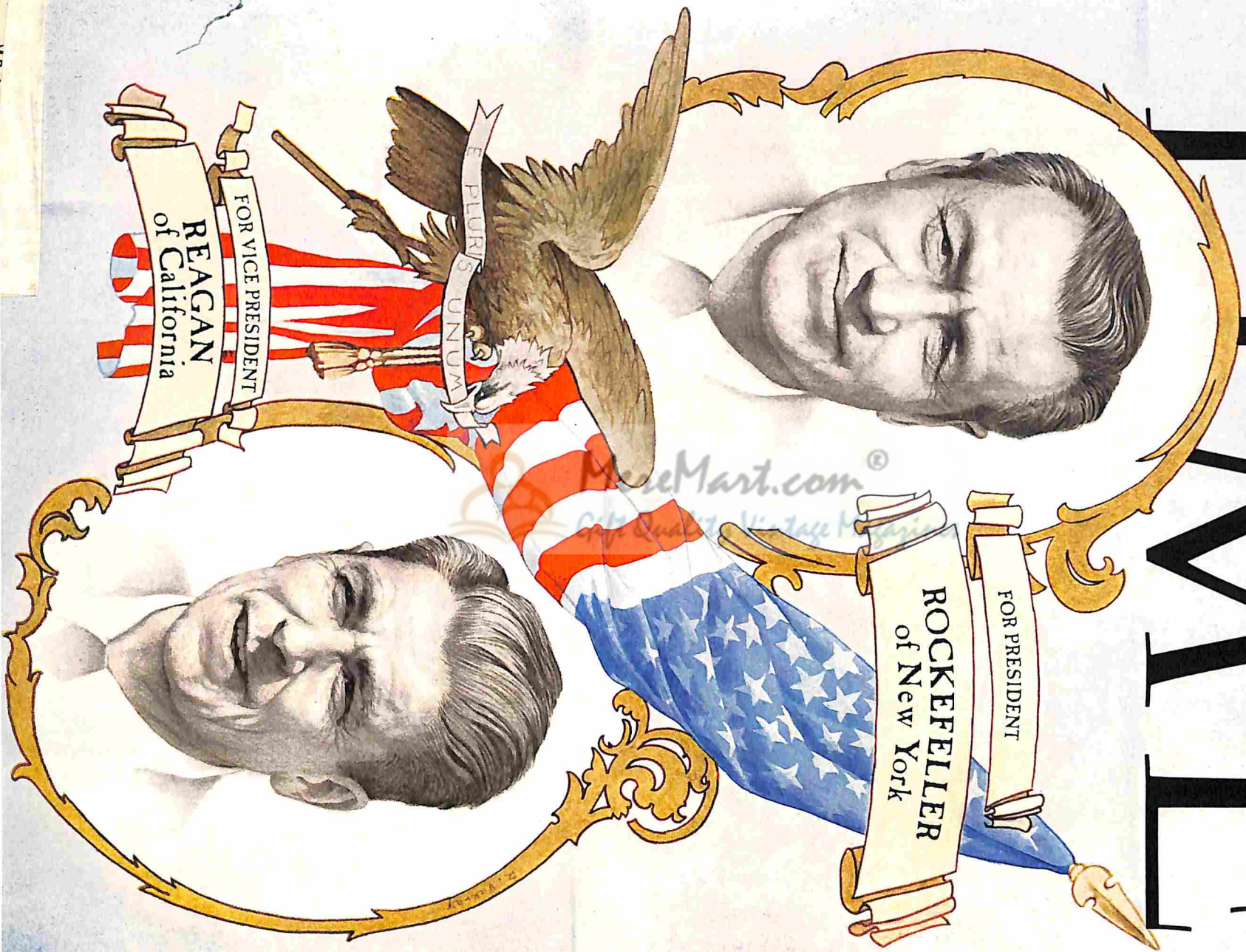
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