

Afghanistan Seen As Country Where West Becomes Orient

Editor's Note: "Afghanism" in the jargon of journalists is a nasty word which means that a newspaper in its news coverage and editorial columns is more concerned with events and controversies far from home than with the local scene. Notwithstanding this, the Mail Tribune takes pleasure in presenting today the first article in a new series by Jerry Liebman, 29-year-old Medford man currently on a trip around the world. The subject of this series—Afghanistan.

Liebman, the son of Mr. and Mrs. Manuel Liebman, 4262 Colver rd., was educated in Medford schools. He then studied at Harvard College, the Harvard Graduate School of Design, and the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris. He is on leave this year from E. E. Poor and company, New York City, where he is employed as an architect, designer and engineer.

By JERRY LIEBMAN

Afghanistan, to me, is the country where the Occident changes into the Orient. West becomes East, and the Arab's burbanic is exchanged for the Indian's turban. Middle Eastern black and brown hued clothing takes on the hummingbird colors of the exotic East.

Of course, the Middle East is not the Western world as

we in Europe and America think of it. And yet Jordan, Iraq and their fellow Arab countries partake more of the Occident than of the Orient. Who can draw the line that separates the Occident and Orient? The Middle East does not have the certain exotic something, the spicy dash of color, that can be felt in the true Orient. It is, after all, a matter of atmosphere that defines East and West.

Afghanistan partakes of both and adds as a third ingredient a distinct Mongol touch of southwest Asia. A mysterious, rich atmosphere results which is uniquely Afghanistic.

Personal Attachment

I have had an odd personal attachment to Afghanistan since childhood, an attachment that had rooted in me and that has stayed in me strongly enough to force my visit to this unbelievable country. It has been extremely difficult to reach Afghanistan; I mean the sheer difficulty of travel, money and business commitments in America aside.

Afghanistan has been open to the Western traveller only within the last few years and ground travel has only recently risen above the camel caravan. As a matter of fact, the camel is far from being outmoded.

It's quite true that Afghanistan is busily engaged in building a national airline and air traffic increases daily. The visitor, such as myself, who wishes to see the country intimately and thoroughly, however, is faced with hardships and problems since he insists on ground travel.

The traveller foolish enough to bring his car into the country soon finds himself with a broken pile of expensive metal on his hands. Even motor cycles give Afghanistan a wide berth and drivers prefer to travel through Pakistan, far south of Afghanistan's frightful roads.

A jeep and Land Rover are the only two vehicles strong enough to stand the punishment of roads that are only tracks across a desert or a gully in the mountains. The jeep driver must bring his own gasoline and spare parts.

Tool Thefts Are Reported in City

Two possibly related cases involving the theft of tools from Medford service stations were reported to city police Thursday.

Jim Joe Hobbs of the Standard Service station, Fourth and Central ave., reported the theft of tools valued at about \$26.50 Wednesday night. He noted that four men in a vehicle had driven into his station, and that two had left the car while he was putting air in the tires.

James Cleo Weter of Weter and Olson Service station, 1258 South Riverside ave., reported the theft of a tool box and tools the same night. He said three men in a vehicle had driven into the station shortly after midnight and asked for gas on credit. He said one left the car to go to the rest room while he was putting in the gas.

designed and built in Afghanistan on truck beds. These homestead buses often sport "Made in America" labels, stolen from some imported goods, as the ultimate recommendation. I have even seen a few buses proudly bearing the plaque of an International Harvester machine.

The buses are designed to carry the maximum amount of bodies. Safety precautions would be detrimental to this one, powerful economic aim.

I preferred to travel third class to be near the rear door. Something like riding at the rear of an airplane, safer in case of crash. The great drawback to third class is the cantilever action when the bus hits a bump (again, which is usually). These seats are far out behind the rear axle and the fulcrum action shoots heads against the bus roof like bodies out of a cannon. Well dented bus roofs (and heads) prove it.

Bus progress is erratic, depending on what friends of the driver we come upon, whether anyone feels like tea, and, above all, the five daily prayers all good Mohammedans must say. I prayed in progress I looked forward to prayer time when the bus would stop and all passengers pile out. While stretch joints and massage my head, good opportunist Christian that I am.

As the driver is the Big Man of his village the greatest ambition of any boy is to be a bus driver. Next best, the driver's helper.

A peculiar function of the driver's helper in Afghanistan is to ride hanging onto the rear of the bus. When the bus is going up a hill, which is usually, the helper runs behind with a huge triangular chock of wood, ready to shove it behind the rear wheel if the bus falters (which is usually). The helper's duties include placing baggage on top of the bus. Almost all baggage is carried on a rack exposed to sand, sun, and storms and the sand, powder fine, has an insidious way of creeping into the tightest suitcase.

Add Assortment

An odd assortment is this topside baggage: sheep, ducks, tents, huge bundles of clothing, hay, bedsteads and, in short, every item of the household. When an Afghan travels, he travels. On top of the baggage are piled the passengers who couldn't afford seats below. The record for upstairs riders was set, to my knowledge, between Herat and Kandahar when 18 men clung, teetering and swaying, on top of all the baggage.

At that, they were safer than those of us inside. This same bus, which was typical of all Afghan buses, seated six abreast inside with no aisle space. Each passenger could rest only one shoulder at a time against the wooden back of the bench since to seat six abreast meant each man sat diagonally, first class included. When the time came to switch shoulders, the bench load of Afghans resembled the Roxy chorus dancing in unison.

The most frightening part of riding inside the bus was having thick, solid iron bars across each window. Escape in case of emergency was impossible except through the one front door. No such thing as an emergency escape door. Often Sport Labels

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Try and Stop Me

By BENNETT CERF

AN ENGLISH PROFESSOR saw a colleague from the same department coming his way across the Dartmouth campus and pulled his friend behind the sanctuary of a spreading elm.

"I hope Old So-and-So didn't spot us," he whispered fervently. "He'd talk us to death."

The friend chuckled and reminded the prof, "You're not exactly the silent type yourself."

"I know," sighed the professor. "If I saw myself coming, I'm afraid I'd duck out of the way, too!"

A couple of sandwich men paraded up and down in front of the internal revenue bureau in mid-town Manhattan, drumming up trade. "Let us make up your federal and state income tax reports for you: \$5," urges one. His rival walks doggedly behind him, advertising "Exactly the same service: \$3.75."

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chester is the oldest settlement in Pennsylvania. It was founded by the Swedes in 1844.

Many large factories in Pakistan are using power developed from supplies of natural gas.

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The resolution was passed at the annual association meeting in the Central Point Grange hall. A total of 87 attended.

The resolution requested a representative of Jackson County be appointed to the advisory board of the state department of agriculture and strongly recommended that Spatz, a Medford fruit shipper, be retained. Spatz is the first man from this county to be appointed to the board, association officers pointed out.

Following considerable discussion on cattle theft, Ed Coles, Prineville, secretary for the Oregon Cattlemen's association, said the OCA is promoting more workable brand inspection laws and has requested the Oregon Bar as-

One of this season's new outboard motors will have three cylinders. Another is claimed to be the first practical outboard diesel.

Stockmen Ask Spatz Be Retained

A resolution was passed by the Jackson County Stockmen's association last week urging Gov. elect Mark Hatfield to retain Ward Spatz, Medford, on the state board of agriculture.

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HARRY L. POTTER

PART II

In our last column, we discussed the first two "C's" of diamond buying—Carat and Cut.

The third "C" that comes into prominence in diamond buying is Color. The term "bluewhite" is a misnomer and although stones tinged with blue do exist, they are quite rare. The traditional engagement ring has a white stone, and to date, over 200 different shades of white have been found. The "whiter" the white, the more expensive the stone. There are quite a few different diamond colors including green, pink, black and brown and some of the world's most famous diamonds are not white.

The fourth and final "C" is diamond Clarity. A good diamond should have fine clarity and there should be no fissures, carbon spots or other flaws visible to the naked eye. A so-called "perfect diamond" is one which has no visible flaws to the trained eye under ten power magnification. Minor flaws, invisible to the naked eye, won't affect the gem's beauty, but will affect its price.


Your best insurance against buying an inferior diamond is a jeweler whom you can trust and depend upon. Weisfield's is the only authorized member of the Diamond Council of America here in Medford, and our scientifically trained staff of qualified Diamondologists and Guild Gemologists are at your service. When planning your next diamond purchase, visit Weisfield's and be assured that we provide you with the best diamond value for your money. Remember, our Diamond Council of America emblem is your assurance of quality and value beyond compare!

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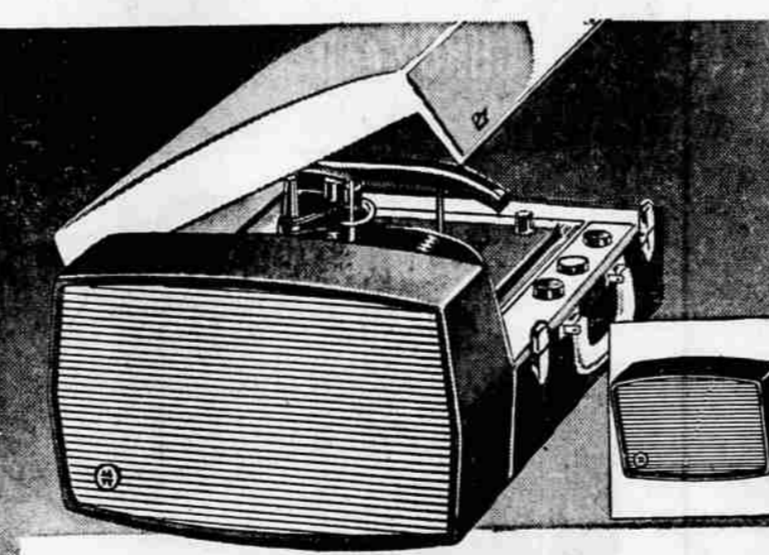
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