



HOWITZER INSPECTED - Laotian government troops inspect a recaptured U.S. 105-howitzer which had been used by the rebel pro-Communist troops and abandoned when Royalists advanced in the Ban Hin Heup area. Pro-Communist troops were reported to have retaken strategic Vang Vieng airport, site of an important Red supply depot, after Laotian government troops seized the Red stronghold town and its airstrip north of Vientiane. (UPI-Telephoto)

Improvements Greater Than Advances in Photography

New York - (UPI) - Improvements on previous advances rather than introduction of any startling new developments prevailed in the photographic world during the year just ended, and the same trend seems likely to continue in 1961.

Photographic highlights of the year included:

Smaller accessories, especially light sources. The jelly-bean sized AG (all-glass) flash-bulb at last came into its own with production of reflectors and small cameras especially designed to use the tiny bulb unveiled by General Electric more than two years ago.

Movie photographers shared in this trend. Sylvania introduced the biggest advance in floodlamps in years, the powerful sun gun, which packs light equal to four reflector flood bulbs into a single unit resembling in size and shape an electronic flash unit. And GE came up with a miniature photoflood bulb, the DAN. Four of them fit on a movie light bar less than 12 inches long.

Sound Moves Forward
Sound for 8mm movies bounded forward. Fairchild introduced an 8mm sound-recording camera using magnetic-stripped film, and a sound projector to show the films. Other sound projectors, or attachments for silent projectors, appeared, and 8mm sound got another strong push when Eastman Kodak came out with its first 8mm magnetic sound projector and established a striping service for adding sound tracks to 8mm film.

Viewing of finished pictures almost immediately after they are taken became a reality with introduction of Polaroid 10-second film. This ended the necessity of waiting a full minute for development of the print. At the same time, the super-speed 3000-type Polaroid film was improved with better sharpness and less grain.

Polaroid demonstrated a two-minute color film but said it planned to improve the process further before making the material generally available. The company may announce this spring what the target date for distribution will be.

More Automatic
Slide projectors became more and more automatic. Push-button remote control extended from simple sequence projection of color slides to reverse motion so that viewers could take another look at a previously projected picture, and some projectors even added remote-control focusing of the lens.

Cameras became more automatic, too, with new models of electric-eye automatic exposure control, some of which have automatic shutters as well as diaphragms. Polaroid, for example, came out with its first electric-eye camera. A trend toward motorized 35mm cameras appeared. These employ built-in motors to advance the film and cock the shutter, so that a rapid series of exposures may be made. Shutters themselves became faster-up to 1/1,000th second leaf-type units, and 1/2,000th in focal plane.

Many 35mm cameras grew bigger to accommodate the host of automatic features being put into them. Some managed to retain clean, simple

lines nevertheless. One of these was the Argus Autronic, an exceptionally easy to operate automatic 35mm camera. Among its unusual features is an exposure button that is pushed in toward the user's face as he holds the camera, instead of sideways or downward. This goes far toward eliminating camera movement and resultant blurred pictures.

Lenses Blossom
Zoom lenses blossomed everywhere, particularly on movie projectors. They appear likely to become the standard projection lens, and the trend is spreading to include slide projectors as well. Zoom projection lenses make it easy to adjust the picture size to the screen without moving the projector or the screen. They do have two drawbacks - unless of extremely high quality, they may not give as sharp an image as a conventional lens; and they cost more.

Exposure meters became more sensitive. At the big West German photo exhibition, the Photokina, last fall Gossen demonstrated a new meter, the Lunasix, so sensitive it will measure moonlight. The Lunasix is expected to become available in the United States by midyear. Its superior light-measuring ability comes only at a price, however, a price likely to be in

the neighborhood of \$50 to \$60.

Processing became simpler. Ilford introduced Monophen, a combination developer and fixer designed for one-stage processing of Ilford films but usable with excellent results with a wide variety of other brands, including Ansco, Kodak, Agfa and Perutz. Cormac Chemical added to its line of monobath solutions for both film and paper, put out a drying solution, and put together kits, called Unikits, that contain a developing tank, chemicals and everything else the photographer need for quick processing in one compact outfit.

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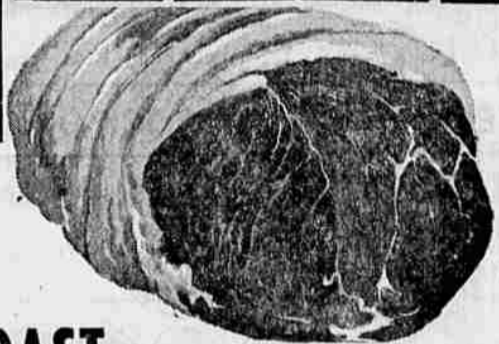
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