

Bontang Selatan

Near Anna & Dot & Anne,

Tuesday, July 13, '82

It's 5⁰³ AM, and the muezzin, the one who calls the Muslim faithful to prayer 5 times a day, has just finished his first summons to the people of Allah. He began, as he has every day here, at 4⁴⁰ AM. In the old days, the muezzin climbed the minaret, the tower-like structure alongside the mosque, 5 times daily in keeping with his calling (so to speak!). Today, however, the up-to-date mosques use 100-200 watt P.A. systems and a tape-recorded message.

Anyway, the mosque is just across the street from the guesthouse here in Bontang, the site of the PT Badak Natural Gas Liquefaction plant in East Kalimantan that Dinki and I came to visit. The muezzin, at 4⁴⁰ AM, begins our day here. He repeats his call at mid-morning, around noon, around 6 PM, and then around 8 or 9 PM. Then he's quiet for the night. I think I may miss him; sure wish I had a tape recorder along.

When you get this, you will know Dinki and I are out of Kalimantan and have passed through Singapore, as we plan to mail a letter there, each of us. Since we got here a week ago yesterday, we have worked each and every day, Sat & Sun. included. The people here, both Indonesians and "expatriates" or "expats" as they are called (British, Americans, others), are very hospitable. We have had many opportunities to see the plant's operations, and to see some off-site areas — the jungle, for example, and an ammonia plant about

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15 miles away which is being started up. The American community here has invited us to breakfast or dinner or a cook out Texas-style on several occasions. We have enjoyed seeing this "jewel in the jungle" much more than we expected, as it is several cuts above the oil camps in Africa & Sumatra & Arabia that Bumbri & I have visited earlier. There is a high level of comfortable living here, and the weather has been surprisingly moderate, considering that we are only about 5 miles or so above the equator here. The closeness to the sea helps, as there frequently is a breeze from off the Celebes ocean to the east.

Our work here is completed for now. There will be some loose ends to tie off when we get home, and we expect (and hope) that the plant may contract with IPSEO for an \$80-100,000 dollar system study soon. But we have done the work we came for, essentially, with some lingering wishes that we had done some things differently, or better, or not at all. They have had many power outages here, and on our arrival they presented us with all the remaining evidence and parts from their most recent equipment burnup, which they had no explanation for. It took us 2 1/2 days of constant probing and examination, but we finally came up with a "scenario" to explain the event. That's what we were supposed to do; it doesn't answer why they had all their other failures, but we believe they understand better, now, that certain problems underlie these events, and that they need to be more thorough and persistent in their analyses. From last Friday through yesterday's early afternoon we worked at

picking over their electrical system area by area and almost piece by piece, to see what kinds of things we believe are wrong or outmoded, & to discuss with them their various problems and their modes of operation. This was all to allow us to estimate what PSEO could do for them with a more formal power system study and to put a price on it. We did that yesterday, to a group of some 15 supervisors and managers, both Indonesians and expats. Dunki is an absolute marvel at organizing such a presentation as we made, with charts and examples and mini-teaching modes. We complement each other in considerable degree, as I tend to get into details and problem-solving, while Dunk works on the "big picture". But we're finished here now, and looking forward to leaving around 10 AM for Balikpapan, south of here across the equator, flying out on the "air van," a box-like plane that ferries people and freight in & out several times daily. I hope to get an aerial view of the plant (picture) going out, as I was not next to the window coming in. From Balikpapan, after about a 2 hour wait, it's off to Singapore.

Each of you would enjoy a visit here, despite some rough edges like huge (occasional) roaches and the mid-day heat. You would especially like to visit in some of the houses. These are supposedly "temporary" wooden houses put up 5-7 years ago, cluster-style and small.

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The ^{married} expats live in these, while the Indonesian staff live in permanent ~~concrete~~ concrete & cement-block homes.

You would be amazed at the comfort and quality of living and equipment in some of these expats' houses. As Singapore is close by (relatively) and very commercial, they buy fine china and furniture - much of it hand made or hand-carved - and other housing furnishings at ridiculous prices.

Some of the furniture, for example, is solid rosewood or ironwood or mahogany. One hostess who served us breakfast showed us her collection of Chinese pottery, mostly expensive antiques. She also had an unbelievable collection of large sea shells - cowries, conch shells, and so forth, many as large as 10 or 12 inches in length.

It appears that many homes have "locals" (natives) as household help - to work the gardens & grounds, or help with the cooking and cleaning. Flowers grow in abundance everywhere, and the guesthouse tables frequently are set with ^{flower} vases with 2 or 3 kinds of orchids in them. I have some pictures of these and some of the Indonesian homes. I hope they turn out OK.

In closing I want to tell you I've thought often of each of you and wondered what you were doing at that instant, 12 hours out of time phase with me. I have missed you all, and look forward to seeing you all again after my short stay in Holland w/ Dunki. Love
My especial best to Anna!

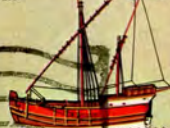
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