Interview No. 3. Southeast Asia Review
June 1, 1977 Vince Matt and Alden Jones

Jones
Okay, Vince, you have some what there?

Matt
I have a number of photographs and slides that might be helpful.

Jones
Sure. Conversation starters.

Matt
As you know, I've been working primarily in the investigation aspect of timber base investments in Southeast Asia and, consequently, I've worked on a number of areas as part of the investigation team there.

Jones
That should be interesting and a lot of variety.

Matt
I think I have a few photos here that might be helpful in terms of developing the Far East Asia and Southeast Asia story.

Jones
Very good.

Matt
And, of course, some of the areas that we do get into are rather remote and this picture I'm showing you here is of central Mindanao. I believe it is the second largest island in the Philippines. This is part of the island which there is a very sizable indigenous population known as the manobos.

Jones
Yes, I've wondered if these were the Manobos, and this is one of their village clearings or something here?

Matt
Yes. It is a hill rice area here and actually where they are standing there is an area in which we cleared a little bit for bringing in supplies and crew members during the timber appraisal. So that is a heli-pad. But it was cleared before hand by the Manobos probably a few years, maybe four or five years ago. It was a rice field.

Jones
Who are some of the fellows in the picture?

Matt
I'll have to take a look at that. This is Jose Binaflot who is with our operation at Basilan in the Philippines. He is the crew leader in this particular case. The other individual is a man that works with Aquinaldo Development Corporation and the rest, of course, oh, and there is another Timba. A man by the name of Timba that works with our Basilan operation. The rest of the individuals are, of course, Manobos that live right in the forest region.

Jones
When was the first time you made a trip over there, Vince?

Matt
Let's see, in the Philippines, I believe around March of 1974. I believe it was the first trip. I was there at Luzon City.

Jones
About three years ago, and how many trips have you made over there?

Matt
Oh, perhaps a total of four or five in all cases in connection with investigation of the timber-base operation. In one case it was appraisal of a plantation mainly for - again it was on the island of Mindanao. Now I don't know on these, Alden, if you see a picture there that you think you might want to utilize somewhere along the lines in the course of writing up the history there, I can leave it with you or leave the negative with you.

Jones
Very good. I want to be sure that we have the document well illustrated.

Matt
Here is another here that you might call it a mini-negotation with the Manobos in that one area that we were cruising. Of course, they are doing quite a good job of making their spears. Of course one of the main-chief means of earning a livelihood or, not earning it but making a living, is hunting wild boar, wild pig, and they use those spears. They also use little dogs with them to run the ...

Jones
I see. Do they do this at night or daytime?

Matt
Normally at night. But they do do some hunting there in the daytime there as well. The surprising thing was that the Manobos didn't seem to do very much fishing in the streams. At the same time, of course, the streams had considerable amount of fish. I don't understand why they wouldn't have more fishing.

Jones
You'd think that so readily available, you'd think they would go for it more. Are there animals other than the wild boars there that they hunt?

Matt
I believe so. Well, I believe there was at least one type of deer, perhaps two, that they also hunt. Plus there is this, I'm not sure of the exact name of this lizard, it might be the Monitor lizard, but I'm not certain. I've seen it perhaps 3' and close to 4' long.

Jones
These are eatable, of course.

Matt
Apparently, because I have seen some of the natives walking down the trail with one of those lizards over their shoulders.

Jones
Oh, yes. If you say so.

Matt
I assume it was destined for the stew pot.

Jones
More than likely. Now these investigations that you were over there on had nothing directly to do with our current operations, is that right?

Matt
That is correct. They were separate potential investment prospects that we were looking into to the extent that a particular investment opportunity was close to our operating area, we would very frequently utilize some of our manpower cruisers and so forth to carry out the investigation. But they were separate and distinct from our ongoing operations.

Jones
Was this entirely government timber? Or was some of it privately controlled?

Matt
It is in effect government timber, but at the same time it is privately controlled. In a sense that the government, of course, owns the land and private individuals receive the rights to harvest the timber on that land.

Jones
I see. They were proposing to let us in on it as a third party?

Matt
Yes, that is correct. In most cases the various timber tracts that we have looked at were situations in which the current holder of the timber harvesting rights on the area for whatever reason either wanted to sell those rights or to encourage a third party to come in and provide additional capital for developing that resource further.

Jones
Were there any of these that turned out to be attractive enough for us, that we wanted to buy into them?

Matt
Yes. There was one in particular in the Philippines that was very attractive to us; however, we were never able to agree to the specific terms. It was more a matter of the cost, of course, for the company to become involved in the venture that from the return-on-investment standpoint it was unattractive. From the resource standpoint, we were very much interested, but we didn't, or could not, reach agreement on the price for becoming a partner in the venture.

Jones
I see. You say they might have been attractive from what point of view? Type of timber, amount of timber, or what?

Matt
Both. Of course, as you know, in the much of the Philippines, particularly on the island of Mindanao, the principal lumber type is the diptercarp forest and many of the timbers found within this forest region are referred to in world trade as Philippine Mohagany. The Filipinos themselves, of course, refer to it as lauan; and it is a widely accepted group of timbers in the world markets. Consequently, the markets exist for the timbers. In fact, the markets are quite well developed. That is unlike some of the tropical hardwood forests that occur in other parts of the world where there doesn't exist the concentration of one, let's say family of tree species that tends to dominate the forest and at the same time are readily marketable. This is one of the

things, of course, that makes some of the Southeast Asia forests attractive to Weyerhaeuser, of course, is the fact that we do have the large family of tree species who's properties are readily acceptable by various end users in the leading markets of the world. In Europe, the United States, and Japan.

Jones
What is it about the lauans that make them an attractive species of wood?

Matt
Well, it is to a large extent the fact that the woods are able to be used for a number of widely recognized uses, such as the production of lumber, production of siding for houses, the production of veneer and plywood, in essence many of the diptercarps are - lend themselves to the manufacture in a sense, of commodity-type products. In other words, with this as a resource base it is possible to produce large volumes of widely accepted products.

Jones
It makes a considerable variety of different products.

Matt
That is correct.

Jones
More so than any of the other species over there?

Matt
That is correct. As far as the actual properties of many of the woods, there are other tropical hardwoods in other parts of the world that, if you take an individual species that might be acceptable as would be let's say this group of diptercarps, But the problem is in many of the others, let's say in Western Africa or tropical rain forests of the Amazon Basin, for example, they differ in that you may find a species, or four or five species, that might be comparable to the diptercarps but you are not able to extract large volumes over a relatively small area such as you can in Southeast Asia. In other words, the percentage of marketable volume per unit of area in the diptercarp forest of Southeast Asia is much higher than in the case of the Amazon, let's say, or the tropical rain forest, belt of west Africa.

Jones
This is the big feature of it, no doubt.

Matt
Definitely. Of course, it helps in its claim to a large extent the degree to which the Southeast Asia forests have been exploited. Whereas, let's say the Amazon basin, they haven't been exploited to the degree they have in Southeast Asia.

Jones
Do I understand that there are many species in the diptercarp family of which the lauan group is simply one group and there are many different kinds of lauans.

Matt
That is correct. I'm not sure, I'd have to check on that in terms of, let's say, taken a large timbered area in the diptercarp forest in Mindanao in the Philippines, for example. Let's say the total volume, let's say let's look over an area of 100,000 hectares or 250,000 acres that you may be working with perhaps six to eight species that fall into the lauan category. They might, let's say, you are removing - in the selective harvesting process - taking off 125 to 140 cubic meters per hectare, perhaps 80% of that total volume will be made up of the six to eight species. So it is quite dramatic when you compare the predominence of that group of species with the similar situation in the Amazon where six or eight species might on the average represent five to 10% of the total stand volume. So there is quite a contrast.

Jones
That is quite a contrast - definitely.

Matt
In the Philippines of course, the marketability of let's say of the timbers there in the Philippines, when you express it as a percent of the total stand volume that situation could be readily marketed, is probably the best situation in Philippines, compared to insular Malaysia or parts of Indonesia.

Jones
Good point. We think of these trees as being hardwoods and technically by forestry definition, they are hardwoods but isn't it correct that there is a considerable variety of hardness and density in the woods themselves and some of them are actually rather soft?

Matt
That is correct. There is a tremendous variety in the hardwoods of the various woods from a technical standpoint. As you indicate also, they are classified as hardwoods. In fact there is a species that I believe is not indigenous to the Philippines; it has been brought in from -- it is indigenous to Ceylon, perhaps Burma. I am referring now to a species, "hardwood species",

has been introduced for purpose of establishing industrial tree plantations, and that's Albizzia. That is extremely soft wood, it might be somewhat similar to cottonwood in the U.S. where a person with his fingernail can make quite an indentation in a block of wood. On the other hand, of course, there are hardwoods that are extremely dense. Of course, they have a specific gravity in many cases higher than 1 and consequently, they sink, they are sinkers. These, of course, pose problems in connection with a timber harvesting operation where one mode of transportation is rafting, using the rivers to raft logs from the timbered area down to, let's say, a manufacturing facility. Of course, the only way that these species that will not float can be transported is either by truck or, in some cases, barged on the river or in some cases, they call it a sinker log, strap them between two floaters and take them down in that fashion but it is more expensive, of course.

Jones
That is part of the resourcefulness and ingenuity. You mentioned this special species that has been introduced there, for the record, how do you spell that name?

Matt
Albizzia, is Albizzia and the species name is Falcataria. Very frequently they shorten that name and refer to it as Albizzia falcata.

Jones
It's indigenous to what locality?

Matt
I would have to check on that to be certain, Alden. I was thinking it was native to parts of Burma, perhaps Ceylon, I think even parts of India.

Jones
But strictly it is Southeast Asia locale?

Matt
I would have to check to be certain.

Jones
Well, Vince, why not describe for us how you went about your work over there, making these investigations.

Matt
Well, the manner in which the investigation is conducted depends to some extent on whether it is a reconnaissance-type investigation in which case, at a particular point in time, we think there is some possibility that we may have an

opportunity to undertake an investment in a forest-based opportunity. But it is of a preliminary nature and consequently, the initial investigation might be only of a reconnaissance nature; in which case, we would want to learn as much as we could at fairly low cost and in a fairly short period of time about the nature of the resource itself. Consequently, this might involve quick fly-overs. We might rent a helicopter, or charter a helicopter or fixed wing if we were unable to get a helicopter, and if we did have the helicopter, for example, we might drop down on an adjacent logging operation to take a look at the timber on the ground to see whether there was some severe defect problem with the timber; to also check on the availability of rocks which are necessary for the development of the road system in order to be able to operate a timbered area or harvest the timber and we would also be doing some preliminary checking on, let's say, the legal status of the ownership of a particular area that we were going to investigate. Perhaps in more detail at a later date.

So we check out some of the broader issues related to the resource itself as well as the ownership and control of that resource. So in many cases we find, for example, we did a piece of work in Sarawak, which is one of the Malaysian states on the island of Borneo. On the east port of the island, we undertook a reconnaissance in that area. One of the things we did find out was we found the timber to be extremely defective. In fact, the timber was over-mature and, of course, this was of great concern to us and we learned, as well, that another American company had gone in there and tried to operate from this particular resource - in fact, as I understand it, they hired a Southeast Asian forestry consultant to do the timber resource investigation for them. The investigation was completed and apparently there was very little mentioned about the extent of defect in the timber stands. Consequently, the company went ahead and started operating in that particular area and after about two years they had to pull out. They lost huge sums of money due primarily to the fact that they didn't have a good fix on the resource before going into it.

Jones
Was this Boise-Cascade?

Matt
Yes. But there have been numerous incidents of that - the importance of understanding the resource that you will be working with - because unless that resource is present and it is readily marketable and there is sufficient volume per unit of area, there is readily marketable and there is sufficient volume per a unit of area, there is really no justification for trying to build an industry around that.

Jones
This over-maturity defect that you mentioned in the timber, very briefly, how was that indicated and displayed in the timber?

Matt
Well, in most cases, the defect was visible. In other words, many of the trees were hollow at the butt and also had very sizable indicators in the form of various types of conks - fungi - in the base of the trees. In many cases, too, the tops of the trees were snapped off by wind, weakened by decay and of course, we also visited some adjacent logging operations and we had a very good look at the timber after it was felled and lying on the ground even before it was bucked. In many cases there were trees that, as far as we could determine, there was no visible indicator that they had a lot of defect, yet when they were on the ground they would have a tremendously large hole right in the center of the tree. So this is the hidden defect that you wouldn't normally pick up in a cruise of standing timber because as far as you could determine there was no visible indicator.

Jones
So a field man out there, not really looking closely or doing a good investigation job, could be fooled by it?

Matt
Very easily. Because that is why in any type of a, let's say, a more detailed investigation of the timber resource, whether appraisal, inventory or a cruise, a very important part of that is taking a sample of timber, felling some of the timber during the cruise itself to check on the extent of hidden defect not normally seen during the actual cruise itself. So the defect sample should be a part of the actual cruise there.

People have been fooled by not felling some of the timber to take a look at that possibility, hidden defects. Of course, especially if the resource base were to be used to support, let's say, a veneer or plywood mill, it is very important that at least they understand beforehand that they were going to have problems peeling that wood because of the sizable volume that has center holes in the logs. There are ways of peeling those. They use a big chuck but it is more difficult to peel those logs that have big holes in the center. You have to take special measures to get the chuck on each end of the log, but they can be peeled.

Jones
As we go along, Vince, if you recall personal experiences or human interest experiences or anecdotes, why, let's be sure to feed them in because they flavor up the whole story. Did you find that there were other companies, other people running around - I shouldn't say running around - making investigations over there?

Matt
Sure. In many cases we have run into, let's say we looked at some of the timber there in the state of Sarawak. In fact, a group of Romanians, an investigation team, had preceded us by a matter of a week or two and this was on the island of Borneo that was noted for the Ibons, who had quite a reputation for headhunting; and, in fact, this Romanian investigating team, which consisted of four individuals, had gone up the river to the interior very close to the border between Kalimantan, Indonesia and the Malaysian state of Sarawak. Of course, the Ibons lived along the river and the Romanian team stayed in this long house at Mandendow, the junction of the Yaat River, I think it's the Balah River that flows into the Gangagatt; but at any rate the Romanian group stayed at the long house, which is the housing used by the Ibons that live along the river and essentially the entire community is all under one roof. An extremely long building and the building is split up into . First, the center portion of the building is made up of apartments, essentially sleeping quarters for the various families, then the outer portion is what we would refer to as a deck or a very long corridor. This was sort of a social area of the long house. Long houses could vary in length from about 100 to 300 feet.

Jones
Then there would be this corridor on each side?

Matt
No, the corridor would be on the front side normally facing the river and then on the back side they have something similar to it except this was the kitchen area for all the individual apartments. Then, of course, the entire building would be up on stilts and very frequently the Ibon family would raise pigs, chickens - primarily pigs and chickens - and of course, they would be running around underneath the house all the time. They had no need for a garbage disposal, for example, just drop through the cracks and the pigs and chickens ate it.

Jones
Were these built over the water so that the tide would come in?

Matt
No. This is beyond the influence of the tide. It was way up the river in the interior.

Jones
Okay.

Matt
They were built on the rivers and they normally are quite a ways up from the river, at a higher elevation, primarily for safety reasons because the rivers can fluctuate tremendously from the rainy to the dry season. Some of the rivers can rise 20, 30 and even 40 feet from one time of the year to the next and of course these heavy torrential downpours, the river can rise maybe five to ten feet within 24 hours.

Jones
Monsoon rains?

Matt
That is correct. But anyway, I am spending too much time laying the background for this. The Romanians stayed at this long house. One of the things, in the apartment areas - not in the apartment areas - but in this long corridor, essentially the social area or where the senior members of the families - I think it was primarily restricted to men, after they had finished the evening meal, for example, they would go out into the corridor area and perhaps smoke a pipe and talk, and all the way up and down this corridor they had baskets made from rattan full of human skulls and in most cases they were blackened by smoke. We were informed that they were heads the Ibons had taken during the Japanese occupation, heads of Japanese soldiers, but I learned later here that it was the Ibons had gone on quite a rampage right after the Japanese surrendered and actually were taking Chinese heads, because the Ibons felt that maybe the Chinese people, that lived in the area, were sympathetic to the Japanese occupation, but again, it is unconfirmed. I have seen the same thing written in a recent article by National Geographic. They came to the same conclusion, that they had gone on a rampage and killed some Chinese. I am sure they probably took quite a few Japanese heads. I understand the Japanese forces were extremely afraid of the Ibons because of their reputation for human headhunting. At first, Japanese soldiers would go out to the restroom, outhouse, and never come back. This happened enough so every time somebody went out to the bathroom they had at least one other guy with them because the Ibons - it was a good time for them to reduce the population of the Japanese in the country.

Jones
They retained these skulls as a measure of their prowess?

Matt
As I understood it, that was an initiation rite into manhood, that they had to take heads. Of course, it was a symbol of manhood, the taking of heads. In fact, they had a very large, very big treaty here around the turn of the century there. It was held at Kapit, which is a settlement that is furthest upriver from the ocean on this Rajahn River and was at that particular town, which has a population, I believe,

about 5,000 people now, mostly Ibon, some Chinese, there are quite a few Chinese, too. But they had a big conference. They signed, the Ibons and a number of other tribes signed a peace treaty, essentially where the Ibons agreed not to take any more heads because headhunting was a primary way of life to the Ibons up til the turn of the century. They'd pretty much - they abandoned the practice up until - it was actually up til Japanese occupation of Borneo. And then, of course, they went back to their old ways. As I understand it, they did continue for a short while after the war, and since that time, as far as we know, they have not seriously practiced headhunting. We sort of hoped that was the case. Apparently, the remains have stayed at the, this very same long house, and of course, they'd seen baskets and baskets of skulls, human skulls, hanging from the ceiling and they were petrified. The head man of the long house offered them rice and pork and so forth, and they didn't dare eat it. They thought they were going to poison them and lose their heads. They wouldn't sleep, stayed up all night, and they were so scared that they were going to lose their heads that they didn't go any further in terms of investigating that particular concession area. So they left and went back down the river. We learned all this because the Ibon guide that we had was the same guy they had, and he was laughing about it. Because he said, you know, they've abandoned those ways a long time ago. He hadn't told them that.

Jones
So, you were reassured, your gang, were reassured, so you went ahead and did your job?

Matt
Yes. I was quite confident that if they were practicing headhunting on a large scale, we probably would have learned of it beforehand or at least, we were hoping that was the case. I do have some of the actual slides, slides that show the view of the long house and the setup and also the skulls hanging from the ceiling.

Jones
I will want to take a look at them, perhaps not right now. But before we get through, I want to see those. How much time can we take?

Matt
Oh, I'd say about another 15 or 20 minutes.

Jones
Fine. What are your recollections of some of the good timber that you saw? Where and what was it like, for instance?

Matt
Well, some of the best timber I've seen was there again on the island of Mindanao in the Philippines, where we looked at a fairly large area covering, oh, a total of roughly

70,000 hectares. The area had very sizable indigenous population, primarily of various types of manobo tribes and shifting cultivation was very prevalent in the area. Nevertheless, in terms of the marketable volume per hectare, they still averaged about 125 cubic meters. We ran into stands where the marketable timber above 60 centimeters dbh exceeded 200 cubic meters and some ran up to 250 cubic meters.

Jones
That's a heavy stand.

Matt
Very heavy volume.

Jones
You mentioned a type of cultivation, Vince.

Matt
It's a shifting cultivation.

Jones
Oh, shifting.

Matt
Yes. There are numerous terms for that practice. In the Philippines, they call this, well, the areas that actually are cleared for the purpose, in most cases, of planting either a type of sweet potato or rice, upland rice, they call them kaingin in the Philippines. Of course, the shifting cultivators themselves in many cases are manobos. They call them fangaros.

Jones
Now, we were talking about particularly good timber which you had seen and that was the best, you say? Where was that in distance and direction from our Milbuk or our Basilan operations?

Matt
Okay. From the Milbuk operation, that would be, the particular area I'm referring to, which was an area controlled by Deofassa, the name of a company in the Philippines, was to the north and east of our Milbuk operations. I'm just making a very rough estimate now. Perhaps I would say 150 air miles northeast of our Milbuk operation.

Jones
I see. Directly inland, in toward toward the island.

Matt
Yes, that's correct. In fact, this area is not very far from the location where they found, I believe that's the same location where they discovered a _____ Stone Age tribe. They just discovered them a matter of four or five years ago. Very, very remote area. I think one of the most remote areas in the Philippines.

Jones
I remember reading the stories in the newspapers.

Matt
On Mindanao.

Jones
How did you go there? From what point on the island?

Matt
Well, we went to Butuan City, which is one of the larger cities on the island of Mindanao. I believe Davao is biggest. This is Butuan.

Jones
Is that on the north coast of the island?

Matt
That's correct. It's on the north coast. North and slightly to the west. This is the city that is difficult to estimate the exact population, but it was probably 100,000 people, so most of the houses on stilts because it was, at least part of the area, would be flooded periodically from the tides. Occasionally during the monsoon season you would have - I didn't see it myself - but they'd have flooding there in the main streets. And from there, of course, during the investigation of this particular area, we had a full-time available helicopter. But some of the bulkier items, food supplies, fuel for the helicopter, so forth, went by way of that Busan River up close to the area. We had to truck another 30, 35 kilometers from the river up to the area.

Jones
What kind of a team did you have, Vince? Did other fellows from here go with you in addition to the local people, I presume, that you hired on?

Matt
Okay, in this particular investigation here, one other individual went with me and that was Tunny McCollum. Then we also employed or utilized 10 of our cruisers from Milbuk operation. We fielded 10 teams, 10 seven-man teams, and made up by 10 team leaders, the Weyerhaeuser employees recruited from our Silam and Milbuk operations. Then this was a joint investigation with Mitsubishi Corporation, and we had two Mitsubishi men, actually three, there, two that were working full time in the jungle, were out at the base camp. Then we had...

Jones
They were Japanese fellows?

Matt
Yes, Japanese fellows. Then we had in all cases, on each team, we had at least one native that worked with the team, perhaps two in some cases because there was a quite difficult

situation in some respect. The area we were investigating was territories of five distinct tribes, indigenous tribes. The boundaries of those tribes were well recognized by the various tribes. They were set up, of course, on the basis of topography, major river drainage facilities. Apparently, a member of one tribe would not go into the area of another tribe. There was a certain amount of hostility between them. So consequently, that was a difficulty we encountered. In looking at it. We would have, let's say, two natives with the cruising team and as we moved from one tribal boundary into another, you would have - the two natives would not dare go into the other territory, so we would have to go ahead and contact a tribal member, one of the leaders, and hire two men from that area. So,...

Jones
An interesting angle.

Matt
So, that complicated the situation quite a bit. Right at the very beginning, we were aware of the fact that there were five different tribes and quite a little friction between them. So consequently, we immediately hired the individual we referred to as the datu.

Jones
How do you spell that?

Matt
D-a-t-u. I'm not sure. It's either datu or dato, I'm not sure how they spell it. Which kind of indicates a Muslim influence in the area and this particular individual was, as far as we could determine, the closest thing to being the recognized leader of all the tribes there. At any rate, this datu soc soc, as I indicated, appeared to be the closest thing to a recognized leader of the five tribes and consequently we used him as a negotiator before going into these various areas because they were, in some cases, quite hostile. We learned later the cause for it. But at any rate . . .

Jones
What was the cause of it, Vince? That might be of some interest.

Matt
There was, as we understand it, I don't recall the individual names, but there was a changed contractor that had started to operate the area and operated in the area for about two years as we understand it and for whatever reasons, during the last - somewhere between six and ten months of the operation, he didn't pay any of his workers. He continually put them off, saying that, "You stay with me and six months from now I'll pay you all your back wages" and so on and so forth. And, of course, many of the workers were the Manobos that lived in the area, fallers and I guess choker men and so forth and, to make a long story short, the contractor left and they were, of course, very angry because they

worked very long without any pay at all and so we didn't find this out immediately until we'd been perhaps a week into the cruise and experiencing hostility on the part of the natives and then we found out that they, of course, felt we were a continuation of that Chinese contractor that was in there so - and of course, especially when, as I indicated before, we had two natives with each crew and we'd go into a new territory and they would insist on leaving the crew - we'd pick up two more - and we'd pay them immediately and they saw that they were being paid for the work immediately and that helped matters tremendously.

But another problem they had there was it was very high in population there and they were apparently between rice harvests, so they were quite hungry and they were foraging the best way they could in supplying themselves with food. Wild game, deer, wild pig, lizards, anything they could find that was edible, and consequently our camps - camps for the teams and crews at night - would be surrounded by a phenomenal number of natives who would ask for food and, of course, they were very hungry and so we had to make allowances for about 50% increase in our food supply. After awhile they became actually quite hostile and they didn't ask for food, they demanded it.

Jones
It became a way of life.

Matt
Sure, that's right. And when our crews were outnumbered 50 to 7, they didn't have much choice but to share the food. At any rate, every particular investigation is different, as you well know.

Jones
Of course. Do you have any particularly memorable recollections of things that happened there?

Matt
I have some but I probably wouldn't want to put them on tape. I have a lot of - I could mention one other thing. That particular one, it was a rather wild investigation in the sense that we had numerous difficulties. One of them was, we lost a helicopter. It crashed with five men on board and fortunately, no one was seriously injured. Totaled the helicopter but no one was injured and there were five men on board. Apparently what happened - I was not one of the members on board - this was as we were setting a crew down. We had sent one crew down, we had two crews in one area and had to transfer them from one area to another and Tunny had gone in and I kept a very tight schedule on where the chopper was supposed to be every minute and probably in the equivalent of perhaps 15 miles away from base camp in the jungle. Tunny had dropped off. He was going to do his check cruising and transfer the crew.

Well, what had happened was Tunny got off and the other three or four people that were with him went up in the woods and started the check cruising, then they loaded the other crew on and when the helicopter lifted off the ground there was a translator we had, plus one of the deputies from Mitsubishi plus a native chief plus one other individual and the pilot and the chopper lifted off the pad, which was right beside the river and it was probably a slope of perhaps 150 feet down the river, tremendous drop. The chopper got maybe 15 feet off the ground and, for whatever reason, the helicoptor tilted quite badly on one side and the pilot, as far as we could determine, overcompensated for it and tipped it the other way and tipped it right into the trees and started shearing the trees off. By that time, he lost complete control of the chopper and the chopper dropped straight down and went right through - two of the trees that he severed off at the top drove right up through the bottom of the helicopter. In one case, the tree went right between this native chief's legs. He must have had his legs apart. It went right up between his legs and through the roof of the chopper and the other tree came in right beside the pilot but but missed him and it was fortunate that those trees were there, otherwise we would probably have fallen into the river and exploded.

That's one of the real dangers of the chopper, it's not the flammability of the fuel but the impact causes them to explode. That's the real danger. The fact that it was in a sense anchored on those trees the blade was whirling before the engine died. Another real danger is when the chopper goes down there, of at all possible, you stay in the chopper until that blade quits rotating. They all get hostile and they stay in that chopper. It's extremely dangerous. Of course, that blade is made of, I'm not sure what alloy they're using in it. But they all walked away from it, it was miraculous.

Jones
Wasn't that a miracle.

Matt
So we had numerous difficulties. In fact, we had an investigation. The government agency regulating air traffic. The pilot was relieved from his role. The helipad was plenty big.

Jones
I see. They felt that he was responsible, that he had caused the accident.

Matt
Right. _____ so we got another helicopter and we had another pilot here who I didn't think was as adroit as he should be operating the chopper. He nearly piled it up and so I told him that was the last flight he makes and sent him back to the office. So we sent him back and we got a real good pilot and he stayed with us the rest of the time. By that time, the individuals were a little jittery.

Jones
I suppose so. That's too bad.

How did you find the native people as workers, Vince? Were they industrious?

Matt
They were excellent. Of course, in this particular operation you're utilizing them primarily as brushers but we have on other occasions used compassmen and so forth. They're very, very quick to learn and I found them in most part, except for the fact that (we level a tree and _____.) I don't see much difference between whatever nationalities. They learn very fast. In the Indonesian operations, for example, they demonstrated they have the ability to learn as well as any other nationalities. And they really have come a tremendously long ways. I know particularly on the ITCI operation, people were constantly making reference to or making comparisons between the skills of the Indonesian loggers versus the Filipino loggers. Of course, it really is not a legitimate comparison because the Filipinos have been working at this trade for a much, much longer period of time, say, 20 to 30 years or more, whereas the Indonesians are just now starting to learn. It's not surprising when, let's say, the Indonesians have difficulty learning how to drive a log truck. Probably never had seen one before much less driven one or driven an automobile, for that matter. It might be equivalent to going to downtown Seattle and meeting the first man on the street and putting him in a jet and asking him to fly it. It might be quite similar. The transition you're asking the individual to make, not transition but when you pick up a fairly complicated skill real quick.

Jones
These native people that you picked up on the job and hired them to help you out, what rate of pay did they require - did they expect?

Matt
They didn't really have any understanding or feeling for what wages they should be paid and we in fact paid them the same as we would anyone else for the particular job we're asking them to do. I think we were paying more between 8 and 10 pesos per day, which would have been somewhere between maybe $1.05 and $1.45 per day, which was essentially the standard wage there in the Philippines for that type of work. Of course, one thing that did surprise me that if they were willing to work for money, pesos in this particular case, because, as I indicated, they live right in the middle of the forest but at the same time they did have an opportunity to go down to the river and buy rice and various types of necessities - salt - so they did have an incentive to earn the hard cash because they were fully aware of what it could buy them.

Jones
What was your impression of the cities that you visited there, Vince? Did you have a favorite one that, one that you liked better than any of the others? What cities did you go to, for instance?

Matt
Well, Sibu. Of course, Manila. I really couldn't say that I had a favorite because most of the time on these special trips, I really hadn't had much time to, let's say, to be impressed.

Jones
You were traveling then. Hadn't given it a thought.

Matt
The investigations were really intensive. You were working under several time constraints to get the job done and we worked seven days a week all the time until the job was completed and consequently, you really don't have much time to take in the sights and cities. I guess in Southeast Asia the place I enjoyed most just from the standpoint of all the various cities, small villages and so forth was there in Sarawak. Beautiful place. I really liked the capital city, Kuching.

Jones
Kuching? That's down in the south, isn't it?

Matt
That's correct. I was going to say it's on the Rahjong there. Then Sibu, which is on the Rahjong River also, very nice city.

Jones
Sibu?

Matt
That's spelled different than the one down in the Philippines. The one down in Sarawak is spelled Sibu whereas the one in the Philippines is spelled Cebu. I really liked Sarawak. It's very nice. Nice little villages. We do have to spend a day or two in some of the villages. The accommodations are less than what you might like once in awhile, such as, if you've been out in the field for a month, it's nice to have a hot shower and you don't have it.

Jones
No way huhn?

Matt
That's right. Besides, I suppose, when you've been out in the woods for about a month it really doesn't take much to make you happy.

Jones
Might as well be philosophical about it, I guess.

Matt
That's right.

Jones
Are there any other particular aspects of it that you find memorable or particularly significant, Vince?

Matt
I can't think of anything offhand. Of course, one of the things I enjoyed more than anything else working in the capacity that I do is that I have plenty of opportunities to really see a variety of situations as it relates to forest resources in the various parts of the world. I spent quite a little time in Southeast Asia on numerous investigations. I had not worked there full time, on operations for an extensive period os time, couple years or whatever. But the combination with the investigations I've been a part of in Southeast Asia and had a chance to look at a lot of areas in South America and Africa. It's been quite a variety of situations and variety is the spice of life.

Jones
Are you still involved in the same kind of work and might you be required to go back over there, Vince?

Matt
Yes. Matter of fact, I just came back. I spent about six weeks here starting in the middle of February or so and I came back about the first of March. I was on two different jobs. One investigation for an economic evaluation of a plantation program in the Philippines and then I went immediately from that to Sabah, where we're looking at the possibility of expanding our operation there . . .

Jones
At Kennedy Bay?

Matt
That's right. My main responsibility there was to help set up the timber groups for the investigation. Working out the logistics and getting that underway.

Jones
This was in connection with the new agreement we're going to make with the Sabah government?

Matt
That's correct. In connection with the detailed investigation of a proposed joint venture between the Sabah Foundation and Weyerhaeuser at Kennedy Bay. Well, that's quite typical of

the types of assignments that fall within my various responsibilities. But you know I concentrate primarily on the resource side. I do get into several other aspects in any type of investigation.

Jones
Well, that must make it interesting to have different aspects, a variety.

Matt
It does. Another thing, that's a very rapidly involving area in Southeast Asia and other parts of the world, and that's the increased emphasis on manmade forests or industrial tree plantations and, of course, that's a very different situation from the standpoint of the homogeny of the resource you're working with, and that's very good. I figure all in the years ahead involved in forestry in Southeast Asia and other parts of the world. It's quite a ways off before, let's say, plantation-grown wood becomes a major factor in world trade of wood and wood products, you know, but it's coming.

Jones
Something to look forward to. You betcha.

Is that about as far as we could go at this point then, Vince?

Matt
I believe so.

Jones
Well, other things may occur to you and as they do, well, I'd appreciate it if you would just jot down a little memo and we'll try to get it in the record.

Thank you, Vince.