

ONE BEIRUT SURPRISE, ONE GRENADA WHOOPÉE, ONE NICARAGUA NIGHTMARE, ONE SALVADOR AND ONE BOTTLE OF SOLE SOURCE — AND THEY SAID IT GOES ON YOUR TAB

# Round & About Sharon Hambrick

## A Dutch Viewpoint

I was both impressed and made to feel my lack of education in many areas when I talked with Peter. He is fluent in English, French and German and noted that most of his countrymen speak English. How many Americans can speak English properly let alone speak another language well enough to be understood on a trip abroad? I studied Latin in high school, but aside from its academic application, it is a dead language. I was not required to study French or Spanish, although they were offered, and in college I was able to slip through again minus any foreign language instruction. I was glad then, but I feel cheated now.

In addition to his grasp on several languages, he apparently is a serious scholar and has spent much time studying about this country as well as others in the world. I suspect he knows more about our foreign policy than many of us do. Regarding the U.S. plans to place cruise missiles in the Netherlands as well as other European sites, Peter said 50 percent of his countrymen are very outspoken in their opposition. The other 50 percent do not want the missiles but do not want to lose the support of NATO. At the time he was here, he feared the debate might destroy the political center in his country's government.

Being in between the U.S. and Russia, the Netherlands is eager to have an arms reduction, and Peter said opinion in his country generally does not favor the Reagan Administration. Dutchmen feel the U.S. is wrong in its El Salvador action and other Central American policy. Since newspapers and magazines from the U.S. are available throughout the Netherlands, citizens can keep abreast of what the U.S. is doing. Peter expressed the opinion that he and other of his countrymen worry about what we Americans know or do not know about his country. He feels we deal in stereotypes. A lot is at stake in the U.S., he feels, and his country has great expectations about the actions of the U.S. so much so that the election of our president is of as much interest to the Netherlands as election of their top officials.

Peter was able to tell me succinctly about his country's political structure, government structure, educational system and economic system. I wonder how many U.S. citizens could tell a foreigner the same facts as succinctly in a few minutes regarding the U.S.?

The visiting Dutchman described a small country whose government is much larger than ours, is more regulated and provides a much more extensive social security system which features a minimum income, continuous unemployment and health benefits. The tax system is based primarily on a large national tax, and government has three layers, local, provincial and national. Most of the tax money is funneled from the national layer through 14 ministries. The political system is a coalition of some 12 parties, three or four of which account for about 30 percent of the vote. Currently the Christian - Democrat party is the center power, and to hold control must join with one of the other major parties. The nation's problems sound familiar -- unemployment of 20 percent, a budget too large and a Social Security system too expensive, as unemployment grows.

When questioned about the Common Market, Peter said most of the members give lip service only and basically are still competing with one another. The Netherlands is an exporting nation, and 50 percent of the items are agricultural -- such as cheese and flowers. The nation is also the home base for many multinational firms such as Shell, Unilever and Phillips. Many of Fortune Magazines top 20 firms are Dutch, he said.

Peter found Americans friendly, and the country one of extremes. One facet of American life which he found puzzling was our penchant to display the U.S. flag. Since we are not bounded by enemy nations, he could not understand why we feel compelled to display the flag everywhere.

I suspect that others who had the opportunity to speak with Peter during his visit were equally impressed. His knowledge of this country, while surprising me, also set me to wondering if our school system is preparing citizens to live in a global world. Are we learning about other nations? As Susan Williams has pointed out, the key to successful arms limitation may be such a closer look at our neighbors and a sincere attempt to at least know what makes them tick. We may not agree with them, but how can we ever successfully get along with anyone if we do not try to understand them? This applies to our personal situation as well as the nation's situation. It is easy to hate what you do not know or understand.

OEK

summer to talk at in the Netherlands and States to try to f what "makes us made were of great e U.S. so rarely get r global neighbors the current Cruise or, I would like to ws about it as well er points. hoek, and he halls nds. He wanted to boy, and recently t became a reality. sity of Leyden, one ersities, and he is he explained is a administrative law, ntlipates entering s a policy advisor or ie to the plateau mbership in Rotary d to visit a small btained the address b and sent a letter sit. The Rotarians ty as did the many t Hamilton ushered l an Oak Hill City county commission s.

ough you will be reading this after  
giving, I'm busy now getting ready for  
special day.

I like taking stock as this holiday approaches, and my list of everything I have to be thankful for is long. When it's done the bread that is rising now will be put into a box with other breads and foods I've made and packed away for a trip to my brother's home. An Oak Hill contingent of my family will meet a Philadelphia contingent of my family at my brother's home near Washington. There we will gather together to give thanks and enjoy being together under one roof.

Since distance separates us, I am immediately thankful for the chance to get together with those who mean so much to me. I enjoy cooking and baking and feeding people who are important to me. I like the idea of having so many people I care about with their feet under one table.

When we do pull our chairs around that table and bow our heads to give thanks, I will be thinking of the many ways I am blessed. I am thankful I have so many people to love and for the health all of us enjoy. I know too many people do not have jobs or adequate food, and I am thankful I have a job I enjoy and so many hard-working, honest, and warm people to work with.

I'm thankful for the opportunities to travel and see so much beauty in our country. I'm glad for chances to meet interesting people and to add to my store of knowledge with the hope that this brings me a little closer to acquiring genuine wisdom.

The birds that come to my window feeder, the bulbs and trees that are taking root in my yard, the constellations that I can make out at the top of the ridge, the purples in the sunset all make me thankful.

The feel of new books freshly purchased, the luxury of time to read, the chance to confront ideas in print delights me, and I am glad I have the freedom to read whatever I want.

I'm thankful for music and drama and art that makes me stop and think things in a new way. I'm glad for laughter; good neighbors and friends.

I'm happy to live in a country where even people like me can express their opinions and where people can come together to give thanks.

\*\*\*

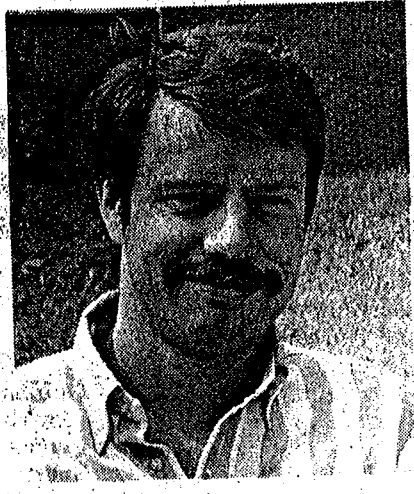
As secretary for the Fayette County Emergency Food Coalition, I would also like to thank the dozens of people who staff and stock the food pantries in operation all around the county. These people work long and hard in this all volunteer organization. At a time when we pause to think of all we have it also seems natural to think of those who aren't as blessed. Too many people in this county have exhausted their unemployment benefits and genuinely need the food they are getting from the county's pantries. The people who are keeping the pantries going deserve everyone's thanks.

The coalition also thanks those who have contributed food and money to the pantries. Most recently the Women of the Moose contributed \$1,000 to buy food for the pantries. This money is greatly appreciated and will be put to good use.

LESSEE... ONE BOTTLE OF...  
SUFFERIN' SALVADOR AND ONE BOTTLE OF

# Round Share

A D



PETER NOORDHOEK

I had the opportunity last summer to talk at length with a young man from the Netherlands who was touring the United States to try to develop an overall picture of what "makes us tick". Some of the points he made were of great interest to me, since we in the U.S. so rarely get a firsthand view of what our global neighbors think about us. In light of the current Cruise and Pershing missile uproar, I would like to share this young fellow's views about it as well as his views about some other points.

His name is Peter Noordhoek, and he hails from 's-Gravendell, Netherlands. He wanted to visit the U.S. since a young boy, and recently the opportunity for the visit became a reality. He is a student at the University of Leyden, one of his country's oldest universities, and he is pursuing law study, which he explained is a combination of state and administrative law. He is nearly finished and anticipates entering government work possibly as a policy advisor or in the diplomatic service.

Peter happened to come to the plateau because of his father's membership in Rotary International. Peter wanted to visit a small town in West Virginia and obtained the address of the Oak Hill Rotary Club and sent a letter telling of his wish to visit. The Rotarians greeted him with hospitality as did the many groups which Rotarian Pat Hamilton ushered him to visit. He observed an Oak Hill City Council meeting and a county commission meeting among other sights.

I was both im-  
lack of education  
with Peter. He is  
German and notes  
speak English. H  
English properly  
language well en  
trip abroad? I stu  
aside from its ac  
language. I was  
Spanish, althoug  
college I was ab  
any foreign lang  
then, but I feel

In addition to  
he apparently is  
much time study  
as others in the  
about our foreign  
Regarding the  
missiles in the  
European sites,  
countrymen ar  
opposition. The  
the missiles but  
of NATO. At th  
the debate migh  
his country's go

Being in betw  
Netherlands is es  
and Peter said o  
does not favor  
Dutchmen feel  
Salvador action  
policy. Since ne  
the U.S. are  
Netherlands, ch  
the U.S. is doin  
that he and ot  
about what we  
about his cou  
stereotypes. A  
feels, and his  
about the action  
the election of  
interest to the  
top officials.

Peter was abl  
country's poli  
structure, educ  
system. I wond  
tell a foreigner  
few minutes re