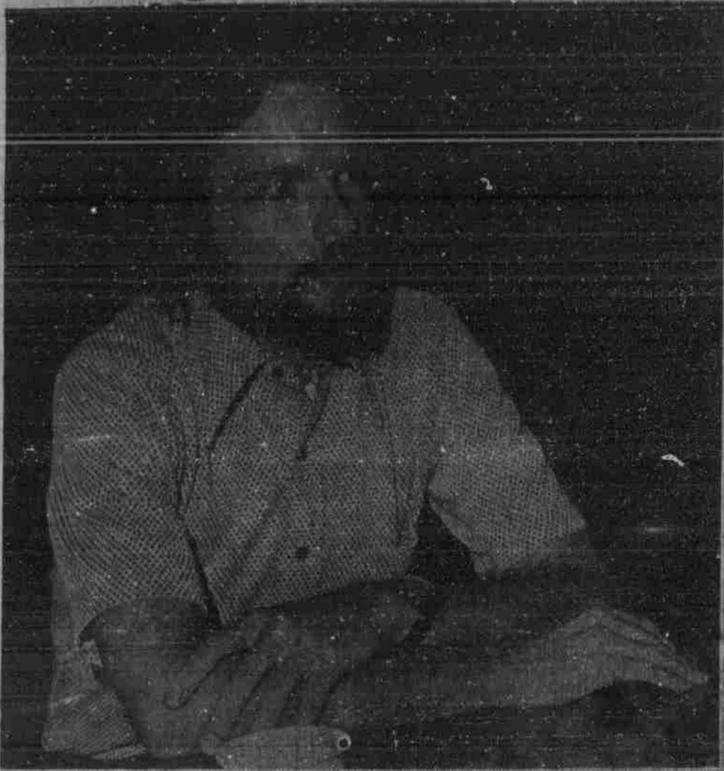


# UNL grad: two years in Africa rewarding



Paul Newhouse, 1972 UNL graduate, reviews his teaching experiences in Chad, Africa.

By Mary Shackleton

When Paul Newhouse came back to the United States after spending two years in Chad, Africa, he said he was more sensitive to big cars and the throw-away society.

"In Chad you don't throw anything away," he said.

Newhouse, a 1972 UNL graduate who majored in French and economics, left for Chad in July 1972 as a Peace Corps English teacher. He taught English as a foreign language to persons from 13 to 20 years old in Bouso, a town of about 3,000 for two years. Newhouse returned to the United States last month.

Chad, Newhouse said, is a poor country with no resources. Some of its people, mostly those living in the capital city, are aware of their poverty and have developed an inferiority complex about it. Some, he said, are bitter toward the French, who controlled the country until it was taken over by a dictatorship 14 years ago. A rebellion by the northern Islamic tribes against this government has been going on for about seven years, he said.

However, most of the people are not political, he said.

The people are concerned with their plot of land, the animals they own, whether or not the rains come and with paying the small tax the government collects.

Many persons do not send their children to school, because they want to preserve their own culture, Newhouse said. Six-primary schools are open to everyone and secondary schools are competitive. Students are required to test into them, he said.

According to Newhouse, the idealism associated with the early Peace Corps no longer exists. People are looking at the Peace Corps more as a job and an alternative to settling down to teaching in an American high school, he said.

Most Peace Corps volunteers do not expect to change the world, Newhouse said.

"The most important reason for teaching English is so communication can be established between the African nations," he said. Newhouse mentioned that the English texts he used dealt with a Nigerian family. Nigeria is an African nation with oil and a well-developed educational system. According to Newhouse, Nigeria could possibly be of help to Chad in the future.

The course curriculum in Chad was developed by the Ministry of Education and the Peace Corps American Program staff.

He also said he tried to convey to his students that the world is bigger than Chad.

Newhouse said his students were warm and interested in many subjects. Class times were often spent discussing American and Chad cultures in English, he said.

Politics were not openly discussed, he said. Most of his students were "too innocent to be too dissatisfied with the government. Most had never been to the capital."

According to Newhouse, Chad students' expectations are realistic. Many hope to become primary teachers or work in government jobs. This way they would receive a government salary. Chad is largely supported by subsidies from France, he said.

Several years ago Chad's government staged what Newhouse called a "cultural revolution." The revolution, he said, amounted to a "psychological preparation" to remaining financially static. Traditional rites, intolerance of outside religions and tribal loyalty extending from one's immediate superior to Chad's president were stressed, he said.

Opposition to the mandatory, pagan rites—which were often physical ordeals the revolution supported—arose from the northern Islamic tribes and Christians in the country. The rite requires a person to spend seven weeks in the wilderness, Newhouse said.

Newhouse asked his students if they would perform his rite. They said they would if they had to, but wouldn't want to. If a person refused to go through with a rite, he could be shot, Newhouse said.

Newhouse said his experience in Chad was "very good for him personally," although he said he got lonely for Americans. During the time he was there, he was the only American within 200 miles, he said.

He said he found work more rewarding than being a student.

"My friends in the Peace Corps were doing concrete worthwhile things. A lot of people at universities are floating around in the clouds. They don't know what they're going," Newhouse said.

Through teaching, Newhouse said he hoped to "reach the small percentage at the top of the class, who learned well and wanted to learn, and who would eventually be the leaders of the country."

Newhouse is currently working at a carwash. He will be leaving with the Peace Corps for Afghanistan in early December. He plans to stay there for a year and a half.

## Shortages end film series

By David Ware

A shortage of funds and dwindling student attendance have combined to spell out the closing title for the Union Weekend Film Series. A fixture of UNL weekend life for more than eleven years, the series fell prey last spring to a large Union Programming budget cut and sharply reduced admissions receipts.

"Profit isn't our motive, but we tried not to use student fees," said Art Thompson, assistant director of programs at the Nebraska Union. "We wanted the films to break even."

Thompson said losses in the past have been absorbed into profits from other programs, but with the advent of the 1974-75 budget, there wasn't enough money to permit this.

At its inception, the Weekend Film Series was shown in the Union Auditorium which seats approximately 160 persons. Outgrowing the Union, the films moved to the Henzlik Hall Auditorium, only to face competition from newly-expanded downtown theatre complexes.

During the spring 1974 semester, the films were cut back to showing only one evening, instead of both Friday and Saturday nights as before.

Thompson said he did not feel the student body was being deprived seriously of entertainment, since there are now fourteen screens in the downtown area alone, not counting the Sheldon Film Theater or the various drive-in establishments.

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