

Chief Binkley stops paychecks for POA leader Tracy/B1

Press-Telegram

LONG BEACH, CALIFORNIA, MAY 3, 1989

25¢

AT A GLANCE

WEATHER

Partly cloudy
Highs 70s, lows 60s. Complete weather/D17

SPORTS



Robbie Ftorek
Robbie Ftorek canned by Kings
As expected, coach gets the ax from L.A. hockey team/D1

Orel Hershiser, Dodgers shut out Pirates, 7-0/D1

PEOPLE

Jackson disguise worked, kind of
Pop star was mistaken for a 'suspicious character'/A2

LOCAL

L.A. commission nixes memorial for Korean War
Veterans group may seek to place monument in Long Beach or some other city/B1

LIFE/STYLE

Local Hero: The co-owner of the Silver Fox bar combines his talents as a savvy entrepreneur with his commitment to social activism/C1

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"This is really America's 'other' drug problem. Even youngsters with potentially life-threatening conditions are misusing the drugs that can save their lives such as cancer treatments or medication to prevent rejection of a transplanted kidney."
Commissioner Frank Young, of the Food and Drug Administration/A1

RECOMMENDATIONS

Thursday: If you're looking for a reason to throw a party, but you don't want to wait until Memorial Day to invite your friends and neighbors over, then plan a Cinco de Mayo celebration. Find out what to serve/Food

FROM L.A. COUNTY

- Circulation.....(213) 436-3676
Classified.....(213) 432-5959
Newsroom.....(213) 499-1337
Scoreboard.....(213) 519-4186
From Orange County
All offices.....(714) 537-1611
Complete phone directory/A2

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Bush warns Noriega not to rig votes

By Susan Bennett
From Our National Bureau

WASHINGTON — President Bush warned Tuesday that Panamanian military leader Manuel Noriega is harassing Panamanian voters and the indicted drug dealer may commit "massive election fraud" to rig his country's national elections.
Obviously concerned about the probable outcome of Sunday's balloting, Bush urged the democracies of Europe and the nations of Latin America to pressure Noriega to allow a democratic election.
"The day of the dictator is over," Bush told a business group meeting at the State Department. "All nations that value



Bush

"The United States will not recognize the results of a fraudulent election...."

—President Bush



Noriega

ests in Latin America, Bush said, "it is evident that the regime is ready to resort to massive election fraud in order to remain in power."
Later Tuesday, the State Department issued a statement accusing the Noriega regime of a "calculated campaign to harass and intimidate opposition parties, journalists and foreign visitors in an effort to carry out its plans for election fraud."
State Department spokeswoman Margaret Tutwiler said incidents of violence and intimidation have increased dramatically in the last 10 days and included the severe beating of a legislative opposition candidate and the arrest of international

democracy ... should speak out against election fraud."
He warned also that "the United States will not recognize the results of a fraudulent election engineered to keep Noriega in power."
Speaking to the Council of the Americas, a group of business people with inter-

CONTINUED/A12, Col. 1

A touching goodbye 193



Chantara Nop's 12-day visit in Cambodia ends with final touches from his sisters, nieces and mother, far left. "I want to stay touched to all those people that said farewell to me," Nop said later. "This is last chance I see them."

CHAPTER IV: THE AGONIZING FAREWELL

Editor's note: Chantara Nop, like many of the 40,000 Cambodian refugees in Long Beach, is torn between his native Cambodia and his adopted home in the United States. Yet, fearful they will be persecuted or killed if they return to their homeland, few have bridged the two worlds. Nop, 34, is one who did. Ten years after he escaped, the Long Beach social adjustment counselor returned to Cambodia in February, accompanied by a Press-Telegram reporter and photographer.

CAMBODIAN ODYSSEY
RETURN TO THE KILLING FIELDS
សំនុំរឿងម្នាក់ៗប្រសិនបើ

The car that would take Chantara Nop back across the Cambodian border had been waiting 20 minutes, and still, he stood paralyzed in the street.
His mother clung to his arm. His sister clutched his white shirt. He stared at them with tremendous sorrow, unable to move, unable to let go.
"I want to stay touched to all those people that said farewell to me," he said later. "This is last chance I see them. I had to watch all those people, to store it in my head, to remember."
Nop, a 34-year-old counselor with a Long Beach social service agency, spent 12

days with those people during his first visit to Cambodia since he escaped a decade ago. He wept with them, laughed with them, reminisced with them, clung to them, videotaped them, even slept in the same bed with some of them.
He cherished every moment, counted every moment, all too aware of the agony that awaited him when the moments finally ran out.
"Twelve days is very short," he said. "Very short."
The day before he left Phnom Penh, his family gathered at his sister's apartment, where his triumphant reunion

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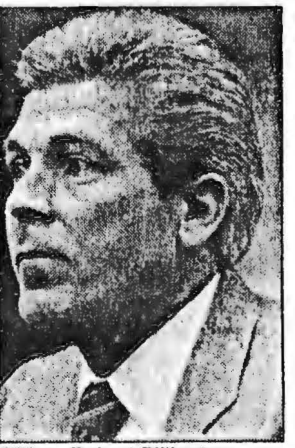
STORY BY SUSAN PACK
PHOTOGRAPHS BY BRUCE CHAMBERS

Police guilty of excessive force in Funkhouser case

By Dorothy Korber
Staff writer

A jury found Tuesday that a Long Beach policeman used excessive force that caused the death of a mental patient in his custody, and awarded \$33,000 in compensatory damages to the dead man's father.
The verdict in the wrongful-death trial was 9-3 against Officer Robert Billington, who grappled with Arnold Funkhouser in the back seat of a patrol car March 5, 1987. Funkhouser, 37, suffered a fatal heart attack that

day, triggered by blunt force trauma to the head, the coroner said.
In addition to the compensatory damages, the seven-man, five-woman jury levied \$500 in punitive damages, finding that Billington acted with "willful, callous indifference" to Funkhouser's constitutional rights.
The jury found in favor of the other defendant — Billington's partner, Michael Masai — by a 10-2 vote. Masai drove the patrol car.



Officer Robert Billington Feels "terrible" about verdict

CONTINUED/A12, Col. 3

Children's misuse of medicine is a prescription for problems

By Angella Herrin
From Our National Bureau

WASHINGTON — Almost half of the American children who receive a prescription get too little, too much or none of their medicine, a problem that causes side effects, unnecessary medical costs and sometimes threatens the lives of young patients, says a new survey.
Of the 13 million children who take prescribed drugs in

a typical two-week period, more than 46 percent are not taking the medicine properly, says a study released Tuesday by the National Council on Patient Information and Education, a non-profit group that promotes the safe use of prescription medicines.
And the study found that misuse exists not just with children taking antibiotics for routine rashes or infections

CONTINUED/A12, Col. 1

# CAMBODIAN ODYSSEY

THE AGONIZING FAREWELL



Chantara Nop's father, Sem, who died in 1971, is remembered by his family with a shrine.

**"I'm OK in America. My life is fine. I have to go back. I have no choice. I have to grow Nop in America."**

— Chantara Nop

#### FROM A1

began. Close to 50 relatives and friends sat on woven mats on the floor, their hands clasped in prayer. A monk in orange robes sat on the metal cot.

A photo of Nop's dead father was propped up on a table behind stalks of flowers. A white candle flickered, and incense spiced the air. They prayed for Nop's father, and they blessed Nop's journey home.

Then it was time to eat.

Bopriek Nop, his 33-year-old sister, stirred a big iron pot of broth that was simmering over a wood fire in the dark, windowless kitchen. She ladled out thin white noodles from a huge wicker basket in the adjacent bedroom.

A child shut the green wooden shutters, and a cassette was slipped into a borrowed VCR that was placed on the metal cot. Home movies flashed onto the little screen of a TV. They were taken when Nop's other family gathered in his Long Beach home to bless his journey to Cambodia.

There were his wife, son and daughter, who waited for him to return to his other world. His other family, the reason he had to "share my heart in two."

In the movie, Nop wore his Screen Actors Guild jacket as he danced around his bright kitchen. Pot, tomatoes and onions sizzled in a small iron frying pan over a gas burner. A traditional Cambodian band sat on the living room floor around a six-pack of Bud.

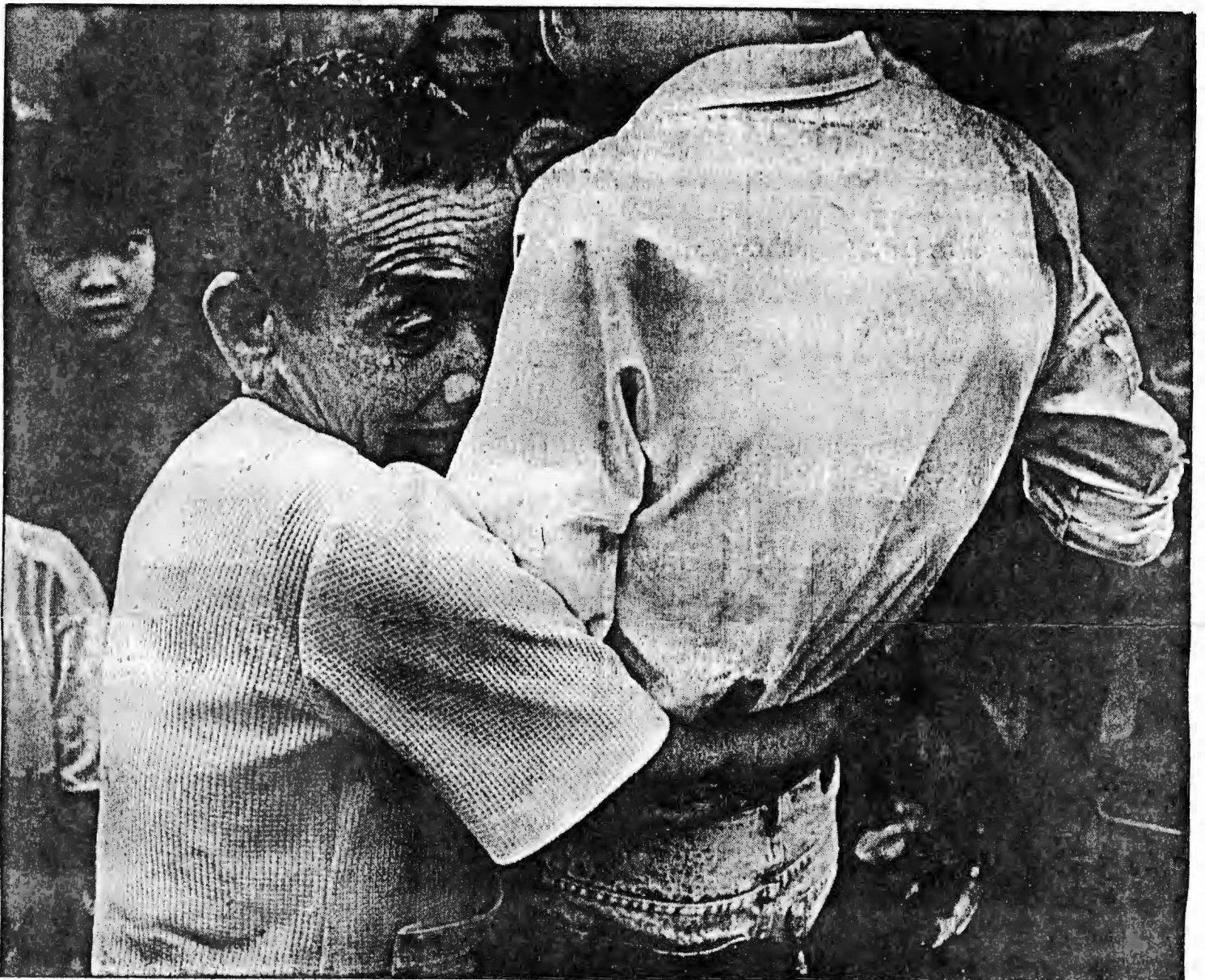
As Nop tried to kiss his wife and then another lady on the screen, his 76-year-old mother, Young Trak, laughed and laughed. Then she slipped over to the photo of her handsome dead husband and lighted another wand of incense.

Nop hoisted his ubiquitous video camera onto his shoulder and filmed his Cambodian family watching the movie of his American family.

"Time is moving so fast ... fast ... fast," he said worriedly.

That night, 20 relatives sat in his

**■ CREDITS:** This special "Return to the Killing Fields" report was designed by Patricia Murphy and Mike Kirkendall, and copy edited by Melissa McCoy.



On his last day in Phnom Penh, Nop's mother, Young Trak, 76, holds on tight, knowing her only living son must return to his family in Long Beach.



Nop's nieces will miss their uncle, an American citizen who overcame great obstacles to see his Cambodian family one more time.

hotel room. They helped him pack his film, his cassettes, some pieces of silk for his wife, hundreds of letters to Cambodians across the United States and a suit.

"They don't use any suit in this country so I take it back," he said.

Except for the suit and the clothes he was wearing, he'd given everything else away.

The group was somber, subdued. They spoke in funeral murmurs beneath the whup-whup-whup of the ceiling fan before settling in for the final night.

Nop was out on the sunny sidewalk at 7 a.m. the next morning, surrounded by 30 relatives. His mother and sisters wore drab brown, gray and bur-

gundy skirts; their festive clothes had been returned to the closet.

The mournful crowd said little as Nop wandered from one person to the next, touching a brother-in-law's shoulder, stroking a niece's hair. Every so often, someone began crying and turned away.

The pale green car that would carry Nop out of Cambodia pulled up. "Oh, no," he said, stricken. "The car."

His frail, forlorn mother dug her fingers into his arm, wiping her tears with her kerchief. He bit down hard on his cigarette to keep the tears from spilling out of his eyes.

He put his arms around the shoulders of his sister and his sister-in-law.

"You both take care of your mothers," he told them in a choked voice.

His mother grabbed him around the waist, buried her tiny, almost-bald head in his chest and wept. Despondent, he told her to go home, take care of her health and not worry.

"I'm OK in America," he told her. "My life is fine. I have to go back. I have no choice. I have to grow Nop in America."

If he stayed away from his wife and children, he said, they would be like trees with no nourishment.

"If I'm lucky, I come to visit you again," he said. "I pray for peace, and you pray for peace. Cambodia will have peace, and we'll be together."

Nop stood in a circle of softly sobbing relatives. He lifted his camera to his shoulder and put it to his blurred eyes. He turned around slowly, capturing his family on film for the final time.

"Ready!" shouted the car driver.

Nop headed toward the vehicle, but veered away from the door and sat on the trunk. Two disconsolate nieces lay their heads on his knees and wept.

He finally slid off the trunk, waved and got into the car. His mother shut the door, then grabbed his hand through the open window.

The car slowly backed into the street, past anguished faces, outstretched hands. His wailing mother had to let go.

Nop waved, his hand frozen in mid-air. The car pulled into traffic. He turned and stared out the back window, tears rolling down his cheeks.

It was the last time he expected to see his mother alive.

"So hard, so hard to say anything," he said. "I keep everything in my head, my chest. Too much sobbing for me. Too much pain for me."

He didn't talk during the 9-hour drive back to Vietnam. He stared out the window for awhile, whimpering.

Then he hauled his video camera onto his lap and bent over the 2-inch monitor. He played the last tape again and again.

**"If I'm lucky, I come to visit you again. I pray for peace, and you pray for peace. Cambodia will have peace, and we'll be together."**

— Chantara Nop



Chantara Nop and his mother

## SUNDAY

### Chapter I:

The journey begins

■ Excruciating delays, dashed hopes and tense encounters with armed border guards face Chantara Nop as he attempts to be reunited with his family in Cambodia after fleeing 10 years ago.

## MONDAY

### Chapter II:

Reunion at last

■ Ten years and thousands of miles dissolve as Chantara Nop arrives in Phnom Penh and begins an anxious search for his mother and other loved ones.

## TUESDAY

### Chapter III:

The faces of death

■ The Cambodian victims of genocide haunt visitors at the chilling sites of torture and murder. Were Chantara Nop's four brothers among them?

## TODAY

### Chapter IV:

The agonizing farewell

■ Chantara Nop's return to his mother and his homeland ends in a sea of tears as he bids goodbye to anguished relatives he may never see again.