

News Roundup from UPI reports

WASHINGTON — The Pentagon said Monday it had essentially completed a crash program to arm South Vietnam with 10,000 tons of new military equipment prior to the withdrawal of American forces. Defense Department spokesman Jerry W. Friedheim told United Press International the massive buildup, except for "a few things" still on the way, was ended during the weekend and U.S. military aid will now revert to the regular levels. The timing coincided with White House envoy Henry A. Kissinger's resumption of peace negotiations in Paris with North Vietnamese representatives. North Vietnam has sharply criticized the United States for accelerating its military aid to Saigon government forces at a time when the two sides were nearing agreement on a ceasefire. It demanded again Monday that the shipments be halted. U.S. officials, however, would make no connection between Kissinger's new round of talks and the decision to end the arms buildup.

PARIS— Peace envoy Henry Kissinger met privately for nearly five hours with top North Vietnamese negotiators Monday in what could be the last negotiating sessions to end the Vietnam war. The talks were expected to last several days. Even as Kissinger met with North Vietnamese negotiators Le Duc Tho and Xuan Thuy, the Viet Cong issued a statement denouncing President Nixon and South Vietnamese President Nguyen Van Thieu. The location of Kissinger's talks was supposed to be secret, but newsmen traced the negotiators to a villa in Gif-sur-Yvette, a Paris suburb near Versailles. The talks began at about 10:00 a.m. and lasted until 4:00 p.m. Neither Kissinger nor Tho left the grounds of the villa between those hours. Both top negotiators took turns walking in the villa's garden during breaks in the discussions. At the close of the session, members of each party could be seen shaking hands, but individuals could not be identified by newsmen. As he left the villa, Kissinger was asked how the talks had gone. He smiled and waved but said nothing. Tho smiled and waved in response to the same question when he left a few minutes after Kissinger.

BONN — West German Chancellor Willy Brandt, riding the crest of a landslide election victory, said Monday he would have "an early meeting" with President Nixon and British Prime Minister Edward Heath. The day after his Social Democrats won 44.9 per cent of the vote in the balloting for a new parliament—a record for that party—Brandt also began the process of healing the divisions created by the election. At a brief, impromptu news conference, Brandt said he contacted Nixon and Heath when he learned of his re-election Sunday night. "I called Mr. Heath today, and he will visit me early next year," Brandt said.

WASHINGTON — Jean Westwood gave the first hint Monday that she may not, as she said after the election, insist on remaining as Democratic National Committee chairman. But she vowed to fight to the end for party reforms. "Everything I will be doing in the next several weeks and every calculation that I make about my own future will be based on my conception of what is best for the Democratic Party as a whole," she said in a statement issued through her committee office. Her own future, Mrs. Westwood said, "is subordinate to considerations about the future of the party," and added: "I have until Dec. 9 to decide how my own future as chairman of the Democratic National Committee fits into these considerations."

CAPE KENNEDY — The fully fueled Apollo 17 rocket passed an important countdown test Monday night for America's last planned launch to the moon Dec. 6. The 363-foot space machine cruised smoothly through a long, realistic countdown rehearsal and blastoff was simulated at 9:53 p.m. EST, the time of night astronauts Eugene A. Cernan, Ronald E. Evans and Dr. Harrison H. "Jack" Schmitt are to be launched. "Everything looked in real good shape," reported launch director Walter Kapryan. "We're ready to go."

WASHINGTON — The State Department announced Monday that Cuba had proposed a date to begin talks to negotiate an airplane hijacking agreement and that three men accused of hijacking a Southern Airlines jetliner last week would be tried in Cuban courts. Bray said that in response to a U.S. request, the Fidel Castro government had proposed a specific time for starting the talks through the Swiss embassy in Havana on an agreement designed to halt skyjacking. He said the talks could begin soon, but that he could not disclose the date until the United States had decided whether or not to accept the date.

THURMONT, Md. — President Nixon decided to begin his second term with a governmental house cleaning because he fears his administration might stagnate without new ideas and fresh faces, the White House said Monday. "There is a tendency after a landslide victory for an administration to go downhill if there are not new ideas," press secretary Ronald Ziegler told newsmen at Camp David where the President is planning his "four more years." Nixon called six top officials, including CIA director Richard Helms, to individual conferences in the study at Aspen Lodge, the rustic presidential residence at the mountain top retreat in the Maryland mountains.

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