

News Roundup from UPI reports

SAIGON — More than 165 U.S. B52s and fighter-bombers blasted North Vietnam below the 20th parallel Sunday, the U.S. command reported. Another 249 American war-planes carried out raids against Communist targets in South Vietnam. The massive strikes came on the eve of the resumption of peace talks in Paris today between Hanoi's Le Duc Tho and Washington's Henry Kissinger.

MANAGUA, Nicaragua — The Nicaraguan government said Sunday the death toll in the earthquake that wrecked most of Managua Dec. 23 has passed 10,000, and an unknown number of dead are still under the rubble. "We will never know the exact death figure," said government spokesman Iban Osorio. "But between 10,000 and 12,000 bodies have been buried so far."

HONG KONG — North Vietnam is stepping up combat readiness on the eve of the resumption of the Paris private peace talks for any new U.S. "war adventure," the New China News Agency NCNA said Sunday. "Being well aware of the U.S. imperialist aggressive ambition and heightening their vigilance, the people and workers in the cities and industrial districts in North Vietnam are energetically building air raid shelters and evacuating to the countryside," NCNA said.

Watergate trial opens

WASHINGTON (UPI) — Seven men, including two former White House aides, go on trial today on conspiracy charges stemming from the bugging break-in at the Watergate headquarters of the Democratic National Committee last June.

Both the government prosecution and the defense for the Watergate Seven were tightly secretive about what the trial before U.S. District Judge John Sirica will produce about the June 17 episode which figured prominently throughout the 1972 presidential campaign.

The proceedings will open with selection of 12 jurors and 6 alternates who will be sequestered at the court house for the duration of the trial. A list of 1,000 prospective jurors has been summoned.

Despite the fact that Sirica postponed the start of the trial until after the election, the case still contains potential political dynamite.

Senate Democratic leader Mike Mansfield publicly requested Saturday that Sen. Sam Ervin Jr., D-N.C., undertake an investigation of the Watergate break-in and "Other insidious campaign practices."

President Nixon's key adviser, John Ehrlichman, asserted during a television interview Sunday that a full-scale FBI investigation of the bugging showed "no involvement by anyone in the administration in that particular incident."

The case broke in the early morning hours of June 17 when five men were arrested at Democratic headquarters in the plush Watergate apartment complex with burglar tools and electronic wiretap equipment in their possession.

Subsequently the five, along with ex-White House aides G. Gordon Liddy and E. Howard Hunt, were indicted on eight counts charging conspiracy, second degree burglary, illegal eavesdropping and possession of illegal wiretapping devices.

The defendants face various possible penalties ranging from 2 to 20 years in prison and a \$10,000

fine on each count, if convicted.

Liddy, who served six months at the White House as an assistant to Ehrlichman, later became chief counsel to Nixon's re-election campaign committee. He was fired from that post when he refused to answer FBI questions about the Watergate episode.

Hunt was a \$100-a-day White House consultant at the time of the raid, working in the office of presidential assistant Charles Colson, a top political operative for the President.

The other five defendants who were found on the Democratic premises are James McCord, former security coordinator of the Nixon campaign; Bernard Barker of Miami, a Cuban-born American and former CIA agent; Frank Sturgis, an ex-Marine associate of Barker; Eugenio Martinez, a former CIA operative who works for Barker, and Virgilio R. Gonzales, a Cuban-born locksmith and a Miami associate of Barker.

Kissinger in Paris for 'one more major effort'

PARIS (UPI) — Presidential adviser Henry Kissinger flew here Sunday night for "one more major effort" to negotiate a cease-fire in Vietnam. His arrival was preceded by a North Vietnamese news statement denouncing President Nixon as a tyrant worse than Adolf Hitler.

Kissinger and Hanoi's chief negotiator Le Duc Tho were to meet today at an undisclosed location. Neither side would confirm some reports this meeting would be held at suburban Gif sur Yvette where many of the past private talks session have taken place.

Tho, on his arrival Saturday, said the United States could either sign the draft truce agreement of Oct. 20 without changes or continue the war.

Kissinger's presidential jetliner landed at 5:04 p.m. EST and was greeted by the chiefs of the U.S. and South Vietnamese peace delegations, William Porter and Pham Dang Lam. Facing a battery of correspondents and cameramen, Kissinger read from a prepared statement, saying:

"President Nixon has sent me back to make one more major effort to conclude the negotiation. We expect the talks this time will be serious and worthy of the yearnings of the people all over the world for an early end to the war."

"As far as the United States is concerned, we shall dedicate ourselves to this effort with patience, goodwill and hope," he said.

Before his departure from Andrews Air Force Base near Washington seven hours earlier, the White House aide vowed,

"I'll do my best."

New Orleans snipers slay 10, set downtown hotel ablaze

NEW ORLEANS UPI — Firing from a helicopter gunship, police Sunday night killed one sniper and tried to flush out another from atop a downtown hotel where 10 persons died in a crazed 12-hour outburst of bullets and fires.

After the first sniper died in a hail of tracer bullets, the second gunman began yelling, "Power to the people," and as the gunship roared over the hotel again, he fired upon it.

Police in a neighboring skyscraper and on a parking lot below were forced to withhold their fire to avoid hitting the helicopter. All available officers, aided by police reserves, converged on the scene.

The second sniper was holed up in the stairwell and remains of a concrete block cubicle atop the roof. His companion was cut to ribbons when he bolted from the cubicle—several hours after the killings began—at the Howard Johnson Hotel three blocks from New Orleans' broad Canal Street.

The dead included policemen and hotel guests. Several were injured and one officer was stricken with a heart attack.

The snipers then set fires in several rooms and bolted to the roof where they fired upon police and firemen arriving at the scene.

They finally took refuge in a concrete bunker atop the hotel which has a large vertical "Howard Johnson" sign along one side fronting on Loyola Street and the company's traditional aqua blue and orange doors. Smoke for a time billowed from balcony windows on the upper, tan portion of the hotel.

The dead sniper, a Black wounded about five hours after the day's events began, burst from the concrete lair with a rifle tucked under his arm in a firing position. He ran across the gravel roof in full stride before struck down by a line of tracer bullets fired from the gunship.

Police in the nearby Rault Center also began firing, as did officers on the street below. The copter closed to within 50 feet as the sniper fell flat on his face, his clothes ripped to shreds by bursts of gunfire from three areas on the craft.

The gunman was described as a light complexioned black man with an automatic rifle who was "only shooting at whites" and at times appeared to be "shooting at anybody in uniform."

Four of his victims were policemen, including the second-ranking police officer in New Orleans. The sniper also killed a hotel employee and five hotel

guests. At least a dozen others were wounded.

Downtown New Orleans turned into a combat zone during the day as fog, a light mist and smoke from the smoldering fires clung close to the ground.

The following is an eye-witness report:

By JOSEPH P. MANGUNO Jr.

NEW ORLEANS UPI — We stood there watching the cubicle in which the snipers were holed up during the police assault when the helicopter drifted back through the dark sky.

The ship threw its spotlights on the roof of the hotel and began firing. It fired three machine guns.

As it fired, it moved in closer, and closer and closer. But there was never any sign of a return fire.

Then it got to within 50 feet away and police from inside the building where I was began firing at the cubicle.

All of a sudden out of the cubicle came this tall, lanky man. He came flying out of the cubicle, running across the roof with his rifle tucked under his armpit.

He was holding it in a firing position.

But he wasn't crouched over. He was standing tall, straight up in the air. As he ran across the roof, in full stride, the helicopter's machineguns opened fire and the bullets started hitting in front of him.

The bullets moved in a straight line toward him and he was running as if to meet the bullets. I don't know how many hit him.

Suddenly he threw his gun up in the air. His arms arched skyward and his entire body stretched straight up in the air. Then he fell on his face.

The machine guns kept purring bullets into him. They kept on firing into him for a full five minutes. And the police in the building where I was kept firing.

His clothes were all ripped to shreds. He was wearing a dark jacket and it was all ripped up. He didn't move after he went down. They just poured it into him.

At the same time another guy inside the cubicle was yelling "Power to the People! Power to the People!"

The helicopter turned off its spotlight and pulled away. The police in the building where I was fired a few minutes more and then stopped.

And then it was all very quiet except for this one guy on the roof across the street yelling "Power to the People! Power to the People!"

'It hardly pays'

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (UPI) — Criminology professor Curtis Belcher Jr. is learning more about crime than he ever wanted to know. Over the weekend he was robbed for the fifth time.

"Things are getting pretty bad," Belcher said after two bandits held up a barbecue restaurant he owns. Another of his businesses was robbed recently, and he has lost a house trailer and two motorcycles to thieves.

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