

UPI Roundup

Paper says prisoners to be released

LONDON — The Manchester Guardian said Tuesday the North Vietnamese apparently have agreed to release all American prisoners held in both North and South Vietnam in exchange for captured Communist soldiers and a cease-fire agreement. In a front page story from Geneva, the influential newspaper said the prisoners would be exchanged within 60 days after the signing of a peace treaty. "According to North Vietnamese sources in Paris, American POWs wherever they are held in Vietnam will be included in the deal," the newspaper said. The newspaper said the move represented several major concessions by the North Vietnamese who agreed to ignore the political prisoners held in South Vietnam. "In the event of a peace agreement the NLF (National Liberation Front—Viet Cong) will be obliged to surrender the U.S. prisoners it detains while the neutralists and the NLF political prisoners will remain in jail," it said.

Gas rationing to cut auto use

LOS ANGELES—A drastic anti-smog program calling for gasoline rationing to cut automobile use in the Los Angeles area by up to 82 per cent in the summer was proposed Monday by the federal Environmental Protection Agency.

William Ruckelshaus, head of the agency set up by Congress under the Clean Air Act of 1970, submitted the plan, which also called for mandatory automobile inspection and installation of anti-smog devices on old cars costing as much as \$400.

Ruckelshaus, in a news conference, said the gasoline rationing could not be fully implemented until 1977, and acknowledged that public resistance to any such step might well prevent its ever going into effect.

Death penalty favored

PRINCETON, N.J.—A majority of Americans favor the death penalty for murderers despite the U.S. Supreme Court's recent ruling which in effect struck down capital punishment, the Gallup Poll indicated Monday. "In a survey conducted in December, a majority of 57 per cent of adults, 18 and older, said they favor the death penalty for persons convicted of murder," Gallup said. "This percentage represents an increase in support since March, 1972 when 50 per cent favored the death penalty." The survey was based on interviews Dec. 8-11 with more than one thousand adults, 18 or older, in more than 300 locations.

Demonstrations set for Nixon inaugural

WASHINGTON (UPI) — Undeterred by President Nixon's halting of the bombing, shelling and mining of North Vietnam, antiwar leaders said Monday their plans for demonstrations on Nixon's inaugural were going forward.

Pointing out that Nixon's actions do not meet the antiwar movement's demands of signing the October nine-point peace agreement and getting entirely out of Southeast Asia, the leaders said nothing Nixon has yet done changes their plans.

"We are strongly suspicious that this is nothing more than a maneuver to lull people into inaction," Jerry Gordon, national co-coordinator of the National Peace Action Coalition told UPI.

But Gordon said NPAC believed "it is going to be difficult to trick the American people again. People have been burned by this last October promise of peace and they will turn out in large numbers to demand that the United States get entirely out of Southeast Asia."

He said NPAC, which is co-sponsoring the mass march Jan. 20 with the Peoples Coalition for Peace and Justice, will continue to demonstrate until its demand that the United States is out of all Southeast Asia is met.

Just before Nixon made his announcement, leaders of Vietnam Veterans Against the War said they would hold their own "disciplined" and "separate" antiwar march on inauguration day.

In a reference to the current rash of peace rumors before Nixon's announcement, VVAW national coordinator Ed Damato said, "I don't think that people believe that peace is at hand."

Damato and VVAW Washington coordinator Tim Butz predicted the VVAW march would draw between 1,000 and 1,500 veterans and their supporters.

Butz said that because of VVAW emphasis on the single demand that the United States sign the nine-point agreement, the VVAW action will be "completely separate" from all other demonstrations that day.

In addition to the VVAW march, NPAC and PCPJ are holding a mass march and rally, expected to begin at the Lincoln Memorial and end at the Washington Monument. Their rally is expected to be the largest of the antiwar inaugural demonstrations and unofficial estimates have put the number expected at 50,000.

Students for a Democratic Society and the Youth International Party also hope to draw a 1,000 demonstrators to a "march against racism and war" near the Capitol. Some Yippie leaders have predicted that march may attempt to disrupt the inaugural proceedings or parade following Nixon's swearing-in ceremony.

In North Vietnam Nixon calls off bombing

KEY BISCAYNE, Fla. (UPI)—President Nixon Monday ordered a halt in the bombing and all other offensive military actions against North Vietnam as a result of progress made in negotiating an end to the war.

The order, in effect, rolls back the military activities which Nixon promised last May 8 would remain in effect until a ceasefire is reached throughout all of Indochina.

White House Press Secretary Ronald Ziegler, who announced the decision to reporters at the Florida White House, declined to comment whether this meant an end to the long war was imminent.

But he did disclose that Henry Kissinger, Nixon's chief Vietnam negotiator, would return to Paris "in the near future" for more talks with Hanoi's Le Duc Tho.

This fed the belief that a tentative agreement had been reached and Kissinger would be returning to the French capital to initial it within the next few days.

Ziegler declined to comment on reports from Saigon that the war's end would coincide with the Vietnamese lunar new year which begins on Feb. 3.

"Because of the progress made in negotiations between Dr. Kissinger and special adviser Le Duc Tho, President Nixon has directed that the bombing, shelling and any further mining of North Vietnam be suspended," Ziegler said.

He said the order went out Sunday night following extensive, day-long conferences between Nixon and Kissinger and became

effective at 10 a.m. EST Monday.

Ziegler said the mines already in place in North Vietnam's harbors and coastal waters would remain and the subject of their de-activation "is being dealt with in the negotiations."

Reconnaissance flights would continue over North Vietnam, he said, but he declined to comment on whether there was any change in the bombing policy over Laos where U.S. planes have been daily pounding the Ho Chi Minh Trail.

Ziegler said South Vietnamese President Nguyen Van Thieu was informed of the President's decision but declined to say whether Thieu approved it.

"This is a unilateral decision by the President...based upon his assessment of the negotiations as they stand now," Ziegler said.

He declined to say whether the North Vietnamese had made any concessions in return for the military de-escalation on the U.S. side.

But when he announced the unprecedented steps against North Vietnam on May 8, Nixon said they would continue until there is an internationally supervised ceasefire throughout all of Indochina and all U.S. prisoners of war are released.

The President, extending a working weekend at his vacation home here, met for a total of about five hours with Kissinger and Gen. Alexander Haig Jr. Sunday to discuss the status of the negotiations before ordering Haig to Saigon to brief Thieu.

Nixon and Kissinger conferred twice more Monday and

Kissinger departed for Washington later in the day. The President was expected to remain here until today or Wednesday, keeping in touch with Kissinger by telephone and preparing the address he will deliver Jan. 20 at his inauguration.

Haig's trip fit the end-the-war scenario outlined by Kissinger and other U.S. officials earlier. They said then that after a tentative agreement had been reached, it would be presented to Thieu for his official reaction.

President Nixon would then give his final approval and Kissinger and Thieu would initial the accord. The formal signing, which would activate provisions of the treaty, would take place sometime later.

Ziegler said Haig's visit to Saigon was part of continuing consultations between Nixon and Thieu and he declined once again to say whether Haig actually carried with him a tentative agreement.

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POW wife: It's just like a yo-yo game

"We have had our hopes up so many times only to have them dashed again," said Mrs. Billie Thornton of Fresno, Calif. "It's just like a yo-yo game."

Thornton's son, Navy Lt. Gary Thornton, has been a prisoner of war in North Vietnam since 1969. Her weary reaction Monday summed up the mood of the families of U.S. prisoners of war to the possibility—again—that peace was in the offing.

Most POW families were hopeful but cautious. Many were frankly skeptical.

"It certainly sounds encouraging. But I'm sure that like everyone else who has so recently been let down I think I'm going to wait until it's more definite before I get excited," said Mrs. Richard Stratton of Palo Alto, Calif. Her Navy pilot husband was shot down and captured Jan. 5, 1967.

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