

UPI Roundup

Fighting flares near Saigon

SAIGON—Heavy fighting flared near Saigon and on South Vietnam's far northern front, sparking the heaviest raids by U.S. warplanes over the South in more than two months, military spokesmen said Thursday. South Vietnamese troops encountered stiff resistance for the second consecutive day Thursday in the Michelin rubber plantation, 40 miles northwest of Saigon, where a major Communist buildup of 8,000 men with armor and artillery was reported. The buildup poses a major threat to the South Vietnamese capital and its outlying areas.

Corona found guilty

FAIRFIELD, Calif.—Without showing a tremor of emotion, Juan Corona was found guilty Thursday of killing 25 itinerant farm hands in the worst mass murder in U.S. history. The jury, which had been deadlocked 11-1 on a verdict for two days, returned its unanimous verdict after 46 hours of deliberations. Corona, 38, a farm labor contractor from Yuba City, Calif., sat expressionless, gripping the defense table and rocking periodically, during the 30 minutes it took for the jury to return its 25 first degree murder convictions. Superior Court Judge Richard Patton delayed sentencing until after a Jan. 29 hearing on defense attorney Richard Hawk's motion for a new trial. Corona faces life imprisonment on each of the counts.

Leary is back

LOS ANGELES—Drug apostle Timothy Leary, who escaped from a California prison in 1970 and drifted the world until he was arrested in Afghanistan, was returned to the United States Thursday under armed guard. Leary, 51, who faces counts of drug smuggling, conspiracy and income tax evasion in addition to the escape charge, emerged in manacles from a Boeing 747 jetliner in a driving rainstorm and was hustled to a van for the trip to the Los Angeles County Jail. Leary laughed and appeared to be trying to talk to the small army of newsmen at International Airport but he could not be heard over the background noise on the field.

Eight slain in Moslem center

WASHINGTON—Eight persons, including five children, were found slain late Thursday afternoon in a northwest Washington home used as a spiritual center by a Moslem sect, District of Columbia police reported. Authorities said they were searching for four men reportedly seen entering the house during the afternoon, then later running from the premises. They said more persons may have been involved. The victims, all Blacks, were discovered about 5:30 p.m. in a three-story stone house in the 7700 block of 16th St. N.W., a quiet neighborhood of upper middle class homes sometimes called Washington's "Black Gold Coast."

Violence continues in N. Ireland

BELFAST—British army sentries shot a gunman to death Thursday during an attempted robbery of a bank branch in Belfast's Royal Victoria Hospital. A Roman Catholic man was shot dead in Portadown, southwest of the capital. The two deaths brought to 688 the number of persons killed in 3½ years of religious and political bloodshed in Northern Ireland between Catholic and Protestant extremists, the British army and police.

Peace talks resume in Paris next week

The United States and North Vietnam announced Thursday that White House adviser Henry Kissinger and Hanoi's Le Duc Tho will resume their negotiations in Paris next Tuesday with the aim of completing an agreement to end the Vietnam war.

A White House announcement that Kissinger will leave for Paris Monday sent hopes soaring for a Vietnam cease-fire in the near future. The announcement by Press Secretary Ronald Ziegler said Kissinger was going back "for the purpose of completing the text of a peace agreement."

A simultaneous announcement by the North Vietnamese peace delegation in Paris said resumption of the Paris negotiations after a 10-day break was "aimed at achieving an accord on the end of the war and re-establishment of peace in Vietnam."

Washington observers said the joint announcement appeared to indicate that Kissinger was returning to Paris to initial a peace treaty ending the longest war in American history.

Ziegler did nothing to dampen speculation that a ceasefire might be declared soon in South Vietnam.

Asked about rumors of a cease-fire, Ziegler said, "There has been an awful lot of speculation along

that line. I am not prepared to address that speculation, even if it is right or it is wrong.

"But I will tell you that Dr. Kissinger is returning to Paris for the purpose of completing the text of an agreement."

The announcement came shortly after South Vietnamese government sources in Saigon said President Nguyen Van Thieu has accepted revised terms of the Washington-Hanoi cease-fire draft "in principle" but has requested about a dozen changes, at least three of them substantial.

In Paris Thursday, U.S. and Vietnamese negotiators indefinitely suspended the regular weekly Paris peace talks that have been going on for four years but said negotiations would continue.

Veteran observers at the peace talks said they believed the Kleber Avenue sessions were being suspended in their present form in the light of progress made in the more meaningful talks between Kissinger and Hanoi diplomats.

Ziegler announced that Gen. Alexander Haig, Nixon's special emissary, who arrived in Bangkok Thursday to confer with Thai leaders, will be returning to Saigon Saturday to consult again with President Thieu.

Dent, Brinegar

Cabinet nominees confirmed

WASHINGTON — The Senate Thursday confirmed Frederick Dent as commerce secretary and Claude Brinegar as transportation secretary. Approval also appeared sure for labor secretary-designate Peter Brennan despite some liberal and civil rights opposition.

Confirmation for Dent, a South Carolina textile executive, and Brinegar, a California oil man, was granted routinely and "without objection," making them the first of President Nixon's new Cabinet nominees to win Senate clearance.

At the sub-Cabinet level, the Senate approved Nixon's nominations of former White House aide John Whitaker as undersecretary of interior and Frank Carlucci, former deputy budget director, to be undersecretary of health, education and welfare.

Brennan, a New York construction union leader, appeared before the Senate Labor Committee at the opening of his confirmation hearing and promptly put himself at odds with the administration's past positions in several areas, including compulsory arbitration, the minimum wage and low income housing.

"I'm as damned good as anybody in this Cabinet," he said bluntly. "I don't quit easy. You can fight a better fight inside than outside."

Nixon's selection of Brennan has been seen as a bid by the President to draw organized labor away from the Democratic Party. But the Democratic-controlled Senate is not likely to help Nixon by turning down a union member for the Cabinet.

Among Brennan's opponents were the Americans

for Democratic Action (ADA) and Roy Wilkins, executive director of the NAACP.

Wilkins urged the committee to reject Brennan, claiming he had been "a major administrative obstacle" to admission of minority group workers into New York construction jobs and training programs as president of the city's Building and Construction Trades Council.

The ADA, one of about a dozen groups planning to fight Brennan, argued that he was unqualified to be labor secretary because he had done nothing to reduce discrimination in hiring and corruption.

But Brennan, 54, known as "Mr. Hard Hat" because of his efforts to gain union support for Nixon's Vietnam policies, defended his civil rights record and promised to "do my damndest" to assure equal employment opportunity for all workers.

Brennan, nominated to succeed James Hodgson at the Labor Department, told the committee he was against the administration's legislation before the last Congress to have a lower minimum wage for teen-agers and to give the White House powers to force labor settlements in the transportation industry. Brennan said such force amounted to compulsory arbitration.

The administration pulled back the transportation strike legislation during the election campaign, with critics alleging the action was in return for an endorsement of Nixon by Teamsters President Frank Fitzsimmons. But the White House is still on record in favor of a special youth minimum wage.

Pledges to eliminate job discrimination

AT&T awards \$15 million in back pay

WASHINGTON (UPI)—The American Telephone and Telegraph Co., pledging to eliminate job discrimination, agreed Thursday to award back pay totaling as much as \$15 million to 15,000 women and nonwhite males who may have been denied promotions under past company policies.

The agreement by the nation's largest private employer was by far the biggest proposed settlement in a civil rights case in U.S. history, said William Brown III, chairman of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. The previous record was nearly \$1 million.

The employees involved now have the option of accepting the compensatory payments or trying to prove in federal court that actual damages were higher than they could obtain under AT & T's settlement formula.

AT & T and its 24 affiliated Bell System telephone companies agreed to pay restitution ranging from \$100 to \$400 to 10,000 women, mostly telephone operators, to compensate them for denial of promotional opportunities.

An EEOC spokesman said the payments would go to the first 10,000 women to be promoted to higher craft jobs. He said the payments would be made even to women who did not previously apply for craft jobs which they knew the company had reserved for men.

The Bell System denied it was engaged in illegal discrimination, but it agreed to the settlement to terminate a two-year-old action filed against it by the EEOC and the Labor Department.

At a news briefing, David Easlick, an AT & T vice president, said the company has been "working hard to provide equal employment opportunity." He said the government had "changed the ground rules" for the anti-discrimination endeavor.

However, Brown said AT&T had engaged in "pervasive and systemic employment discrimination." The EEOC said the company excluded women from most craft jobs such as installer and lineman and excluded men from clerical and operator posts.

AT&T and the affiliated companies employ 750,000 workers, a little more than half of them women—the nation's biggest employer. The decree does not cover Western Electric, the Bell System's affiliate which manufactures telephone equipment.

About 1,000 job discrimination complaints against AT&T are pending before the EEOC. The individuals involved now have the option of accepting payment under the agreed formula or pressing their cases in an effort to prove actual damages in excess of the amount they would receive under the formula. The EEOC said other employees could, if they chose, file individual complaints instead of accepting payment under the formula.

About 3,000 employees, including both women and men from minority groups, will receive about \$7.5 million in back pay for the last two years to give them retroactive credit for transferred seniority.

The agreement also establishes a new class of awards in job discrimination cases—payments to people who were

discouraged even from applying for higher paid jobs.

The EEOC said about 2,500 women have been promoted to craft jobs since the complaint was filed two years ago. Those who were promoted during 1971 will receive a settlement of \$100. Those who were promoted last year will get \$200. Those who are to be promoted this year will get \$300 and those who are to be promoted next year will get \$400.

A spokesman explained the payments escalated with time on the theory that the longer a promotion was delayed, the greater the individual was damaged.

The awards will go to the first 10,000 women who qualify for them and will be terminated once the 10,000 figure is reached.

Easlick said the company did not plan to file requests for rate increases to recover the additional wages it must pay its employees, but he added, "on the other hand, it is a cost of doing business and the cost of doing business must ultimately be borne by the users of the telephone."