

UPI Roundup

Putting peace 'in perspective'

WASHINGTON — President Nixon, putting the Vietnam peace accords "in perspective," said Thursday the cease-fire will bring peace only to the extent leaders of both sides have the will to comply. He cautioned that the past peace record "is not too encouraging." "All the paper in the world, all the fancy phrases that are already in the agreement would mean nothing if the individuals who have the responsibility for keeping the agreement do not keep it," Nixon said. He pledged that the United States will keep its part of the pact, adding "we expect others to keep the agreement. That is the way peace can be kept abroad."

Taking the credit

WASHINGTON — President Nixon said Wednesday he personally ordered the dismissal of an Air Force civil servant who first told Congress about cost overruns on the C54 cargo plane. Nixon told a news conference A. Ernest Fitzgerald was fired on his instructions. The Air Force previously had contended it released Fitzgerald in an economy drive. "I was totally aware Mr. Fitzgerald would be asked to resign," Nixon told a news conference. "I approved it. This was not a case of someone down the line saying he should go." It is a crime punishable by a \$5,000 fine and imprisonment up to five years, to "influence, intimidate or impede" any witness before a congressional hearing.

Vietnam fighting continues

SAIGON — North Vietnamese troops in two major battles Thursday annihilated a force of 100 South Vietnamese marines who were trapped with their backs to the sea at a former U.S. naval base near the Demilitarized Zone, military sources said. UPI correspondent Donald Davis, reporting from the northern sector, said he was told that three U.S. Navy gunships were offshore from the South Vietnamese but did not intervene because of the cease-fire. Further to the south, the North Vietnamese overran 200 Saigon government paratroopers below Quang Tri City, military sources said.

Watergate civil trial set

WASHINGTON — With the Watergate criminal trial finished, wheels were set in motion Thursday to begin the next stage of the bizarre affair—civil trials involving \$10 million in claims and counter-claims between Republican and Democratic officials.

Thieu: there was no victor in Vietnam

NEW YORK (UPI) — There was no victor in the Vietnam war, President Nguyen Van Thieu said Thursday. Everyone lost.

"I think everyone has lost — lost on the casualties, on the blood and money — and no winner and no loser," he said in an interview in Saigon.

"I think everyone has lost. The peace on behalf of the prosperity of the world, the security of the world, I think that everyone has lost. Nobody has won."

Thieu's sober appraisal came in an interview on the Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS).

"We will never ask U.S. troops to come back here," he said. However, when asked if he would request American air support in the event of a new outbreak of hostilities, he said, "Yes."

Thieu said he did not believe the Communists would respect the cease-fire.

"I think that they will continue the guerrilla war on the remote rear and . . . continue the infiltration and . . . would like to capture as many as possible the hamlets and the people," he said.

"I think we have not to be confident on their goodwill. We have to be confident on the efficiency of the control commission."

The International Commission for the Control and Supervision (ICCS) of the Vietnam truce — Canada, Indonesia, Poland and Hungary — was meeting in Saigon, preparing to oversee the cease-fire as soon as post-truce battle activity subsided.

"If I have the continuation of full support, economic and military, from the United States, the Communists will never win in South Vietnam," Thieu said.

"If you continue the military and economic aid, certainly we will win," he added.

"I have no ambition, no political ambition, I have nothing," Thieu said in the interview with correspondent Bernard Kalb.

"I just play the role of the soldier, a leader to save the nation. But I realize that South Vietnam can be saved only with the help of the United States."

Asked about elections, Thieu said he still favored his own proposal of holding a presidential election with several candidates from both sides.

"And the man who has the highest percentage of the vote will become president and the man who has the lower percentage would be together in the so-called national coalition government," he said, adding, "The Communists have rejected that, too."

Thieu said he had not decided whether to run again for president or whether he would agree to participate in a coalition government.

"But anything decided by the people I will respect," the president said. "Now for my personal case, it is not time yet for me to decide."

Budget Director backs Nixon's impoundments

WASHINGTON (UPI) — Budget Director Roy Ash testified Thursday that contradicting orders from Congress — telling him both to spend and to economize — empower President Nixon to impound billions appropriated by Congress.

Making his first Capitol Hill appearance as director of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), Ash, the former president of Litton Industries, defended Nixon's impoundments of funds — actions many in Congress call unconstitutional.

Ash testified before the Senate subcommittee on separation of powers. He opposed a bill which would forbid a President to withhold money for more than 60 days unless explicitly given permission by Congress.

Ash engaged in a constitutional quarrel with Sen. Sam Ervin, D-N.C., considered by his colleagues the Senate's foremost constitutionalist. Ervin argued the President's impoundment policy.

Ironically, both men cited the same constitutional language to make their point — the clause directing the President to see that the laws are faithfully executed.

"An appropriations bill is a law," said Ervin, contending Nixon must spend all that is appropriated.

Yes, said Ash, but the debt ceiling passed by Congress is another law, forbidding the President to borrow — and spend — above a certain level.

He conceded "that there is no explicit law that stipulates the President has the specific right to impound funds" but impoundment is nonetheless "fully consistent with the President's constitutional duties."

The subcommittee was stung when Agriculture

Secretary Earl Butz and Administrator William Ruckelshaus of the Environmental Protection Agency changed their minds and refused to testify about impoundments of farm and environmental funds. Later they sent word agreeing to appear next week. Sen. J. William Fulbright, D-Ark., threatened to cut off foreign aid funds until Nixon agrees to release impounded funds appropriated for domestic programs.

Fulbright testified that impoundments left Nixon free to decide which laws enacted by Congress to carry out and which to ignore.

"If Congress is going to fulfill its constitutional functions and to operate as a separate, co-equal branch of government, we cannot continue to allow the President to use impoundment to impose policy," Fulbright said. "To do so would be to subvert the explicit constitutional authority of the Congress."

Nixon said Wednesday he justified his withholding of funds "the same way that Jefferson did, and Jackson did and Truman did."

The President contended Congress had spent irresponsibly and so it was up to him — in the interest of combatting inflation — to withhold some appropriated funds.

Fulbright, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, noted that legislation must pass by Feb. 28 if the administration wants to have any foreign aid funds to spend.

He said he may attach an amendment to a foreign aid bill "which would require release of funds for these important domestic programs if the administration wanted to continue foreign assistance."

Top White House aide blasts opposition to Nixon policies

WASHINGTON (UPI) — Charles Colson, one of President Nixon's closest political advisers, said Thursday night that end-the-war measures in Congress prolonged the Vietnam conflict and made more difficult the negotiations for a cease-fire.

Colson, who is resigning March 1 to return to private law practice, said that if Nixon had enjoyed the kind of bipartisan support that former President Dwight Eisenhower received from a Democratic Congress in the 1950's "the war would have ended much sooner than it did."

Colson was interviewed on the "Thirty Minutes With . . ." production of National Public Affairs Center for Television. The program was broadcast on public television stations.

He called former Defense Secretary Clark Clifford a "hypocrite," and said Sens. J. William Fulbright, George McGovern, Frank Church and Edward Kennedy were members of a "sellout brigade." He charged that press critics of the war had "almost a vested interest in our failure."

Colson also predicted new restrictions on network television newscasts. He said a television

network was like "a bus company . . . a public utility."

He said the networks "are going to be broken up one way or another in the next four or five years." This, he said, would be due chiefly to "new technology in communications."

"The networks are constantly talking about wanting unrestricted First Amendment rights," Colson said. "They want the same right to say or do whatever they want, without restriction. But at the same time they really are using public airways as a public trustee . . . Now you can't have it both ways," he said. "You can't have a free license given to you by the public . . . and not have a concomitant responsibility to present to the public a fair and balanced perspective on the news."

Although he said he was questioning no one's patriotism, Colson said critics of Nixon's Vietnam policy wanted what "I would call a dishonorable peace."

"The Eastern Establishment that had been a part of the New Frontier, the Kennedy Cabinet that came to Washington that got us into Vietnam in the first place,

they were the harshest critics of the efforts of this President to get us out honorably," he said.

"I think the people who perhaps had a sense of guilt or a sense of failure simply couldn't reconcile themselves to the fact that this man who had been their political opponent was doing successfully that which they couldn't do," he said.

Asked by interviewer Elizabeth Drew to go into specific, Colson said:

"Well for example Clark Clifford left office with 550,000 Americans in a ground war to which there was no end . . ."

"I think the grossest hypocrisy, really shocking hypocrisy, of the man who contributed so much to our being in Vietnam, for him to be so consistently wrong and so harsh in his criticism of the President."

Clifford became Defense Secretary early in 1968 at a time the total of U.S. forces in Vietnam had come within a few thousand men of the all-time high. He was later reliably reported to have argued against a Joint Chiefs of Staff request for over 200,000 more troops and to have urged President Johnson to halt bombing of North Vietnam.

Island used for target practice to get relief

(ZNS) — Several members of the United States Senate report that they are going to fight with the Pentagon on behalf of the island of Culebra.

Culebra is a small island in the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico that has been used as a practice target by U.S. Navy ships for the past 37 years. Testimony in front of a Senate committee reveals that at least 10 people have been accidentally killed during the Navy's shelling operations.

Being a target for U.S. gunners is obviously not a pleasant

situation — and the inhabitants of Culebra received some good news from Secretary of Defense Melvin Laird nearly two years ago; Laird reported that all target operations on Culebra would be halted by 1975.

However, on December 27th, Laird suddenly announced a change in plans; he reported that a "classified" study by the Navy revealed that Culebra could not be abandoned after all; in fact, said Laird, shelling would continue until at least 1985, and would be intensified.



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