

UPI Roundup

Rand security head testifies

LOS ANGELES — Daniel Ellsberg signed a statement stating he knew he might be punished under federal law if he revealed top-secret information, a government witness testified Monday at the Pentagon Papers trial. Richard Best, head of security for the Rand Corp., where Ellsberg worked when the secret documents allegedly were removed in 1969, identified a form that the 41-year-old defendant signed before taking employment.

French poll shows left leading

PARIS — A public opinion poll released on the opening day of the French national election campaign Monday showed a Socialist-Communist alliance leading the present Gaullist government by a wide margin. The official campaigning for the general elections March 4 and 11 began with an average of six candidates for each of the 490 legislative seats, representing four major political parties and more than a hundred small groups. A poll published in the newspaper *L'Aurore* timed to coincide with the official campaign opening Monday showed the Gaullist majority dropping farther behind in popularity. The poll showed 47 per cent of those questioned backed the Socialist-Communist alliance, 35 per cent the Gaullists and 17 per cent the centrist reformers.

Irish Protestants ready for war

BELFAST — Extremist Ulster Protestants put their organizations on a war footing Monday by ordering members to go underground and select alternate leaders in preparation for confrontations with the British army and Catholics. The moves by the Protestants were designed to thwart an expected crackdown by the army following a weekend strategy conference among the militant groups. Sources said the group's more militant elements were demanding violent measures unless the army released 12 Protestant extremists arrested over the weekend.

ITT lobbyist suffers seizure

DENVER — The FBI said Monday that Dita Beard, the former International Telephone & Telegraph Corp. Washington lobbyist, suffered a heart seizure last Tuesday during questioning about a memo linking ITT to an alleged \$400,000 donation to the Republican Party. "We were attempting to interview her again on the instructions of the government," James Newpher, the agent in charge of the Denver FBI office said. "She became ill during the questioning," he said. "We haven't attempted to contact her since."

Airports forced to have gate guards

WASHINGTON (UPI) — A federal judge lifted a court order Monday barring the government from forcing airports to post armed guards at airport boarding gates to help prevent airliner hijackings.

U.S. District Judge John Lewis Smith Jr. lifted a week-old temporary restraining order against the Federal Aviation Administration's antihijacking security program.

The Airport Operators Council International (AOCI) won the restraining order Feb. 5, but Monday the court denied the airport operators request for a preliminary injunction that would continue the order.

Judge Smith said, "The public interest lies in protecting the safety of air commerce from the threat of a now more sophisticated type of hijacker — the armed and fleeing felon."

The FAA had argued that the guards were needed at the 531 airports served by scheduled U.S. airlines to act as a deterrent to hijackers.

The armed guards were part of a three-step program ordered into effect, starting Jan. 5, when the airlines were required to electronically screen all passengers boarding airlines and to search carry-on luggage.

On Feb. 5, the airports were required to post armed guards, but the proposal was blocked by the court order.

The Airport operators argued in vain that the government failed to provide enough time to hire and train the 4,500 guards needed to protect the boarding gates. But the government claimed "an emergency situation" existed in the industry.

Transportation Secretary John Volpe told the industry the \$57 million a year cost of the program could be defrayed by boosting the cost of the airline ticket by \$1.

As yet, however, the Civil Aeronautics Board has filed to approve the increase, which the airlines would pass on to the airport operators.

Opponents of the government program have argued that the airports should not be saddled with the armed guard program. They contend that a federal police force is necessary to do the job effectively. The FAA argued, however, that the guards were a local responsibility, and should be carried out by local police, or private airport guards.

First POWs released

CLARK AFB, Philippines (UPI) — The first American prisoners of war released from Vietnam walked across a red carpet to freedom Monday in a low-key but intensely emotional welcome at this huge American air base.

Appearing pallid but militarily erect and obviously elated, 142 POWs who had been held for up to eight years in Communist prison camps flew from Hanoi and South Vietnam in four military hospital planes.

"Wel-come-home! Wel-come-home!" chanted the crowd at Clark, where the prisoners will be examined and debriefed before their return to the United States, which could come as soon as Thursday.

Some of the men were permitted to make free 15-minute overseas telephone calls to their loved United States within hours after their arrival. The rest were told to get a good night's sleep first.

Three medical flights flew 115 of the released prisoners from Hanoi, and 26 others, held in jungle camps in South Vietnam, arrived seven hours later at 10 a.m. EST. One jungle camp prisoner, a 25-year-old civilian student, was hospitalized in Saigon.

The first man off the first plane from Hanoi, Navy Capt. Jeremiah Denton Jr., who had been a POW since July 18, 1965, saluted and tearfully stepped to a microphone:

"We are honored to have the opportunity to serve our country under difficult circumstances. We are profoundly grateful to our Commander in Chief and to our nation for this day."

He paused, then said emotionally, "God Bless America."

Some of the POWs appeared somber as they emerged from the planes but broke into smiles as they walked down the ramp and sharply saluted welcoming military officials and a color guard with a flowing American flag.

Then they walked along a red carpet which had been unrolled on the runway, boarded buses and went to the Clark base hospital.

Bulletin

U.S. dollar devalued 10%

WASHINGTON (UPI) — The United States government said Monday night that it would devalue the dollar by 10 per cent as a means toward ending the current world currency crisis.

Treasury Secretary George Shultz called a surprise news conference one hour before midnight to announce the devaluation, which he said would "mean a better deal for the American working man and the American businessman."

Shultz said the major trading partners of the United States were in full agreement with the decision.

Japan announced at the same time that it was freeing the yen from its fixed parity rate and allowing it to float and find its own value in world currency markets.

West Germany and France were expected to announce similar revaluations. The British pound, Canadian dollar and Swiss franc are already floating.

Shultz said President Nixon agreed to the devaluation Monday morning at the Western White House at San Clemente, Calif. Nixon returned to Washington Monday night.

The Hanoi flights originally called for the return of 115 men but North Vietnamese officials granted the wish of a Coronado, California father that his son be hurried home because his mother was critically ill. The extra man was Navy Cmdr. Brian Woods, 40, held since Sept. 18, 1968. His mother, Anita, was in a Coronado hospital intensive care unit.

"I hope he can pull her through," said Wood's father, W.R.D. Woods, 70, a retired admiral.

President Nixon, at the Western White House in San Clemente, Calif., praised the POWs as men who "made peace with honor possible." He appealed to newsmen and the nation to let them come home to their families in privacy and quiet.

Navy Lt. Cmdr. Milton Baker, a member of the crew of the second C141 Starlifter that flew to Hanoi to get the prisoners, said the men appeared solemn while boarding the plane.

But "once inside the plane they really became elated," he said. "The reaction on takeoff was shouts, cheers, thumbs-up, that sort of thing."

During the flight to Clark, Baker said, the men asked "hundreds of questions. They asked about news, they asked about fashions, they asked about woman's lib, they asked questions about their own military ranks. They asked questions about everything."

In contrast to the generally healthy appearance of the Hanoi POWs, the Americans released at Communist-held Loc Ninh in South Vietnam looked haggard and weak. They waited in the hot jungle sun 12 hours while the details of their release were haggled over and obviously were tired when they arrived at Clark.

A State Department spokesman said one of the civilian jungle prisoners, Richard Waldhaus, 25, a student from Pittsburg, Calif., captured Aug. 4, 1970 while traveling in South Vietnam, decided to stay in Saigon for "personal reasons." The spokesman did not elaborate, but said Waldhaus was taken to the U.S. military Third Field hospital.

Pentagon sets up new Southeast Asia headquarters in Thailand

WASHINGTON (UPI) — The Pentagon announced Monday it has begun to set up a new Southeast Asia headquarters at a remote base in Thailand to control teams searching for missing U.S. servicemen and to direct any air activity the United States carries out there after March 28.

The dual-purpose headquarters will be located at Nakhon Phanom, Thailand, the base which has served as headquarters in the past for the remote sensors dropped along the Ho Chi Minh Trail to detect Communist supply troop movements, a Defense Department spokesman said.

"We're looking down the road to a time when MACV (the U.S. high command in Saigon) and the 7th Air Force headquarters (also

in Saigon) will be gone from where they are now," the spokesman said. The Vietnam cease-fire requires both these headquarters to be disbanded by the end of March, when all U.S. troops will have been withdrawn from Vietnam.

The Pentagon said approximately 1,000 persons would be attached to the headquarters — roughly 200 are working with the Joint Casualty Resolution Center (JCRC) and the rest assigned to the air operations headquarters.

"The JCRC will attempt to locate or otherwise resolve the status of U.S. personnel still carried as missing in Southeast Asia," the spokesman said. "It will use all available means to locate crash and gravesites or otherwise determine the fate of such missing persons."

He said the air operations headquarters would "control such supporting air activities as may be required," including flights in connection with JCRC activities.

Pentagon sources said the air operations headquarters would also direct air strikes in Laos or Cambodia if those strikes are still going on after March 28. At present, the United States is flying about 280 strikes a day against Communist positions in Laos and "a few tens" of strikes a day against Communist forces in Cambodia, as requested by the Cambodian government.

The Pentagon said the new headquarters would be commanded by Air Force Gen. John Vogt Jr., presently in charge of the 7th Air Force and all U.S. air operations in Southeast Asia.