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Nixon planned to use nukes in Vietnam

WASHINGTON (AP) — Former Pres. Richard Nixon's administration drew up ultra-secret contingency plans for the nuclear destruction of supply routes and a ground invasion of the North in the Vietnam War, says reporter Seymour Hersh.

The book, "The Price of Power," says the plans were part of a strategy for ending the war that Nixon and Henry Kissinger agreed upon in early summer of 1969.

Neither Nixon nor Kissinger responded to queries about the book, whose author won a Pulitzer Prize in 1970 for uncovering the My Lai massacre by U.S. forces in Vietnam and is a former reporter for The Associated Press, United Press International and The New York Times.

Hersh, 46, writes that Kissinger, then Nixon's national security adviser, commissioned a secret study for escalation of the war. It says the study was completed on July 20, 1969, by the office of the chief of naval operations, without the knowledge of Secretary of Defense Melvin Laird.

It called for massive bombing, a ground invasion of North Vietnam and "the destruction — possibly with nuclear devices — of the main north-south passes along the Ho Chi Minh Trail," the main artery linking North Vietnam with its Viet Cong allies in South Vietnam, Hersh reports.

"There was a separate, even more secret study dealing with the implications of using tactical nuclear weapons on the rail lines, the main funnel for supplies from the Soviet Union as well as China," he writes.

Hersh says the North Vietnamese were warned through intermediaries that the plan would be put into effect if they did not agree by Nov. 1 to a negotiated settlement of the war.

To emphasize the warning, Hersh says Nixon ordered the Strategic Air Command to place its nuclear-armed B-52 bombers on full alert for 29 days, without public knowledge.

Nixon discussed the ultimatum to North Vietnam, but not the nuclear option, in his own memoirs and said that

he abandoned it after anti-war protests convinced him that "American public opinion would be seriously divided by any military escalation of the war."

The Hersh book quotes Kissinger as saying at a staff meeting early in 1969, "It is the policy of this administration not to use nuclear weapons and we shall not, so these options exclude that one thing. But you are not to exclude the possibility of a nuclear device being used for the purposes of a blockade in the pass to China."

Guerrillas vow to kill advisers

SAN SALVADOR, El Salvador (AP) — The Popular Liberation Forces, the largest of five leftist guerrilla groups, said Wednesday it will continue killing American advisers until all of them are forced to leave the country.

The FPL, as it is known by its Spanish acronym, claimed responsibility for the May 25 slaying of Lt. Cmdr. Albert Schaufelberger III, the deputy commander of the American

military advisory group.

"All the military advisers sent here will return to the United States in coffins," the FPL said in a communique, copies of which were sent to local radio stations in the capital.

The FPL leaflets said the slaying of Schaufelberger was a warning against "the bellicose Reagan administration so that it does not continue its aggression against our people."

American advisers, the FPL leaflet said, "have invaded our soil and massacre our compatriots every day." It said the guerrillas "will be implacable with them, until its achieves their total withdrawal from our beloved homeland."

Schaufelberger, 33, of San Diego, Calif., was also in charge of security for the 51 American military advisers currently in the country. He was the first U.S. adviser to be killed in El Salvador.

Roberts stricken with chest pains

SALEM (AP) — The wife of state Sen. Frank Roberts, D-Portland, said today her husband had not suffered a heart attack but was being hospitalized for chest pains.

Officials at Salem Hospital on Tuesday night had said Roberts was admitted earlier that day after suffering an apparent heart attack.

But House Majority Leader Barbara Roberts, D-Portland, said her husband was admitted for observation of chest pains which "do not appear to be a result of a heart attack."

Roberts, 67, chairman of a Joint Ways and Means subcommittee, who suffered a heart attack May 6, was listed in "serious but stable" condition today, Roberts said. A nursing supervisor said he was admitted to the hospital at 3:05 p.m. Tuesday.

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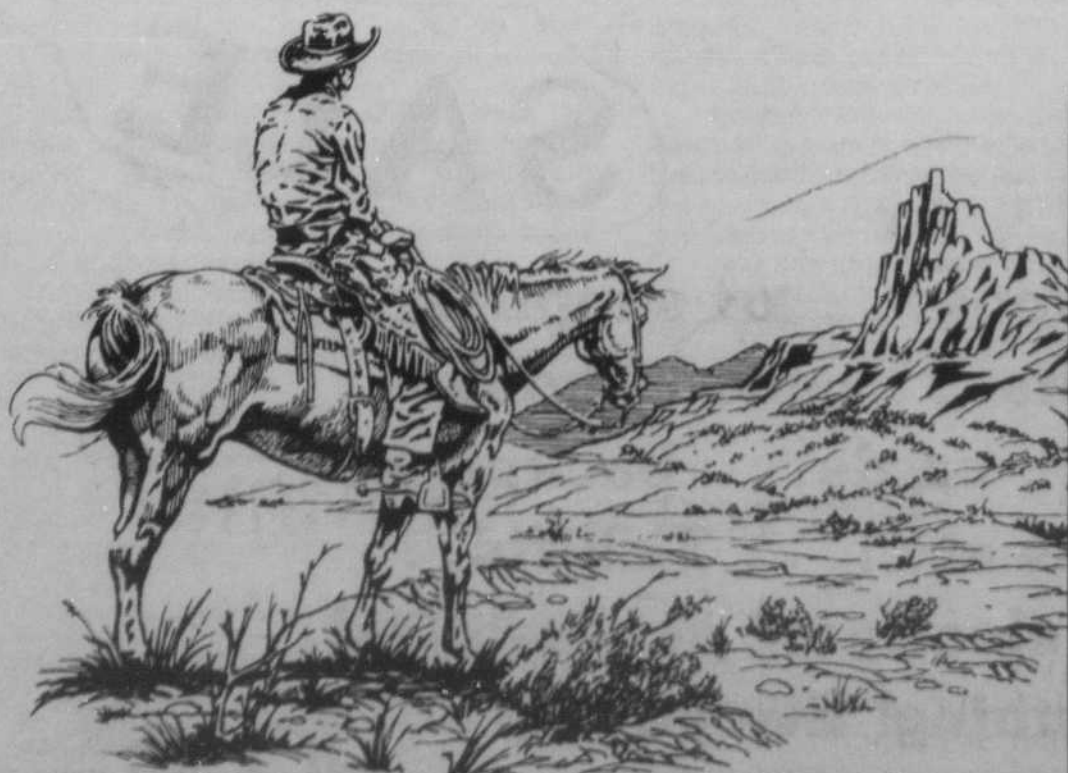
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