

Pentagon News Chief Says No 'Cover Up' Behind Secrecy Plea

By CHARLES CODDREY
United Press Correspondent

Washington — (U.P.) — R. Carl Honoman, Pentagon public relations chief, hopes for a "voluntary publication" by editors to restrain publication of information that is not secret but might prove helpful to Russia.

Such data is called "strategic information" by the man charged with carrying out Defense Secretary Charles E. Wilson's new and tighter information policies. No effort to "cover up" official mistakes or other legitimate news is involved, Honoman insisted in an interview today.

Editors of newspaper, business and trade magazines have protested that the new category of "strategic information" is one that cannot be precisely defined and might result in blacking out vital news with no security connotation.

Honoman, deputy assistant defense secretary in charge of public affairs, was asked to describe the boundaries of "strategic information."

Describes Boundaries

"The boundaries," he said, "are what will help the enemy more than it will help us." Judgment on such matters is not the government's responsibility alone, he said.

"Judgment can be made by editors as well."

The point was raised in the interview that critics fear new Pentagon rules, calling for information to be "constructive" as well as free of help for an enemy, could be used to hide facts to which the public is entitled.

Honoman took note of the criticism by saying "there is need for loyal opposition . . . vital principles are at stake."

He called for an atmosphere of "mutual trust" between government and press and apparently visualized the two as more or less partners in informing the public.

"Neither side is in a vacuum," he said. "Your interests (the press) and ours are not antagonistic. We ought to serve the public that pays the bills."

He said he hopes the press would "scream" if any of the "horrendous" things feared by his critics came to pass.

News 'Brownout'

Honoman, 60-year-old former

publication director at Bell Telephone laboratories and organizer of the Commerce Department's office of strategic information, is one of the focal points of complaints of a news "brown-out" in this administration.

He said that for every hour spent at the Pentagon restraining information, officials put in 100 hours in a "positive effort" to make data public.

But something must be done, he insisted, to prevent "grey area" information from being circulated. That is data which cannot be classified "top secret," "secret" or "confidential" because too many people must know it, yet would be valuable to Russia.

Mostly technical information is involved and restricting it, critics contend, would slow technological progress here, without really hampering the Russians.

Van Vactor To Rule In Beating Case

Klamath Falls—(U.P.)—District Judge D. E. Van Vactor was expected to rule today in the case of Royde Crockett, 55-year-old Beatty, Ore., laborer accused of complicity in the beating of Watson Duffy last May.

Defense Attorney Pete Driscoll entered a plea of not guilty for his client yesterday, contending that since the original assault with a dangerous weapon charge was dismissed by the court last week, further prosecution under a reduced charge of assault and battery would be placing Crockett in double jeopardy.

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Driscoll said the lesser charge was included in the assault with a dangerous weapon charge, furthermore, and that once the more serious accusation had been dismissed the lesser one was dismissed by implication.

Orange Trees Growing 3000 Feet Below Surface in Mine Get Light from Electricity

By RUSSELL R. NIELSEN
United Press Correspondent

Kellogg, Idaho—(U.P.)—Orange trees which sprouted from seeds dropped from a miner's lunch pail have survived for six years the hazards of existence 3000 feet below the earth's surface and now stretch their limbs toward the artificial sky which casts the only light into their bleak "orchard."

The two trees are growing on the 20½ level at the Bunker Hill and Sullivan mine here. Mine officials hope they will continue to grow even longer than the famed lemon tree which lived 15 years in the dark recesses of the old mine.

The seed for the largest orange tree, a four foot leafy bush, was dropped prior to the labor strike of 1949. Seeds had been dropped in the mine many times before and no one thought another of the "lemon tree freaks" would sprout.

Foliage Appeared

But, through the hard rock where the seeds had fallen, there soon appeared green foliage. Herman Heier, a shift boss, and James Allen, assistant foreman, found the sturdy little plant thrusting its way through the ground between track ties on the level. They transplanted it to a coffee can. It continued to grow and the plant was moved to a nail keg, then to a larger box.

Heier brings plant food in his lunch for the tree that has never seen the sunlight. Its sunshine is the light supplied by 10 bulbs of 100 watts each.

"I even carried angle worms down to put in the soil around the tree," Heier says. "They keep the earth from packing too tightly around the roots."

15 Years

The old lemon tree lived 15

years without so much as a single ray of sunlight. It began to die a few years ago after it moved from the 17th level to a spot where caretakers thought the air was better. It reached a height of eight feet and had to be pruned constantly because it reached the ceiling of its rickety tomb-like home.

One miner figured the tree died because it simply used up the life span of an underground existence.

"But it's nice to come down to the level every day and see evidence of life where you would never expect to find any, except for us human beings," he says. "You might say there's some light, or hope, where none seems to be."

In time there may be other plants adorning the tunnels of the big mine. There is no plant food in rock, but warm and humid conditions inside the mine make it possible for a seed to sprout. If the plant is cared for, it can reach full growth even though it is destined never to see the sun, a company biologist says.

Five Killed in New Jersey Crash

Somerville, N. J. — (U.P.) — Five persons were killed Monday night when a car in which they were riding collided with a tractor-trailer.

James Cordick of Bradley Gardens, N.J., the surviving occupant of the car was in critical condition with multiple injuries.

Police reported the truck,

loaded with concrete and lead pipe, collided with the car on Route 206 near Somerville.

Police said Ralph Horton, 19, driver of the car; Steve Chonko, 17; Francis Trout, 26; Robert Lawyer, 15, and Miss Lawanda Serafino, 17, all of Bridgewater, N.J., were crushed to death by the car's engine which was driven into the back seat

The truck driver, Herman B. Walsh, 30, of Rosendale, N.Y., was treated at Somerville hospital and released. He was freed in his own recognition by police on a mandatory auto-death charge.

Police said the accident happened when the southbound car pulled out to pass on a straight section of the two-lane highway and collided with the northbound truck.

GSA Will Supply Anything Including 'Penguin Milk'

By DEAN DITTMER
United Press Correspondent

Washington—(U.P.)—The General Service Administration (GSA) prides itself on being able to supply anything a government agency wants—including penguin milk and body lice.

GSA has the job of purchasing for other government agencies. Take body lice. Some time ago GSA got a requisition from an agriculture department experiment station for "24 cooties of the type that infest humans."

Never Stumped

This order was referred to Lester Winfree, a purchasing officer who never had been stumped by a request. He recently directed the collection, packaging, shipment and distribution of 3,592,000 food packages of needy families in underdeveloped countries for the Foreign Operations Administration.

Winfree suspected a gag. He telephoned the agriculture experiment station. Yes, they said, they wanted 24 live cooties of specified type for a research experiment.

Winfree pondered, then called the local calaboose. It just happened to have some overnight customers who were carrying

around a sufficient number of the insects. The lice were collected, packaged, and delivered.

Wanted Penguin Milk

A short time later, the same agriculture experiment station asked for two small cans of condensed penguin milk. Then he called Dr. William M. Mann, director of the National Zoo. When Mann stopped laughing, he explained that penguins don't give milk.

But Winfree is a resourceful and imaginative fellow. He sent to a grocery for two small cans of regular condensed milk. Then he called on a GSA draftsman who is a spare-time artist. Authentic-looking condensed "penguin milk labels" were prepared and the merchandise was sent on its way.

Winfree never did receive a note from the agricultural experiment station expressing appreciation for his efficiency and enterprise.

MORE CHILDREN

Washington—There are about 54.5 million children in the U.S. under the age of 18. The total represents an increase of almost 13 million since the conclusion of World War II.



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