

Thurs, Dec. 19-68.

The big rumor today on Capitol Hill - all about the Pueblo affair. Congressional sources reporting near-agreement -- between U S and North Korean negotiators; pointing the way, hopefully, toward release of the Pueblo's eighty-two crew members perhaps within the next week.

Only hold-up as of now - we are told - the wording and timing of a joint announcement. However, 1/2 the U S State Department refusing either to confirm or deny the rumor. Indeed, Capitol Hill warning that there is still the ~~poss~~ possibility of some "last minute hitch", that could again delay the long-awaited agreement.

PHNOM PENH FOLLOW CAPITOL HILL

In the meantime, the best possible Christmas present for another twelve American service men. At Phnom Penh in Cambodia - that country's Prince Norodom Sihanouk - giving the men their freedom today. ~~Turning them~~ Turning them ~~over~~ over to Australian authorities - who will have them flown to Bangkok tomorrow. ~~The U S official further promises~~ They ^{may even} ~~will~~ be back home with their families - in ~~plenty of~~ time for the yuletide holiday.

Why the sudden release? Prince Sihanouk saying he was doing it - to "give satisfaction to President Johnson." U S officials ~~are~~ confirming that the President had sent a letter to Sihanouk urging clemency.

PARIS FOLLOW PHNOM PENH

Another Christmas surprise package -
reported ~~for~~ today from Paris. Where the Viet Cong
promised to release three more American prisoners -
for so-called "humanitarian reasons". This apparently
in response to an American good will gesture - in the
recent release of seven North Vietnamese prisoners.

Elsewhere at Paris though the news was
anything but good. With negotiations toward expanded
peace talks still in "complete deadlock". If anything -
the situation seemingly on the verge of deterioration,
~~today~~ With the U S taking note of a Viet Cong call -
for a "massive uprising" on tomorrow's eighth anniversary
of the National Liberation Front. ^{Our people} Warning that any new
offensive in the south - could well trigger the resumption
of bombing in the North.

PAHUTE MESA

Here at home - at Pahute Mesa, Nevada,
a nuclear test blast today, the biggest ever on ^{the} American
~~continent.~~
~~shore~~ A mile ~~wide~~ deep - the Atomic Energy Commission
exploding a nuclear device sixty times as powerful as
the one that destroyed Hiroshima. The ~~work~~ resulting
force carving out a subterranean cavity - some eight
hundred feet in diameter. Also sending shock waves ~~for~~
hundreds of miles - through four western states.

As far as we know, though - there has been
no seepage of radiation. Hence - no apparent danger.
~~An A E C test official observing - "It was just about~~
~~what we expected."~~

CAPE KENNEDY

Speed up at Cape Kennedy. Space technicians working hard - today - to recoup four lost hours.

Time spent in the ticklish job of activating the Apollo Eight's electric generators. A task complicated - we hear by a faulty valve in ~~ground~~ ground equipment.

~~Luckily though a built-in hold facilitated the catch up.~~ But ~~With~~ all signs still pointing toward a Saturday launch ~~to be followed shortly by a ring around~~ and ~~they go-~~ the moon ~~I~~ we hope.

HUNTINGTON

One of the great visionaries of American politics dead today at Huntington, NEW York. Norman Thomas veteran leader of the American Socialist Party -- victim of a length illness. He was eighty-four.

Norman Thomas - a man who was born perhaps a generation too soon. In many ways, a loser all his life; running for President six times ^{= also} for Governor of New York, even ^{for} mayor of New York City - with never a prayer of winning. Yet he lived to see many of his goals eventually accepted by the people - and finally

written into legislation. Widely regarded as one of the great men of his time - even if he always seemed to be a loser. ~~On retirement from active politics~~ Norman

~~Thomas saying: "I am not a disappointed man. America may never have accepted Socialism under the banner of a political party - but it has gradually accepted the party's program."~~

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SYDNEY

Looking for a bonanza? Then Australia's the place to go - or so says a report today from Sydney - recapping a series of recent prospecting discoveries; some of the richest - almost by accident.

For example , a flying sheep rancher by the name of Langley Hancock - trying to duck under a storm one day ; when he spotted some strange outcroppings - on the ground far below. Returning later on foot - he laid claim to iron ore deposits estimated at one ~~hundred~~ hundred million tons.

Then there was Norman McConachy - whose jeep bogged down in a northern Queensland creek bed. While waiting for help he picked up a strange looking rock - and thereby discovered Australia's biggest uranium deposit. ~~Essentially~~ ^{And much} the same story ^{concerning the} ~~the~~ discovery of Australia's first big bauxite deposit on the Gulf of Carpentaria.

*All of which is bringing on a flood of
American geologists - one of whom was heard to
remark recently: "Australia is a lousy country,
its lousy with minerals."*

SAKARRA

Found, at last - the long lost burial place
of Imhotep - builder of the first Egyptian Pyramid.
At least that's the claim today - from Professor W. B.
Emery of London University.

Site of the discovery at Sakarra - which once
served as a cemetery for the ancient Egyptian capital
the city of
~~at Memphis~~ Memphis. After five straight years of digging,
Professor Emery unearthing a maze of tunnels he calls
"the gateway to Imhotep's tomb." With actual discovery
of the tomb itself expected "any day" now - said he.

Although his Pyramids have stood five
thousand years - Imhotep was perhaps best known through
his contemporaries as a great physician. Indeed, he
was ~~kn~~ later deified by the Greeks - ^{with the name} "Asclepius, the
God of Healing." I wonder if Imhotep's tomb
will be full of priceless golden treasure,
like they found when they opened the tomb
of King Tut.

KARLSKOGA

From Karlskoga, Sweden - the story today of a little boy as cold as death - yet somehow he survived.

Three year old Christer Jacobsson playing outside his home - when a storm came up and he suddenly disappeared. Searchers combing the countryside for twenty-four hours - until they finally found him half buried in a snowdrift. Clinically - he was dead. No pulse, no heartbeat. His temperature a scant fifty-five degrees. However, doctors refusing to give up - administering oxygen, also heart massage, immersing the youngster in warm ~~in~~ water. continuing the ~~the~~ treatment for one hour - two hours - when at last, the youngster came alive again.

Little Christer Jacobsson in good condition tonight - expected to recover fully thanks to the medical miracle men - of Karlskoga, Sweden.