

WHITE HOUSE

*For President Nixon - a tentative first step today - into the field of collective bargaining. The President set up a special labor-management commission to deal with "strife and tensions" in the turbulent construction industry. He appointed as its chairman - Labor Secretary George Schultz; with a warning that "the national interest" requires an immediate improvement - "in this vital sector."*

*The President went on to stress that his new commission - will not bar the right to strike nor prevent possible lockouts. Nor will it constitute a medium of compulsory arbitration - said he. Adding that, indeed, its purpose is to head off voluntarily - "widespread public demand" for just such controls.*

## ATLANTIC CITY FOLLOW WHITE HOUSE

*Coincidentally, the AFL-CIO's giant Building and Construction Trades Department - opened its regular convention today at Atlantic City. President C. J. Haggerty - the keynote speaker; asserting that "black coalitions" are unjustly "harassing the building trades in several cities" - especially Pittsburgh and Chicago. <sup>said Haggerty</sup> And charges that said unions are "lily-white" - or guilty of practicing only "tokenism" - are a distortion of fact!*

*A few minutes later - the labor group rejected a black-urged quota system for minority hiring, calling it - a "simplistic idea." The added that the building trades will not be cast "in the role of scapegoat or whipping boy - for all the current ills on the racial scene."*

## QUE SON

A new surge of fighting today in the battle-worn Que Son Valley in Vietnam. For the second time in a month - Communist forces threatened the village of Hiep Duc. This - you may recall - is a so-called "model city" in the Allied pacification program; housing at the present time - about four thousand war refugees.

Another development: The U.S. Marines have finally achieved a kind of parity - with the Army, Navy and Air Force. This by virtue of an order today cutting from thirteen to twelve months - same as all the rest - the regular tour of Marine duty in Vietnam.

~~This~~ This - along with a Pentagon announcement that another ~~thirty~~ seventy-seven-thousand-five-hundred-men are being cut from the armed forces, along with two hundred planes and twenty two ships. The economies will save something over three-hundred-and-fifty-million dollars in the Defense Department budget this fiscal year.

(SUGGESTED LEAD-IN TO THOMAS TAPE SLUGGED "SOCOTRA")

Lowell Thomas is somewhere in the Pacific tonight -  
as you perhaps know. Still temporarily incommunicado -  
and so another special report tonight. Subject: The  
forgotten isle of Socotra - east of Aden. Lowell...

## SOCOTRA

*Hello everybody: Once upon a time - so the story goes - the Garden of Eden was inhabited by nine tribes in Arabia. And when the Garden turned to desert - eight of the tribes supposedly headed North and the ninth - headed South. According to legend, ending up on the Island of Socotra - where we hear that now their descendants are still living in the Stone Age.*

*The reason - hard to say. Once it was rich in trees of myrrh and frankincense - and Socotra served as a trading post at one time for Greeks and Romans as early as Three Hundred B.C.; and later on - it was a way-stop for merchants from India, from Persia, and from Africa. And then - something happened. We don't know what. For maybe a thousand years the island was practically cut off from the rest of the world. And in effect, time marched backward - on Socotra - to the point where the Socotra Bedouin even today - live in caves and make fire by rubbing sticks*

*together and they haven't yet discovered the wheel.*

*Be that as it may - the legend of Socotra lives on and on. In part, because of the writings of early visitors such as Alexander the Great, and St. Francis Xavier and even Marco Polo - Marco Polo found the island literally enchanting. Marco Polo, told of the sirens of Socotra who made the winds blow and blow - turning back and often sinking any ship that dared pass them by.*

*Socotra's "sorcery" - we now know - the product of two monsoon seasons annually - lasting fully ten months of each year - which certainly didn't help any.*

*Solong. . . .*

(SUGGESTED FOLLOW TO THOMAS TAPE SLUGGED "SOCOTRA")

*Thank you, Lowell. More in a moment!*

## PRICES

*The U.S. cost of living index - same old story - it was up again last month. Jumping another four-tenths of a point - for a total gain of four per cent since the first of the year. The highest rate of increase - since the post-war boom of Nineteen-Forty-Eight.*



MOSCOW-PEKING

From Peking by way of Moscow <sup>Came</sup> a weekend report that Red China's Chairman Mao Tse-tung had ~~recently~~ suffered a stroke; that he ~~was~~ <sup>is</sup> still partially incapacitated - unable to carry on as chief of state.

Now - a follow-up. Diplomatic sources in Moscow - <sup>told</sup> ~~telling~~ today of a new ruling "troika" in Peking. The trio at the top said to include Red China's Premier Chou En-lai- Defense Minister Lin Piao - and ~~veteran~~ Communist Party leader Chen Po-Ta.

All of which - is neither confirmed nor denied by official sources. They simply refuse to talk about it.

UNITED NATIONS

At the United Nations - here in New York / Jordan  
to the attack today. Amman's Foreign Minister Abdel Monem  
Rifai - blaming the U.S. for prolonging the current Mideast  
crisis. This - said he - by backing Israel with new Phantom  
jets; "at a time when Israel already enjoys superiority in  
the air - at a time when its air raids have become the order  
of the day."

Rifai further predicted that Big Four peace efforts -  
resumed this past weekend - will collapse again. And when  
they do - said he - a new war / or series of wars is inevitable.

## CAIRO FOLLOW UNITED NATIONS

A related item - from Cairo; where Egypt joined today - in attacking the new Big Four peace move. Like Jordan - blaming the U.S. for dooming it to failure.

*This is Mike Wallace for Lowell Thomas.*