

February 9, 1970, Monday

PLAIN OF REEDS

In Vietnam - the swamp-like Plain of Reeds sixty miles west of Saigon - the scene of a fourth straight day of heavy fighting. With a force of South Vietnamese troops led by U.S. Green Berets - attempting to stall an enemy drive on the provincial capital of My Pho. This - a river city in the rice rich Mekong Delta; also, headquarters of the South Vietnamese army's seventh division - which recently replaced American troops in the area. The battle a major test of the administration's "Vietnamization" policy.

LAIRD

Here at home - Defense Secretary ~~Melvin~~ Laird

~~boarded a plane~~ today headed for Vietnam. ^{going} ~~The Secretary~~

under direct orders from the President to see exactly "how
it looks today;" as compared with his last trip to Vietnam

- about a year ago. Laird's findings - as well as battle

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field developments ^{over} of the next few days ^{are sure} ~~expected~~ to play

an important role in determining how fast we can continue

to withdraw ^{our} ~~the~~ troops.

RABAT

For U. S. Secretary of State William Rogers - at

Rabat, ~~Morocco~~ - a luncheon ^{with Hassan} ~~meeting today with~~ King

~~of Morocco. This~~ ^{Winding up the official schedule}
~~Hassan, of that country,~~

- on this the first stop of his current ten nation African

good-will tour. Next stop - Tunis - ancient Carthage.

^{We hear, see,}
~~By the way, a report today that~~ William Rogers

may also meet with President Tito of Yugoslavia - ~~sometime~~

later in the week. The Communist leader ^{is} now visiting

^{also} Africa ^{Their} on a good will tour, ~~of his own.~~ ~~Thus the~~ probable

meeting place - ~~if they do get together~~ somewhere in

Kenya, could it be at Treetops where all
travellers go to see the animals? If so
then they'd both be "up a tree." Correction: -
the latest: - they may meet in Ethiopia - at
Addis Ababa

VATICAN

From the Vatican ^{came} ~~Rome~~ - an announcement ~~today~~

~~issuing~~ of an order sent to Roman Catholic Priests the world over; An order calling for a public reaffirmation of ~~their~~ ^{henceforth} vows of celibacy and obedience _λ each and every year. The

Vatican further suggesting Holy Thursday - which falls on

March 26th this year - as a good time to carry out the

command. This, in effect, setting the stage for a showdown

battle _λ on two of the most divisive issues within the church.

+8

DALLAS

Speaking of century marks - at Dallas - an
assertion today that the U. S. mail ~~is~~ service is outdated by
a hundred years or more. This - according to Post Master
General ~~Winston~~ Blount; who added ~~that~~ ^{over} ~~the~~ postal system now
has an annual deficit - "of over a billion dollars;" also,
an employee turnover ~~of~~ upwards of twenty percent a year.
As a result - ^{The P.M. General} ~~Blount~~ went on - the Post Office
"functions constantly on the rim of disaster." And "the
only thing that keeps it from sliding over the edge" - ~~he~~
said he: Number one - "the dedication" of the great majority
of it's employees. And number two - lots of "luck".

MANILA

*From Manila - the story of a Philippino houseboy
- Felipe Vargas - sentenced to death for murder. While
waiting to be executed - willing his eyes to medicine.
Except that he changed his mind today - enroute to the
electric chair. The condemned man saying he wanted to keep
his eyes - so he could see God a few minutes hence.*

Felipe Vargas - an optimist to the end.

EDDYVILLE _ ANAMOSA

This next - a story with a surprise ending.

Farmer Edward Briney of Eddyville, Iowa - setting up a gun as a booby trap in a vacant house he owned. The gun going off, alright - wounding a would be burglar; who then turned around and sued and sued farmer Briney - winning a judgement of thirty thousand bucks. In the end - the farmer losing about two-thirds of his total acreage.

Now - the surprise ending. A group of inmates at the Iowa Reformatory - Anamosa, Iowa - taking up a collection - raising a hundred bucks. Sending it to farmer Briney - to help him get back on his feet.

1/4 ~~Howe that~~
~~all of which~~
for poetic irony? Warren.
~~perhaps suggests - there's still some good in even the~~

~~worst of us.~~