

The biggest oil fire in the history of drilling operations in the Gulf of Mexico - was finally extinguished today. A four hundred-pound dynamite charge - turning the trick at last; ending a blaze that had raged virtually unchecked - for four weeks.

Now begins another battle - the battle to control what could well prove to be history's largest oil slick. The platform where it all started - about thirty miles out from Venice, Louisiana - continuing to spew forth a hundred-foot geyser of crude oil; with accumulations expected to reach up to a thousand barrels a day - until the wells can be recapped; which will probably take anywhere from five to fifteen days.

Indeed, the oil is already polluting - rich offshore seafood beds. The oil slick is also said to be moving in a west-northwesterly direction - thereby endangering practically the entire Louisiana coastline.

SAIGON

From Radio Saigon - a warning today that Communist agents are attempting to purchase South Vietnamese Army uniforms. This said to be the first step in an effort to infiltrate the capital - in preparation for a ^{possible} sneak attack later this month.

LAOS FOLLOW SAIGON

Meanwhile, scores of American jets were ^{took} taking off from South Vietnam - headed for bombing missions in neighboring Laos. In line with newly-announced Washington policy - U.S. officials discussing the raids with rare candor; attempting to lay to rest the spectre of another so-called "credibility gap" - such as plagued the Johnson Administration.

At the same time, a report today from Vientiane - that North Vietnam has now established a military headquarters inside Laos. If true, Hanoi's first such ⁽¹⁾ command post - since the start of fighting in that country. This seen as the possible forerunner of another Communist offensive - aimed at achieving an additional advantage in advance of any future peace talks.

WASHINGTON FOLLOW VIE'NTIANE

Here at home, five more U.S. servicemen were officially charged today - in connection with that ¹⁹⁶⁸ My Lai massacre. The group headed by Captain Ernest Medina of Pico Rivera, California - who commanded the company involved in the My Lai mission. Others newly-charged including Captain Eugene M. Kotouc of Fort Omaha, Nebraska - Staff Sergeant Kenneth Hodges of Dublin, Georgia - Private Max Hutson of Attica, Indiana - and Sergeant Esequiel Torres of Brownville, Texas. This raising to ten the number of men now awaiting trial - on charges arising from the My Lai incident.

LAMAR

At Lamar, South Carolina - the site of racial violence last week - five busloads of Negro children made it safely to school today. Desegregating the formerly all-white Lamar school system - under the protection of State Police and National Guardsmen.

Two groups of whites - who later attempted to invade the school grounds ^{was} promptly turned back. ^{by police} Police using planes as well as helicopters - to guard against any eventuality.

BEL AIR

At Bel Air, Maryland - the riot and arson trial of black militant H. Rap Brown - was recessed today, at least till next Monday. The result of a mysterious explosion last night - that killed two Negroes traveling to Bel Air by car.

One of the victims - Ralph Featherstone - age thirty - a close friend of Brown. As for the other victim - he is still unidentified as yet. However, police say they do not believe it was Brown. They also said the blast was set off - inside the car.

SALISBURY

America's decision to close its consulate at Salisbury, Rhodesia - apparently the spur to like action today ^{by} in Italy and the Netherlands; both of which announced that they, too - will close their consulates in the breakaway British colony. It was further reported that West Germany, among others - will soon follow suit.

All of which led to a special Rhodesian cabinet meeting - seeking ways and means of dealing with the new situation. A government statement later expressing deep regret - that, ^{in its words} quote, "the United States has allowed itself to be forced by Britain to close its mission." It was further specified that the rights of a thousand Americans living in Rhodesia - would be safeguarded, mission or no.

SENATE

Dr. Walter Heller - a former Chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers - the chief witness today before a Senate subcommittee. Asserting that the nation's economy "is teetering" - right now- "on the brink of a recession." Therefore urging speedy enactment of a number of anti-recession measures - including a public works program - to head off the possibility of what he called "a long period of continued softness." Dr. Heller declaring that there must be "a job at the end of the line" - for all who are thrown out of work.

EAST BERLIN

East Germany's Interflug airline reported today an attempted airplane hijacking - on a flight between East Berlin and Leipzig. Two men described as "armed bandits" - allegedly forcing the craft to change course briefly.

"However, the attempt failed" - we are told - "thanks to security measures taken by the crew." The would-be hijackers later committing suicide - the Interflug announcement says - "in order to avoid the legal penalties."

BEIRUT

The U.S. Embassy in Beirut - was target of an anti-American protest today. This one unique in that the protestors were women - mainly Arab students from the American University of Beirut- but also including a few American coeds. One banner they carried saying: "American women against Phantoms to Israel."

Even so that, the Nelson's arrival - at first, went practically unnoticed. In part, because he had been expected to land at Jacksonville, Florida - some two thousand miles to the Northwest. Nevertheless, he made it - in good health, too. Appropriately enough, lying up at Nelson's Dockyard - which was named after another British seafarer of some note - the great Horatio Nelson.

Now for Lowell Thomas - so long until tomorrow.

ST. JOHN'S

A British seafarer by the name of Sidney Genders - has become the first man ever to row from Europe to America. This confirmed by a story today - from St. John's on the Island of Antigua in the Caribbean; where the fifty-one-year-old Genders has just landed his twenty-foot boat - after seventy-four days on the high seas.

Even at that, the Briton's arrival - at first, went practically unnoticed. In part, because he had been scheduled to land at Jacksonville, Florida - some two thousand miles to the Northwest. Nevertheless, he made it - in good health, too. Appropriately enough, tying up at Nelson's Dockyard - which was named after another British seafarer of somenote - the great Horatio Nelson.

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March 11, 1970
Allen Jackson

DRUG ADDICTION

Drug addiction among school children - increasing at alarming rate. So said President Nixon - this afternoon as he announced an increase - of thirty-million dollars in Federal programs - to deal with the drug problem - through research and education.