

VIETNAM

Wed, Jan. 31-68,

For once, at least, it's true - what they've been saying all along in Vietnam; there is no "front line" in that embattled land. Indeed - the war is practically everywhere tonight; with reports of fighting from the streets of Saigon to the ancient imperial capital of Hue - from the Mekong Delta in the South to Khe Sanh in the North - in every major city in South Vietnam and in scores of villages and hamlets in between.

1/2
Viet Cong ~~fax~~ forces seemingly bent on proving - they can strike at will - anywhere in the country. And that they have done - though at fearful toll. An American spokesman reporting the Viet Cong have already lost about two thousand men - in this their greatest offensive. And still - no end in sight. South Vietnamese President Thieu today declaring martial law throughout the land - also imposing a twenty-four hour curfew - for the duration of the emergency.

WASHINGTON FOLLOW VIETNAM

Here at home - a public admission today from the White House; that American officials knew in advance - Viet Cong terrorists were planning to strike. Press Secretary George Christian saying though - there was little that could have been done to prevent the offensive. Christian further echoing the words of a U S officer in Vietnam - who said, in effect: There can be no foolproof defense - against attack by suicide forces.

NEW DELHI

Talk about bad timing - here's a related item from New Delhi. A joint communique - from Indian Premier Madame Indira Gandhi and visiting Soviet Premier Kosygin; urging immediate and "unconditional stoppage - of U S bombing in North Vietnam;" which they said would lead quickly - to negotiations for peace.

What of possible North Vietnamese concessions in return? What of terrorist attacks in the South? On that - nothing.

UNITED NATIONS

At the United Nations - a report today that the United States has rejected the idea of an invitation to North Korea; to come to the U N - ~~to~~ to discuss and hopefully solve the Pueblo crisis. Reason - we are told - that failure to achieve release of the Pueblo ~~and~~ her crew under such circumstances - might further inflame ~~the~~ American public opinion; perhaps - to the point of war.

A later ~~at~~ report -- Afro-Asian members of the U N Security Council - said to be sounding out both Washington and Pyongyang. Object - to obtain release of the Pueblo's eighty-three crew-members - if nothing else; in return for U S agreement to negotiate the fate of the ship itself - outside the U N.

CONCORD

Up in New Hampshire - Richard Nixon was officially entered today - in that State's first-in-the-nation presidential primary. Campaign workers for the former Vice President - filing necessary petitions with state offices in Concord. ^R Additional late starters: Governor Kirk of Florida - also Harold Stassen.

(all three)
Theoretically ~~(Nixon Kirk Stassen)~~ could still withdraw ~~his name~~ ^{As for Nixon though,} His New Hampshire campaign manager ~~asserting though~~ ^{says} that "the odds he will not run are now beyond calculation." ~~At any rate~~ ^{with} a formal announcement set for noon Friday.

Coincidentally - a new Gallup Poll just out. Showing Nixon the leader among Republican contenders - by a margin of three to one over Michigan's Governor Romney, ^{and} by a margin of three to two over New York's Governor Rockefeller. ~~At that - a slight gain for Rocky~~

TOULON

That missing French submarine - the Minerve -
today declared officially lost with all hands. Her crew
of fifty-two - consigned ^{forever} ~~forever~~ to the "deep ²⁰⁰ ~~six~~" - as
the French Navy was finally forced to admit defeat -
in its frantic search for the sub off the coast of
Toulon. A Navy bulletin conceding that "all chances
of finding the crewmen alive - are now gone."