

*Good evening everybody.*

*Secretary of Defense Melvin Laird has shaken up this country's million intelligence organizations. The objective - stronger civilian control. Laird telling the head of the Defense intelligence agency to report directly to him after February First - instead of to the Joint chiefs of staff - which has been customary in the past. The joint chiefs in turn have been told not to set up another intelligence-gathering organization of their own. Secretary Laird says he wants to make sure that all million intelligence and counter-intelligence activities are completely consistent with constitutional rights, all other legal provisions, and national security needs.*

*The Pentagon says Laird's order does not reflect any lack of confidence in the present set-up - and it denies that the change was made in response to charges that the Army has spied on national political figures. But it does seem to result - at least in part - from indications that the Army's surveillance of radical groups have gotten out of hand.*

# STATE

*For Secretary of State William Rogers - a year-end news conference today covering a broad range of subjects.*

*First and foremost, Hanoi's release of that latest American prisoner-of-war list; which Rogers called - "a contemptible maneuver;" aimed solely - said he - at diverting attention from the enemy's "failure - to comply with international law and the elements of human decency." Rogers adding that the list had also raised false hopes - among some who had already waited so long for word of their loved ones.*

*The Secretary then going on to assert that Hanoi was endangering its own position - by contending there is no "understanding" with regard to the U.S. bombing halt.*

*"If there is no understanding - there are no restrictions" - said he. Further making it plain the U.S. would resume all-out bombing - if necessary to protect the lives of withdrawing U.S. servicemen.*

## **PARIS FOLLOW STATE**

*At the peace table in Paris - David Bruce of the U.S. was also alluding to the prisoner issue today; in a tone - somewhat milder than usual. Instead of using words like "inhuman" - Bruce calling prisoner treatment in North Vietnam "unsatisfactory."*

**VIETNAM FOLLOW PARIS**

*The guns of war began to fall silent today - if only briefly. The Viet Cong - launching a three-day Christmas ~~cease~~ cease-fire; to be followed shortly - by a twenty-four-hour U.S. and Allied standdown.*

## ECONOMY

*Unpleasant news on the economic front. The total output of the United States economy declined this year for the first time since the Nineteen-Fifty-Eight recession. The Commerce Department says it now is certain that production in the final three months of this year will be down from the output in the third quarter. And that in turn means the Real Gross national product - as contrasted with those figures on the Gross National Product clock - will be lower than the Seven Hundred and Twenty-Seven Billion dollars recorded in Nineteen-Sixty-Nine. The Commerce Department blames the decline on the effects of the auto workers strike against General Motors.*

*First it was Tuna - now it's Swordfish. The Food and Drug Administration reports that Swordfish also has been found to contain poisonous mercury. And FDA spokesman saying "In about Eighty-Nine percent of the swordfish we sampled, we found mercury - and that means that most swordfish is going to have to come off the market."*

**WARSAW**

*In Communist Poland - another government shake-up .*

*Long-time Premier Jozef Cyrankiewicz - getting "kicked upstairs" - becoming President; to make way for Piotr*

*Jaroszewicz - an Army general and economics expert - who now becomes premier. All this taking place, of course -*

*under the aegis of Poland's new Communist Party leader,*

*Edward Gierek.*

## WHITE HOUSE

*At the White House - an effort to take advantage of a seventy-one-year-old law. President Nixon issuing an executive order - requiring a Federal permit for the dumping of business wastes and discharges into U.S. waters. This under a newly-rediscovered provision - of the U.S. Refuse Act of Eighteen-Ninety-Nine; which was passed at a time when many firms were indiscriminately polluting vital water supplies - especially in the West.*

*The President observing that his new order - will help to "enhance the ability of the Federal government to enforce water quality standards;" and thus provide - said he - "a major strengthening of our efforts - to clean up our nation's water."*

*In Canada - Ontario Provincial Police have begun distributing - a poem dedicated to Yuletide drivers; a poem - which reads:*

*'Twas the night before Christmas,  
And all through the town,  
People were happy.  
Not a face wore a frown.  
And out on the street,  
Not a driver'd been drinking;  
For it seems that they'd all  
Been doing some thinking.  
To drink and to drive,  
On this day or any,  
Would endanger their lives,  
Indeed, those of many.  
So they walked, went by cab,  
Or just stayed at home.  
And Christmas morning arrived,  
With no children alone.*

*It may not be great poetry but the sentiment is worth  
~~keeping in mind~~  
keeping in mind - tomorrow being Christmas Eve. ■*



**SUGGESTED LEAD-IN TO THOMAS TAPE "SKIING"**

*And now - it's time again for Lowell Thomas;  
reporting tonight from way up North - on a subject that  
perfectly fits the locale. Lowell...*

*Thank you Lowell. If we have a chance, we might join  
you.*

*Dallas Townsend saying Good night.*

*Hello everybody. Here we are back in Alaska. Our main reason for coming North these days is to spend a little time with the Alaskan L T and his family, to see the grandchildren.*

*As some of you know whenever I head West or North, another reason is that I'm still an enthusiastic skier. Have you been watching the way this sport has been spreading? It wasn't long ago that ski ads were rather few and far between. Now, they are everywhere. This winter there are a number of important new books, one entitled THE OFFICIAL AMERICAN SKI TECHNIQUE, written by the professional ski instructors of America. An impressive book, for which I wrote a most unimpressive introduction.*

*The mere fact that there is now a recognized official American ski technique is an indication of how this sport is sweeping America.*

*And, thousands now are taking up what is perhaps the most fascinating of all phases of skiing, cross country. If you*

want to know how comparatively inexpensive it is, and how anyone up to the age of ninety-nine can do it, I suggest you pick up a copy of **CROSS COUNTRY SKIING AND SKI TOURING**. The co-author of which is the man who made headlines years ago as co-author of **THE UGLY AMERICAN**, Bill Lederer.

Cross country skiing is fun, thrilling and the least dangerous of all outdoor sports. You are missing something if you don't try it.

So, let's go skiing.

Solong.