

Tues. December 19, 1972

ABOARD THE U.S.S. TICONDEROGA

Back from space they came today. The men of Apollo-SEventeen splashing down in the South Pacific - as no doubt you've heard by now. On target - all the way. With Mission Commander Gene Cernan exclaiming en route: "It's a beautiful day!" He and his colleagues - Jack Schmitt and Ron Evans - quickly transferred to the waiting aircraft carrier Ticonderoga.

A perfect finish - to a perfect flight. And the last - in the present U.S. lunar exploration series - for now. A beautiful day! said Astronaut Cernan! Any day has to be beautiful - if you've made it back safely from the Moon.

PRESIDENT

Indeed, the White House was noting just that today. President Nixon observing that the safe return of Apollo-Seventeen - "marks the end of one of the most significant chapters in the history of human endeavor." But stressing that the U.S. ^{surely} will continue to play - a major role in space exploration.

The President also said that America's moon exploration program - had "dealt in scientific realities and technological progress." "For all this" - he continued - "can we look at the record of twenty-four men sent to the moon - and twenty-four men returned to earth alive and well - ^{can we look at that record} and not see God's hand in it?" The President adding: "Perhaps, in spite of ourselves - we do still live in an age of miracles."

WHITE HOUSE

The resumption of all-out U.S. bombing against North Vietnam - was condemned today in Communist capitals. U.N. Secretary General Kurt Waldheim - also voicing "an expression of concern."

The White House insisted, however - that this was necessary to prevent ~~to~~ a Communist build-up. Press Secretary Ron Ziegler saying: "We cannot allow the peace talks to be filibustered or delayed - for the purpose of continuing the war in the South." Ziegler adding, in any event: "We stand ready to negotiate - in good faith."

THUY FOLLOW VIETNAM

Meanwhile, the Communist side at Paris ^{was}

threatening to boycott a peace session set for tomorrow.

Hanoi's Xuan Thuy telling reporters: "We will have to let

you know." Adding: "If the American party continues

bombing and escalating the war - it will have to bear full

responsibility."

SAIGON FOLLOW THUY

At the same time - another series of strikes against the Communist North; with Hanoi and Haiphong - again the main targets.

The U. S. Command in Saigon - also confirming the strength and ferocity of renewed bombing. Reporting that more than a hundred B-Fifty-Twos and about five hundred fighter-bombers - have taken part in the latest raids.

While Radio Hanoi, for its part, ^{was} saying: "There have never been such intense strikes against North Vietnam - in the history of the war."

KANSAS CITY

At Kansas City - Harry Truman continues the fight, ~~of his life~~ Doctors reporting today - his condition is still "very serious." Adding, however, his "kidney output has increased" - "he continues to receive adequate nutrition" - and he "seems more alert." An old friend observing: "That's Harry Truman for you - he doesn't know how to quit."

Mr. Truman's daughter, Margaret - also contributing to the general optimism; leaving her father's bedside ^{for} the first time in two weeks - to spend Christmas with her family in New York. Margaret having earlier said she would not leave - as long as there was any immediate danger.

FORD

The Ford Motor Company today presented to the Federal government - a brand new experimental safety car. Token cost - One Buck. Said car to be subjected to tests next year - including a fifty-mile-an-hour crash into a fixed barrier. And it comes, apparently - none to soon;

for
The National Safety Council reporting^{ed} today that traffic deaths this year - will probably total around fifty-six thousand, seven hundred. This - an all-time record; about two thousand more - than last year. Council President Howard Pyle - blaming the increase mainly on alcohol. "The drinking driver is involved" - said he - "in about half of all fatal accidents."

HOLY LAND

Christmas in the Holy Land normally brings with it - a flood of visitors. This year - an expected twenty thousand tourists and pilgrims.

~~At~~ Christmas this year also brings with it - the threat of Arab terrorist attacks. The government of Israel, therefore, announcing today - the imposition of strictest security precautions. In the words of an official spokesman - "as strong and as good as we are able."

MARIJUANA

In the first test of its kind - just a few weeks ago - the voters of California said no to a call for the legalization of marijuana. Now the publication of an important new book - fully endorsing that California decision.

"Marijuana - Deceptive Weed" by Dr. Gabriel Nahas of Columbia University - perhaps the first comprehensive study of marijuana; telling of its use in China nearly four thousand years ago - and the deadly toll it exacted; tracing its ravages across Asia - and on into the Middle East, Africa, Europe and finally the New World.

But Dr. Nahas' book - is more than just an historical treatise. He also tells of studies around the world - on the effects of marijuana as it relates to mental and physical health. Documenting case by case - the harm it has done and is doing; as now fully recognized - he reports - in virtually every country of the world, except the U.S. and England.

Summing up, Dr. Nahas comes to the following conclusions: One - that "regular usage of marijuana" - inevitably leads to "multiple drug use." Two - that "chronic users of marijuana - suffer a significant decrease in their productivity, efficiency and dependability." Three - that any use of marijuana - "can only increase the present major cleavage" in U.S. society. And four - that those who still urge the legalization of marijuana - "ignore the lessons of history, of preventive medicine and of plain common sense."

PARIS FOLLOW MARIJUANA

In the same vein, a meeting today at Paris - sponsored by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization; bringing together drug experts - from twenty countries around the globe.

The Paris parley quickly approving a resolution - calling for an international campaign against drug abuse. This to include, first and foremost - an all-out war against marijuana, opiates and hallucinogens; also, an effort to impose strict controls - on the use of tranquilizers, headache tablets and energy pills.

San Juan, Puerto Rico - the twenty-fifth annual meeting of the U.S. Gerontological Society; hearing today - from a Harvard health expert. Dr. Carl Seltzer telling of a twelve-year study - on the smoking habits of so-called senior citizens. Observing that "reduction of smoking after age sixty-five - does not appear to prolong longevity."

Dr. Seltzer quickly added, however - this is not to be considered an endorsement of smoking. It simply means - said he - if a smoker has made it to sixty-five - well, he must be immune.

WASHINGTON

Washington again - a report tonight from a special study committee - composed of U.S. Roman Catholic Bishops. Subject: The possible ordination of women - into the priesthood. The Bishops concluding that neither scripture nor theology - "can give a clear answer to this question." Adding, however, that "constant practice and tradition" - would seem to dictate an all-male priesthood; would seem to do so - we are told - at least "until a contrary development takes place."