

Wed. Jan. 22, 1969 (Denver)

SENATE

First big flap of the new Nixon administration -- "the Hickel Hassle" - as it was dubbed today. With the Senate chosing up sides - pro and con; on the merits of Governor Hickel of Alaska - as the President's choice for Secretary of the Interior.

Senator Proxmire of Wisconsin - newest addition to the anti-Hickel forces. Admitting Governor Hickel is an exceptional man - but challenging what he called the Governor's "extraordinarily close ties to the oil and gas interests."

Reverse side - Senator Allott of Colorado calling opposition to the Hickel appointment - in part politically inspired. Also, the result - said he - of intensive lobbying by conservation interests: Most especially - the Sierra Club.

Show down tomorrow when he probably will be confirmed.

WHITE HOUSE FOLLOW SENATE

Meanwhile at the White House - the rest of the Nixon cabinet was sworn in today. Chief Justice Warren - administering the oath of office. With the President later observing that eight members of cabinets in the past had gone on to be President. Further telling his new aides: "If any of you is to come through - we must get to work." Whereupon he called his first Cabinet meeting - which turned out to be a marathon session lasting three hours.

According to a subsequent announcement - the meeting mainly "procedural in nature." An attempt to develop issues and pinpoint priorities to be dealt with at future meetings. Part of the Nixon plan - we are told - to maintain "a full and open administration." The White House adding that confirmation or no - Governor Hickel was there and took part in the cabinet's first session "as a regular member."

MOSCOW

For Russia's four latest Soyuz Cosmonauts - a hero's welcome today in Moscow. With thousands upon thousands braving the city's eight below weather - cheering the cosmonauts' motorcade on their way to the Kremlin, where party Chief Brezhnev greeted each with a bear hug and a kiss - hailing them for their "courage and daring." Further proclaiming them members of the Order of Lenin - and official heroes of the Soviet Union.

Oh yes, and Brezhnev also paid tribute to the recent Moon flight of Apollo Eight, calling it - an "outstanding flight." Adding that the Russian and American space successes - are big strides by mankind toward unraveling the mysteries of the universe.

PARIS

Like it or not - DeGaulle of France will be with us for years to come - health permitting. Le Grand Charles making it plain today - he has no intention of retiring as President before the end of his scheduled term in Nineteen Seventy-Two.

This - in response to a statement from Rome, where ex-Premier George Pompidou said he would run for President - if and when DeGaulle calls it quits. The seventy-eight year old DeGaulle replying, in effect - no need as yet. "I was re-elected President for seven years". Adding: "I have the duty and intention of fulfilling that mandate to its end."

CORONADO

In Coronado, California - Commander Lloyd Bucher continued his testimony today - before a naval court of inquiry. Saying he surrendered the U.S.S. Pueblo without a fight because he felt that "any resistance would have caused the slaughter of the crew." The Commander noting the ship had already been hit once - it was armed with only two machine guns; while facing at the time - four Communist torpedo boats and two warships - plus a pair of MIG jets circling overhead.

Commander Bucher saying he later stopped the Pueblo enroute to port - attempting to permit more time for the destruction of classified material. Whereupon the Communists opened fire again - hitting the Pueblo amid-ship and -- he was forced to resume speed. It was in this second attack - that the Pueblo suffered its only fatality.

NAURU

One of the world's youngest, smallest and most remote nations - getting ready today to celebrate its first birthday. The island Republic of Nauru - about half-way between Sidney and Honolulu. A developing country that has just staked its future on a get-rich-quick scheme concocted by a pair of Australian promoters.

The idea - for Nauru and the bulk of its labor force - about five hundred - to serve as a clearing house for a giant new soccer pool. The kind that exist in Britain -- but is presently outlawed in Australia. The pool promoters convinced they can beat the ban - by operating out of Nauru; in return for which they promise the Nauruvians - an eventual twenty-two and a half per cent of the take.

What if it doesn't work out? Not a chance - said the promoters. Asserting that Australians - "will bet on anything." Mauruvians too - it seems,

BEATING WIFE

Next to the Governor of Alaska, the Premier of Japan has been getting a lot of publicity lately. By now just about every newspaper in the world has printed the story from Tokyo about Premier Eisaku Sato, who recently admitted that in the early years of his marriage he sometimes beat his wife. Today here in Colorado I read a follow-up item from Tokyo - about the journalists who, when they meet their Premier, how they still ask him: "Mr. Premier are you still beating your wife?" Maybe you've heard the Premier's reply. "No I don't," says Eisaku Sato, "how about you gentlemen?" And what do the reporters reply to that? According to the dispatch from Japan, most of them say: "yes, we do!"

You were married recently, Warren, do you still beat your wife?

MOUNT LEBANON

Here's one from Mount Lebanon, Pennsylvania - a swank suburb of Pittsburgh; where town officials recently passed an ordinance - attempting to safeguard fire plugs, bushes, telephone poles and so on. Making it a crime for Mount Lebanon canines to do what comes naturally - anywhere but in their own back yards.

Well, local dog lovers are up in arms.

Making phone calls - circulating petitions - attempting to get the law repealed. In the meantime, a nice lady by the name of Mrs. Dale Cable - has installed on her lawn an emergency dog comfort station.

Mrs. Cable observing sagely - that "after all doesn't somebody have to provide them with a ~~po~~ restroom?"