

Sept. 16, 1969
Dallas Townsend

WHITE HOUSE

Good evening everybody. The White House today made it official. President Nixon confirming plans for a second U.S. troop withdrawal from Vietnam. Setting the size of the new pullback - at thirty-five thousand men; all of them - scheduled to return home by December Fifteenth. This raising to sixty thousand, in all - the total troop reduction by mid-December. In the President's words - "a significant step." One that demonstrates - said he - that "the time for meaningful negotiations has arrived."

The President then went on to say: "I realize it is difficult to communicate - across the gulf of five years of war. But the time has come to end this war" - he declared. Adding: "Let history record that at this critical moment - both sides turned their faces toward peace rather than conflict and war."

SAIGON FOLLOW WHITE HOUSE

First reaction - minutes later from Saigon. South Vietnam's President Thieu - hailing the further "replacement" of U.S. troops. Calling it a "measure of the progress" so far made - in strengthening South Vietnam's own armed forces. Warning, however, that peace will still be difficult to attain - because, as Thieu put it, "the enemy is fighting with a careful strategy."

PARIS FOLLOW SAIGON

Reverse side - from Paris; where the Viet Cong today formally denounced - the planned U.S. troop withdrawal. Calling it simply a "maneuver - aimed at appeasing American and world public opinion." Indeed, the Communists again demanding - as they always have - "an immediate and complete withdrawal of all American troops."

DRAFT

The White House indicates that President Nixon has given some thought to suspending the military draft - at least temporarily - but hasn't made up his mind yet. News Secretary Ron Ziegler says that President is discussing draft reforms with his aides - along with possible executive orders or directives to change parts of the draft procedure. But - at the moment - says Ziegler - no firm decision.

CAPITOL HILL

On Capitol Hill - a hero's welcome for the three Apollo Eleven astronauts. In turn, Neil Armstrong, Buzz Aldrin and Mike Collins presenting the House and Senate each - with a flag they took along on their historic moon-landing mission. Armstrong observing that "man must understand the Universe - in order to understand his destiny." Buzz Aldrin expressing "a great sense of pride - as an American." Mike Collins telling of a remarkable view from space - a view of the earth one way, Mars the other. And he added: "We looked both ways - we saw both - and I think that's what our nation must do."

(SUGGESTED LEAD-IN TO THOMAS TAPE SLUGGED "BIRTHDAY")

With Lowell Thomas still winging his way across the world - it's time again for another special report he left us; about a birthday celebration - we can all join in sharing. Lowell...

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BIRTHDAY - 2

That fair also served as a showcase - for the works of artists such as Thomas Gainsborough and Winslow Homer; not to mention an obscure wagon decorator named Archibald Willard; whose "Spirit of SEventy-Six" was largely ignored by critics of that day but it became a masterpiece as you know by public acclaim. It was there, too - that America was first introduced to the banana - at the time, it was served individually one banana sold just one at a time, wrapped in tinfoil.

So what's going to be in store for us at our next great centennial? No doubt a lot of surprises. But first the big question - who's going to get that fair? Will it be Philadelphia, Boston, Washington, D.C.? Right now - they are all bidding - and they are all ready and rarin' to accept the challenge.

Solong.....

BIRTHDAY

Hello Everybody: As you undoubtedly know the biggest birthday party of the century - will be coming up soon. Under plans initiated by LBJ - and now carried on by the Nixon Administration - the U.S. is at present laying the groundwork for a giant bi-centennial fair to be held in Nineteen Seventy-Six. A fair to mark, of course - the two hundredth anniversary of the U.S.A.

Whatever the final outline - the Bi-Centennial Committee already has an impressive record to shoot at; that of the original U.S. Centennial Exposition which was at Philadelphia back in Eighteen-Seventy-Six; America's first world's fair and it was a momentous one; indeed - holding forth the promise and excitement of a brand new machine age and of course that machine age came. Exhibits including Alexander Graham Bell's wondrous telephone were there - Thomas Edison's miraculous light bulb - a complex instrument that was later to become the typewriter and so on.

(SUGGESTED FOLLOW TO THOMAS TAPE SLUGGED "BIRTHDAY")

Thank you, Lowell. And here's hoping - many happy
returns.

Back to the news again...

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MIDDLE EAST

After a one-day respite - the Israeli air force was back in action today in the Middle East. Israeli jets bombing and strafing alleged Arab guerilla bases - across the Jordan River. Also hitting at Egyptian installations - on the Gulf of Suez. At the same time, Arab terrorists hurling a hand grenade - into the central market place at occupied Gaza City; killing one person - wounding seventeen.

PAHUTE MESA

At Pahute Mesa, Nevada - another underground nuclear blast today. At a depth of thirty-eight hundred feet - the Atomic Energy Commission detonating a new hydrogen weapon; an antimissile warhead - said to be one of the most powerful ever tested; and from all reports - it felt like it. The resulting shock waves - swaying tall buildings in Las Vegas, a hundred miles away - jiggling seismographs from coast-to-coast.

For Federal Judge Clement Haynsworth, of South Carolina - a gentle grilling today; as the Senate Judiciary Committee began hearings - on his appointment to the Supreme Court. The Judge's Senate supporters - leading him through an explanation of alleged conflict of interest. Along the way, Senator Hollings - also of South Carolina - accusing "special interests" of trying to kill the Haynsworth appointment. As for the anti-Haynsworth forces - they get their turn tomorrow.

And now Warren - it's your turn.

Good night!

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The U N today opened its twenty-fourth General Assembly - with great emphasis on the distaff side. Miss Angie Brooks, a forty-one-year-old lawyer from Liberia, was elected President of the Assembly. Miss Brooks immediately urged it to do better than has been done before. World problems remain unsolved, she said, and there has been a gradual decline in UN prestige.

Almost as much attention was paid to one member of the US delegation - Mrs. Shirley Temple Black, the child movie star of not so long ago. Mrs. Black said she doesn't have too many answers to world problems - but she hopes we can toward peace and brotherhood, and improve our environment. And no one could argue about it.

Good night.