

Wed. November 17, 1971

WHITE HOUSE

The White House - President Nixon proves again - "the buck stops here." The President signing today - a new twenty one billion dollar military procurement bill; thereby assuring the continued development and deployment - of military weapons such as the Safeguard Anti-Ballistic Missile; but also making it crystal clear - he intends to disregard the bill's so-called Mansfield Amendment.

This - as you know - a clause urging the President to set a date for final withdrawal from Vietnam - subject only to the release of U S Prisoners of War. However, the President saying: "It is without binding force or effect - and it does not reflect my judgement about the way in which the war should be brought to a conclusion." And therefore - he continued - "my signing of the bill not change the policies I have pursued - and that I shall continue to pursue toward this end."

The President adding "regretfully - that legislative action such as the Mansfield Amendment - actually "hinder rather than assist in the search for a negotiated settlement."

ADD WHITE HOUSE

*And now this; the House tonight rejecting -
by a vote of two-thirty-eight to one-sixty-four -
a proposed June first cut-off on all Indo China war
funds; in effect, a telling vote of ~~no~~ confidence
in Administration war policy.*

LONDON

The latest edition of Janes Weapons systems - foremost in its field - just out tonight in London; says Russia has overtaken and even surpassed the West - in developing missiles and other sophisticated weaponry. This - we are told - mainly because of cut backs in military spending - in the U.S. and the rest of the Free World. Janes adding: There is now a need, "greater than ever before, for western nations to continue to invest in such developments - if they are to maintain, or perhaps even achieve, parity with the East."

PRICE

On the economic front - the President's price commission today approved a new two and a half percent price increase - in American Motors Nineteen Seventy-Two model cars; at the same time though, deferring at least temporarily similar price hikes sought by Ford and Chrysler.

Meanwhile, the President's pay board ^{was inviting} ~~and inviting~~ spokesmen for both union and management in the coal industry - to appear at a hearing set for tomorrow; there to justify, if possible - ~~showing~~ their new three year contract. Said pact calling for a ten percent increase in the first year - as compared with government guidelines set at only five-and-a-half percent.

BANGKOK

Bangkok - a bloodless coup today. Thailand's Field Marshal Thanom Kittikachorn - who had been serving as Prime Minister and commander-in-chief of the Thai Armed forces - assuming near dictatorial powers; suspending the Thai constitution - abolishing parliament - and imposing Marshal law throughout the land. All with the apparent approval - of Thailand's King Bhumibol Adulyadej.

Thanom thus following in the footsteps of Cambodia's Lon Nol who instituted his own government-by-decree just last month. Lon Nol - you'll recall - saying "democracy and freedom" were futile during time of war and now Prime Minister Thanom Kittikachorn - similarly cites alleged abuses of parliamentary and democratic freedom." These a "threat to the national security" and requiring "prompt action not possible through due process of law."

NEW YORK

Here at home again - in New York - a long hard look at the U N; courtesy of Canadian Maurice Strong - who heads the U N Conference on Human Environment. Canadian Strong calling the world body "a flagging organization - which is somehow out of tune with the needs and moods of the times. Therefore, urging "shock treatment" as he put it; including staff cuts of up to fifty percent; along with a major redeployment of U N resources. This - said he - in order to concentrate U N future efforts - to "those tasks in which it can be most useful to its members and the world community; where its efforts can make an important difference."

WASHINGTON

President Nixon's ^{choice} ~~new nominee~~ for Secretary of Agriculture; ~~the~~ lead-off witness today at Confirmation hearings before the Senate Agriculture Committee.

Earl L. Butz picturing himself - as a "spokesman for progressive agriculture." Asserting that family farms "must be preserved" - but they must also change with the changing technology.

Whereupon - a heated attack by committee Democrats. Senator Harris of Oklahoma charging that Butz was "an agent of giant Agri-business Corporations -- dedicated to driving farmers off the land." Senator McGovern of South Dakota also citing the nominee's stock holdings - as an indication of conflict of interest. All of which - was not entirely unexpected. ~~though~~.

Indeed, Butz telling the committee: ~~right at the start~~; "I feel ~~like~~ like the chap who walked into the post office - saw his picture on the wall - and said, 'it's good to know you're wanted.'"

HENLEY on THAMES

At Henley-on-Thames over in England, the end today for one of the great names of the British stage. Dame Gladys Cooper - passing away in her sleep; from complications - arising from a recent bout with pneumonia. The daughter of a British journalist - Gladys Cooper made her stage debut at age sixteen. At Twenty starting at the Gayity in London; later the British Tommies favorite pin-up in World War One. Over here she starred in Max Rineharts "The Miracle". Then in the movies and TV. Still active - right up to the end. Recently appearing in "The Chalk Garden: in London - and planning a tour with this play later this year.

Dame Gladys Cooper - age eighty-two.

MARS

Way out there in space - America's Mariner

Nine took another look today at the frosty South Polar

cap of Mars. So far, about the only part of the ~~planet~~ ² ~~planet~~

planet - not covered by swirling dust storms;

incidentally, the Mariner Nine also sending back

an analysis - estimating the size of each Martian

dust particle ~~is~~ at less than five microns; which means,

it would take about a quarter of a million or so -

to cover the head of a pin.

1/2 Warren,
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PITCAIRN

Nearly two hundred years ago - Mutiny on the Bounty Fletcher Christian and Captain Bligh glaring at each other across the quarter deck of the H M S Bounty. Remember? Fletcher Christian and companions finally settling on Pitcairn Island; while Bligh was put in a long boat and made some four thousand miles across the Pacific, one of the greatest feats of seamanship - ever recorded.

Now - a reunion of sorts. At Pitcairn Island - Mr. Christian again addressing a sailor named Bligh. Thomas Christian - the current day leader of the Pitcairn Islanders - a fifth generation descendant of the original Fletcher Christian. The sailor named Bligh - Maurice Bligh - great great grandson of Captain Bligh; taking time off from his book shop in Kent England - to do a tour of the South Seas.

Best of all - the two men apparently hitting it off well. The present Mr. Christian saying of Mr. Bligh; "he's a nice, young chap."