

DEBT

L.T. - ~~Old~~. Tues. Mar. 13-62.

So now ~~we Americans~~ can now go into debt to the tune of - a cool three hundred billion dollars.

This, the new ceiling on ^{our} ~~the~~ National Debt, which ~~it~~ became legal today when President Kennedy signed the measure sent to him from Capitol Hill.

The reason for the new ceiling - to alleviate the squeeze on the Treasury Department. Secretary Dillon pointing out - that the National Debt will go above two-hundred-and-ninety-eight billion this spring. So he needs the elbow room provided by - a flat three hundred billion.

This authority, temporary. Legal - only until the end of June. That's ~~the~~ when the debt is expected to drop, possibly as low as two-hundred-and-eighty-five billion. But no economist believes that we can hold it --at that level. So it looks as if the Secretary of the Treasury will soon be ~~be~~ back on Capitol Hill, asking Congress to write - another permanent ceiling ~~of~~ for the National Debt. ^{with} Secretary Dillon expected to peg the figure at ^{three} ~~hundred and eight~~ billion.

BOMBER

The House Rules Committee has cleared for debate one of the most controversial bills of this session of Congress. Subject - the B-70 bomber. To build, or not to ~~build~~ build - a fleet of giant B-70's, with a speed of -- two thousand miles an hour - three times the speed of sound, and capable of hitting targets - around the globe.

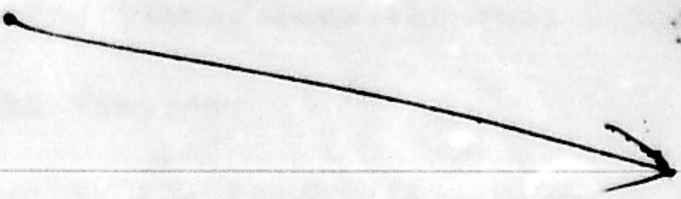
President Kennedy has said repeatedly that there's no need to speed up the project. His congressional opponents, threatening - to have him "ordered" to do so. Which is the intent of today's bill, earmarking an extra three-hundred-and-twenty-million dollars for the B-70.

Has Congress the power to give the President such an order? This is disputed, If the bill passes the scene will be set - for a show down between Congress and the President.

CONFERENCE

The belief in Geneva tonight - is that the Russians are there ^{only} to put on a propaganda show. Gromyko, so unyielding in his talks with Western leaders - that his presence appears pointless. That is - as far as genuine negotiations are concerned. The obvious explanation - Khrushchev sent his Foreign Minister to stall the conference with propaganda tirades.

The main stumbling block - still Berlin. Dean Rusk has been trying to get firm Soviet guarantees - that our rights in West Berlin will be respected, Especially - the right of access. Gromyko, countering with the old Soviet demand - that Moscow's East German puppets be given full authority over the air corridors.



BERLIN

Those air corridors that are full of "chaff" tonight. The Russians, again dropping a cloud of aluminum filaments - in an effort to disrupt Western radar. Why trying this gambit for a second time - isn't clear, since our planes are going right on thru.

imposed.

The issue - the security forces to be assigned to patrol Algeria, during the interim period. The French insist - that their army can handle the job. Four hundred thousand men -- in no need of outside help. The Moslems, retorting -- that it isn't a question of help, but of prestige. They want their own army included -- in the security negotiations. The thirty-five thousand rebels -- now in Tunisia and Morocco.

Secondly, the French have brought to Berlin a text - that shows France "granting" a cease fire to the rebels. The Moslems, demanding that the wording be changed, to make both sides equal. Again, that question of - prestige.

ALGERIA

France in a somber mood tonight -- because of the news from Evian. The French and Moslem negotiators hitting a snag -- on the terms of an *Algerie* cease fire. ~~in Algeria~~. At Evian, some observers are even talking pessimistically about - "an impasse".

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CUBA

The run on the grocery stores in Havana - could have been foreseen; that is if - Castro had any foresight. It's the same old story that witnessed time and again - under dictatorships. Tyranny, producing - curtailment of the food supply; this - leading to rationing; and finally - housewives, swarming into the markets before everything disappears.

Tonight, the cupboard is bare - in Havana. And for once, the Castro regime is coming in for - outspoken home criticism. The Red dictator claims - that the American embargo is responsible. ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~

LOWELL JR.

Everywhere today I have been asked questions about Lowell Jr. and the eleven American scientists, on the floating ice island in the Arctic Ocean - somewhere near the North Pole. Marguerite Higgins, famous Washington correspondent, in a first page story in today's New York Herald Tribune tells how this group, on the ice island, swept along by the Arctic currents is now in a part of the Polar Sea claimed by the Russians.

Her story based on information she obtained from the National Geographic Society. The Air Force, and other Washington sources, says that the ice island with the scientists and L.T. Jr., is now past the International Dateline, and somewhere North of Wrangel Island, off the coast of Siberia.

Miss Higgins asks the question: "What will the Russian reaction be to American planes servicing the

island?" To which Washington officials reply that they are optimistic, that Uncle Sam does not recognize Soviet claims to the Arctic Ocean, that Soviet manned ice islands have floated into the part of the Polar Sea north of our Alaska and Canada. But, they add that this is the first time this has ever happened to an ice island with American scientists aboard. The group out there on the Polar Ocean is making a study of ocean currents, glaciology, and of course, weather, so much of which originates over the Arctic Ocean.

The Herald Tribune story mentions that in addition to the scientists and my son there are six polar bear on that vast cake of ice - the ice island that is some two-and-a-half miles wide and about the same length.

For high adventure, this should be just about the ultimate, adrift on an ice island near the North Pole, with the currents sweeping you nearer and nearer/
Siberia.

OCCULT

Now - a ghost story. Mrs. Renate Beck and Mrs. Lina Gemmecke, of Indianapolis, mother and daughter, live together, and are the victims of a poltergeist, or something.

Sunday night a crystal platter flew through the air and crashed to the floor in pieces. Then the China cut loose - cup by cup, and plate by plate. Forty pieces, dashing themselves onto the floor - in three days. While a policeman was investigating - a milk bottle soared across the kitchen, and hit Mrs. Gemmecke on the head.

The occult visitor seems to have a grudge against Mrs. Gemmecke. It tried to strangle her - and left three cuts on her neck. Plus an assortment of bruises - on her arms and legs.

Quite a belligerent poltergeist. Dou you believe in poltergeists and spooks, Dick?

FIRST LADY

Yesterday, newsmen filed - forty-five thousand words from New Delhi. Far short of the hundred and sixty-six thousand - when President Eisenhower visited India. As for photographs - ah, the opposite result. Forty-one radio photos of our former President - were transmitted in a single day - a record now broken by the 1st Lady. Forst-four of Mrs. Jacqueline Kennedy! And that seems only natural.

Today the First Lady had an Indian curry for lunch with President Prasad. Curry - India's number one contribution to the world's cuisine. At Prime Minister Nehru's home - she amused herself - feeding bamboo shoots to Nehru's Himalayan pandas. Now from the Pan Am terminal at Adlewild - s-l-u-t-m.