

At the White House today - President Nixon held an unexpected news conference - his first in three months - leading off with the announcement that he will leave - one week from today - on his historic trip to Peking.

And he emphasized again - the trip should not create any very great optimism - or pessimism. As he put it - Twenty years of hostility will not be swept away in one week of discussions. He looks upon his meetings with the Chinese leaders - he said - more as a dialog - than negotiations - because, he added - we are in truth - at a beginning.

On another front - Mr. Nixon attempted to soothe the ruffled feathers of South Viet Nam's President Thieu.

PRESIDENT

**He noted it was Thieu himself who offered to resign -
a month of in advance of any future elections in South Vietnam.
Adding that there will be no change in the Allies' latest peace
offer - without full consultation between Washington and
Saigon. Said the President: "We are ready to negotiate a
settlement - but we are not going to negotiate a surrender."**

SAIGON

All this - following a rare televised news conference in Saigon. President Thieu saying: "Whatever happens here - is decided by South Vietnam;" which means - he went on - the decision "whether the U.S. withdraws or leaves its troops - is a decision made only with Saigon agreement."

Thieu also said that it was he - who was "in charge of drawing up" the latest U.S. and South Vietnamese peace offer. Adding that this represented - his "last step backwards." Said Thieu: "With guarantees such as I suggest - peace can be restored here; if we go one step further - Vietnam will be lost."

SAPPORO

Scandal at Sapporo. A routine check of West German hockey player Alois Schloder - turning up traces of a narcotic called ephedrine. Belgian Prince Alexander De Merode - who heads the Olympic Medical Commission - ^{took} taking the ball from there. Later telling reporters: "I had no alternative - but to demand Schloder's expulsion."

The Prince further noting rd that he could have expelled - "the entire West German team;" but "after consideration of the facts" - said he - "I decided to recommend only Schloder be expelled."

MOSCOW

Moscow - the Kremlin announced today - the death of the commander-in-chief of Russia's nuclear missile force. Marshal Nikolai Krylov - twice awarded the Hero of the Soviet Union Medal - Russia's highest military honor; also, winning four Orders of Lenin - Russia's highest civilian award. Now - we are told - the victim of a brief illness.

dead
Marshal Nikolai Krylov - age sixty-eight.

KATMANDU

At Katmandu in the Kingdom of Nepal - an age-old Hindu ritual was reenacted today. On the eleventh day following the death of King Mahendra of Nepal - the Royal Family selected as his alter-ego an impoverished Nepalese - a Brahmin. Said Brahmin receiving, among other things - a bagful of money - an elephant - a horse - a brand new car - a gold and silver replica of the late King's crown - as well as enough food to last him for years; in all, a gift worth thousands and thousands of dollars - a King's ransom. And that's just what it is.

In return for all this - the Brahmin in question agrees to become the bearer of any sins the late King may have committed; becoming, in effect - an untouchable; according to Hindu beliefs, thus assuring the Royal soul - safe passage into Heaven; and there - eternal peace.

One thing more: The King's "sin-bearer" - is also banished from Nepal; leaving behind his family and most of new-found wealth - for at least a year; at which time - if

KATMANDU - 2

*he's still alive - he can return a rich man. But we are
told, oddly enough - that few such men have ever made it back.*

*At Katmandu in the Kingdom of Nepal - a dream come
true ere the devil takes his due.*

SUGGESTED LEAD-IN TO THOMAS TAPE "MIAMI-ONE"

Next - Lowell Thomas; reporting back tonight from his first stop - on another trek in search of high adventure.

Lowell...

SUGGESTED FOLLOW TO THOMAS TAPE "MIAMI-ONE"

Thank you, Lowell.

A final note - in a moment.

PHILADELPHIA

The burning question today in Philadelphia: How long should a fireman's hair be?

This the result of an order - from Fire Commissioner Joseph Rizzo; an order suspending a Black firefighter - for refusing to cut back his bushy Afro hair-style.

Commissioner Rizzo - a brother of Philadelphia Mayor Frank Rizzo - ruled the hair-do a safety hazard - also, contrary to regulations.

An appeal - now in the works though. Thus - the burning controversy.

Now for Lowell Thomas - this is Allen Jackson saying so long.