

CHURCHILL. Sir Winston Churchill grew steadily weaker today. And by late afternoon, the members of his immediate family were again assembled at his bedside. A spokesman for Sir Winston's personal physician later said the war-time prime minister is obviously near death, but added that his great heart simply refuses to give in.

Meanwhile, the British Parliament cancelled its seven hundredth birthday party because of Sir Winston's illness, and Prime Minister Harold Wilson postponed a major parliamentary speech, as well as a scheduled television address. A spokesman for the Prime Minister said he would give neither speech as long as Churchill remained seriously ill.

KING

The Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King

traveled to Alabama today to lead his first civil rights demonstration since receiving the Nobel Peace Prize.

There - at Selma, Alabama - he urged local Negroes to join him in breaking down the city's traditional racial barriers. Dr. King told a pep rally: "Let us be willing to accept blows because it is better to be scarred in our bodies than in our souls". His words proved almost prophetic.

Dr. King led a march to the Selma Courthouse, where the first of an expected three hundred Negroes to began/registering to vote. Next, he and his party desegregated a previously all-white restaurant. Finally, he and eleven other Negroes registered in a plush, previously all-white hotel. All this without any violence.

But then, as Dr. King still stood at the hotel's registration desk, a gaunt-faced white man with

a short stubble of beard asked to speak to him. Dr. King said: "What do you want?" The man swung twice - hitting the Negro leader ^{once on the temple, once on the cheek.} ~~twice in the face.~~ And when onlookers pinned his arms at his side, he lashed out with his feet - kicking Dr. King on the right thigh.

Police promptly jailed the man. He was identified as Jerry Robinson, a member of the National States Rights Party - a white segregationist group.

After a brief rest, Dr. King almost shrugged off the incident. He said the day's integration drive was a "major accomplishment", representing "a great change for Alabama".

CONNOR

With the start of pre-inaugural festivities in Washington today, the city began to take on a carnival air. The gaiety and confusion extended all the way to the White House, where John T. Connor was sworn in as Secretary of Commerce.

To begin with, someone forgot to bring a Bible - or, for that matter, Connor's Cabinet commission. So with Chief Justice Earl Warren of the Supreme Court waiting to administer the oath, President Johnson had to hurry back to his office. A moment later, he reappeared with both a Bible and the missing commission.

Next, Justice Warren got the wrong name. He said: "Do you, John T. O'Connor, solemnly swear" and so forth. It remained for Connor to pronounce his own name correctly - without the "O" - which he did in repeating the oath.

DEFENSE FOLLOW CONNOR

On the other hand, President Johnson's Defense Message to Congress was straight to the point.

The President estimated defense spending for this year at forty-nine-point-three billion dollars, but pledged to reduce that amount by three hundred million dollars in fiscal 1966 - without weakening the nation's defenses.

Indeed, Mr. Johnson outlined plans for the development of a wide range of new strategic weapons within the limited budget. One of them ^{will} ~~was~~ be a new ballistic missile for use by submarines with twice the destructive power of the present polaris missile. It's to be called the Poseidon, after the Greek god of the sea. ~~The President also disclosed plans for~~

Another will be ~~development of~~ a new short-range attack missile called the Sram - a winged missile to be launched from a B-52 or some other type of aircraft. Mr. Johnson

also disclosed that America now has eight hundred fifty ballistic missiles, more than three hundred polaris missiles and more than nine hundred bombers. He said: "The danger of war remains ever with us. But if the hope of peace is sturdier now than at any other time in these past two decades, it is because we - and free men everywhere - have proved preparedness to be 'the most effectual means of preserving peace'".

UNITED NATIONS

Here at the United Nations, Soviet Ambassador Nikolai T. Fedorenko told U.N. Secretary General U. Thant that Russia would be willing to make a "substantial contribution toward its U.N. debt, provided there was no further question about Russia's right to vote in the General Assembly.

The plan was proposed by the Afro-Asian group of nations as a compromise solution of the U.N.'s Financial crisis. It involves some sixty million dollars that Russia owes in back dues and U.N. peace-keeping accounts. There's just one catch. The Soviets want to vote now and pay - some unspecified amount later. The U.S. which says that payment - or the promise of payment must come first - has already emphatically rejected the plan.

WEATHER

A new cold wave gripped the Eastern Seaboard today, from Main to Florida. The Arctic air mass dumped up to three feet of snow on Western New York and plummeting temperatures caused severe damage to Florida truck crops. At Tallahassee, Florida, it was just fifteen degrees this morning - a record low. By mid-afternoon, it was warmer in Denver, Colorado, at fifty-eight degrees, than it was in Miami, at fifty-seven.

How a word from
Dale Hall

VIET NAM

In South Viet Nam Premier Tran Van Huong

today reshuffled his cabinet in an attempt to appease

insurgent generals, his Buddhist opposition and the

United States - all at the same time.

Huong named four generals to ^{key} ~~keep~~ posts and

dropped two ministers who had drawn heavy fire from

the Buddhists. A U.S. Embassy spokesman promptly

hailed the changes as a "positive and helpful step"

toward creation of a stable government - something the

Vietnamese have not had for a long, long time.

END

While for many in Washington these days it's the beginning - for four holdovers from the Kennedy years, it's the end.

They are P. Kenneth O'Donnell, appointments secretary; David Powers, special assistant and White House receptionist; Myer Feldman, special counsel, and Dr. Janet Travell, White House physician.

All four stayed on as White House aides after President Kennedy's death, at Mr. Johnson's request. Now, the President has accepted their resignations - "regretfully and reluctantly".

MINES FOLLOW UNITED NATIONS

In another move - not quite so conciliatory - the Soviet Union today attacked the West German proposal for a defense line of atomic land mines on the Communist frontier.

The Kremlin warned West Germany's Bonn government that if the land mines are ever put in place Russia will respond with "counter-measures". Just what that might mean - not specified.