

U.S. not leaving prisoners in Vietnam

WASHINGTON—Defense Secretary Melvin R. Laird said Friday the United States would remain in Vietnam until U.S. prisoners of war are freed.

"Vietnamization cannot be completed as far as I'm concerned until these prisoners are freed," Laird told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

Laird testified on a proposal to pump \$255 million in foreign aid into Cambodia, acknowledging that "a

commitment" had already been made to Vietnam's embattled neighbor. But most of the two-hour hearing was devoted to the prisoner-of-war issue and the abortive Nov. 21 commando mission to rescue some of them from a camp near Hanoi.

Laird denied Chairman J. William Fulbright's charge that the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) had not been consulted about the issue. He bitterly assailed Fulbright for spreading

"innuendo" that the administration knew in advance no prisoners would be found.

It was left to Sen. Claiborne Pell, D-R.I., to raise the question about overall policy regarding the prisoners. He reasoned that, since the Vietnamization program is the alternative to a negotiated settlement, he could not see how it would ever lead to the release of prisoners—since Hanoi refuses to let them go until the fighting ends.

"This is one of the major concerns we have," Laird said. "The Vietnamization program cannot be completed as far as I'm concerned until these prisoners are freed." He said if other opportunities present themselves for rescue missions, "I will approve them again."

Laird, who was late for a luncheon engagement, declined to talk afterwards about how large a force would be left in Vietnam while the prisoners are there.

Fulbright earlier said that CIA Director Richard Helms told him his agency was not even consulted prior to the Nov. 21 raid on the Son Tay prison camp, 21 miles from Hanoi.

"I don't believe that can quite be the case," Laird said.

Blast injures 45, jars N.Y. mayor

NEW YORK—An explosion destroyed a safe building opposite historic City Hall Friday, injuring most of the 50 lunch-hour patrons and jarring the office of Mayor John V. Lindsay.

First police reports said at least 45 persons were injured in the blast, 10 of them seriously.

The mayor jumped from his desk and ran to the scene. The explosion caused a massive traffic jam that made it difficult for firefighting equipment and ambulances to move in.

The blast at Ryan's Cafe on Park Row

sent patrons reeling into the street where they collapsed covered with blood. Ambulances from nearby Beekman-Downtown Hospital raced to the scene to aid the injured.

The entire front of the building was blown away and the street was covered with shattered glass.

The explosion set the cafe on fire and flames 30 feet into the air from the two-story building. Three alarms were issued for firefighters and equipment. People fled from adjoining buildings in panic.



Russians cancel Bolshoi U.S. tour

MOSCOW—The Soviet Government Friday canceled a scheduled U.S. tour of the Bolshoi theater and threatened to break off cultural relations with the United States in retaliation for "Zionist provocations."

The decision to cancel U.S. appearances of the famed opera and ballet company was personally delivered to U.S. Ambassador Jacob E. Beam by

First Deputy Foreign Minister Vasili V. Kuznetsov in a Foreign Ministry interview. Kuznetsov gave Beam a note that accused American authorities of failing to take necessary measures to halt the "criminal acts of Zionists, thereby encouraging them."

The newspaper Izvestia said Kuznetsov protested "the various provocations perpetrated by Zionist extremists against Soviet institutions in the United States and against artistic groups sent to the United States pursuant to the inter-governmental cultural exchange agreement."

Kuznetsov presumably referred to demonstrations against Russian performers in the United States and attacks on installations by members of the Jewish Defense League of America. The small Jewish organization has raided the U.S. offices of Soviet agencies such as the Tass News bureau and Intourist, the Soviet travel agency.

These acts, Kuznetsov said, "not only create obstacles for the Soviet institutions in America in the fulfillment of their functions and threaten the break-up of activities connected with cultural exchanges, but threaten the personal security of Soviet citizens."

Izvestia said Kuznetsov also told Beam that despite repeated Soviet protests U.S. authorities have not taken steps to curb "continuing sallies of the unrestrained Zionists."

The Bolshoi was to have toured the United States in the spring of 1971 with its company of several hundred singers, actors, dancers and musicians, many of whom are world famous.

Bush named to UN

WASHINGTON—President Nixon Friday nominated George H.W. Bush of Texas, who gave up a safe House seat with Nixon's support to make an unsuccessful bid for the Senate, to be U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations.

Nixon introduced Bush, a 46-year-old Massachusetts native turned oil millionaire, to White House newsmen as a man with "enormous interest in the United Nations."

Pending Senate confirmation early next year, Bush would succeed Charles W. Yost, a career foreign service officer who the President said had left

retirement in January, 1969, to serve with "great distinction" in the United Nations.

Nixon's first choice for the job was Daniel P. Moynihan, a White House counselor and top urban affairs adviser, who declined the offer and decided to return to Harvard University. Moynihan was reported to have felt badly about a news leak of the offer and Yost's suspected embarrassment.

The President himself said Friday that after Yost had made it known last summer that he wanted to leave the United Nations at the end of the current General Assembly session, he thought his consultations about a successor were "off the record."

Nixon told Bush he would have "big shoes to fill, but I'm sure you will meet the challenge." Bush, a Republican congressman since 1967, said he was facing "a great and awesome responsibility."

Bush's father, Prescott Bush, was a Republican senator from Connecticut.

Bargaining begins for rail union

WASHINGTON—As trains rolled again from coast to coast, contract negotiators laid the groundwork Friday for renewed bargaining which the Labor Department expressed hope would result in agreement averting another strike threat March 1.

"There was no specific agreement on issues today, but the tenor of the meeting was excellent," Assistant Labor Secretary W.J. Usery Jr. said after an hour-long meeting with representatives of rail management and four unions.

"I hope that we can reach a voluntary agreement. I don't think either party wants to go back to what they went through these last few days. In that sense, I think you can say the strike has turned out to be a plus."

Usery said the negotiators will decide early next week when to resume serious bargaining in their dispute over wages and work rules changes that led to an 18-hour union walkout shutting down the U.S. railroad system for the third time since World War II.

At Friday's meeting at the National Railway Labor Conference—management's negotiation headquarters—was C.L. Dennis, president of the holdout Brotherhood of Railway and Airline Clerks who ordered his men back to work Thursday night under pressure from congress and the federal courts.

Dennis said he would respect the congressional order of a strike delay until March 1 as long as there was progress in the new talks. Usery said the "attitude and spirit was good on both sides" at the initial session, and that "the parties are willing to work together to overcome the past and reach agreement."

By midafternoon, a spokesman for the Association of Railroads said operations had been resumed on all lines. The U.S. postal service ordered its regional centers wherever possible to lift an embargo on movement on all but first class and air mail beyond 300 miles.

Many industries, however, will feel the pinch of the brief strike for several days, as shipments arrive late or damaged by the delay in transit.

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