



Compiled by Tom Sawyer
Wire Editor

Nixon asks minimum wage increases

WASHINGTON—President Nixon called Wednesday for enactment of minimum wage increases provided they did not fuel inflation and contribute to unemployment. In a letter to leaders of the House and Senate labor committees, Nixon said he had not changed his opposition to the inclusion of domestic workers and government employees under minimum wages provisions governing the rest of the labor force—Nixon said he still favored differentials for youths under 18 to allow them to be hired for less than the minimum wage.

Coup seizes Ethiopian government

ADDIS ABABA—The Ethiopian cabinet resigned Wednesday as a military rebellion spread through the mountainous African kingdom.

Rebel army and navy units, demanding higher pay, seized the Red Sea port of Massawa. Air force personnel joined mutinous soldiers who took over the northern city of Asmara Tuesday.

Premier Aklilu Habte-Wold and 18 other ministers quit after negotiations collapsed between high-ranking generals and rebel soldiers in Asmara, about 400 miles north of the capital.

Simon moves to lift tax on oil imports

WASHINGTON—The Federal Energy Office (FEO) moved Wednesday to increase the nation's gasoline supplies by easing restrictions on imports of crude oil.

FEO Director William E. Simon asked Congress to remove what he called "disincentives" for oil companies to bring in foreign crude, which under law they must share with competitors even though they may lose money on the deal.

"It's more of a removal of disincentives than giving incentives," Simon said. "... we have to operate this program with great flexibility."

Balloonist still missing

WASHINGTON—The Pentagon reported Wednesday that due to wind conditions missing balloonist Thomas L. Gatch could be anywhere within an area twice the size of the continental United States ranging from the West Indies to China.

Pentagon spokesman Jerry W. Friedheim said aides to Gatch were in the Pentagon Tuesday giving experts the information they need to mount a search.

Gatch took off from Harrisburg, Pa., Feb. 18 to attempt the world's first trans-Atlantic balloon voyage.

An Air Force spokesman said winds in the mid-Atlantic were blowing westward under 7,000 feet but eastward over 8,000 feet.

The Pentagon said if Gatch had stayed at 7,000 feet he could now be approaching the West Indies, while if he stayed at 8,000 feet he could be nearing the African coast. If he

went as high as 30,000 feet—which was not thought likely—Gatch would now be just west of Hong Kong, according to computer calculations.

If he lost helium Gatch might land in the water and drift in one direction at night while the sun would heat the gas and could send the balloon aloft in the daytime to be blown in yet another direction.

"Gatch is flying an eight-balloon cluster which is opaque," William Armstrong, a friend of Gatch said. "He's got a white gondola suspended beneath it and a red banner below that."

Lawyers warn 'confrontation'

WASHINGTON—Justice Department lawyers Wednesday held out the possibility of a "constitutional confrontation of the highest magnitude" if President Nixon were to withhold evidence demanded by the Senate for an impeachment trial.

But they also concluded there is wide support for the idea the Senate can convict a President on any charges it sees fit, because of the "political power" it enjoys through the lack of any constitutional provision for judicial review of a Senate impeachment vote.

The scenario for a historic conflict between the President and the Senate was contained in a summary and two additional memoranda prepared by the department's Office of Legal Counsel in its study of legal

and historic impeachment precedents. Nixon has invoked executive privilege, refusing to surrender subpoenaed tapes and documents to the Senate Watergate committee.

"We are not aware of any impeachment involving a federal official... where executive privilege was invoked," the Justice lawyers said.

If a President refused to provide information Congress wanted in an impeachment proceeding, the lawyers said, the Chief Justice presiding over the Senate trial might rule on the executive privilege issue. But no matter how he ruled, they said, "the Senate has the last word on admissibility of evidence."

"If the President persisted in his refusal to

comply, a constitutional confrontation of the highest magnitude would ensue," they said.

Attorney General William B. Saxbe, who released a section of the study Friday and most of the rest of it Wednesday, said it made no judgment on the issue of executive privilege or the proper grounds for impeaching a President.

The study, compiled under the direction of Assistant Attorney General Robert G. Dixon, was forwarded to the White House,

special prosecutor Leon Jaworski and the House Judiciary Committee, which is investigating possible grounds for impeaching the President.

The House committee staff has said Nixon could be impeached by the House and tried by the Senate for a serious abuse of the public trust, and not simply a criminal offense. Nixon said Monday night that under the Constitution, "a criminal offense on the part of the President is the requirement."

Saxbe agreed Wednesday with Nixon's contention that "I do not expect to be impeached." Saxbe put it this way: "Anything I say would be a guess, but unless they come up with something I'm not aware of, I don't think he will be."

Breakthrough seen in Kissinger talks

JERUSALEM—In a major diplomatic triumph, Secretary of State Henry Kissinger Wednesday delivered to Israel a list of its prisoners of war held in Syria and opened the way for talks on disengaging the forces of the two countries.

His success raised immediate speculation that the Arab oil embargo against the United States will soon be lifted.

Kissinger handed over a list of 65 names to a grateful Prime Minister Golda Meir soon after he arrived from talks with President Hafez Assad of Syria.

In turn, he got assurances that he can take back to Syria the Israeli ideas for disengaging troops in the disputed Golan Heights.

The Israeli prisoners will be released as part of the disengagement agreement, a high U.S. official with the Kissinger party said.

"On March 1, we shall give Dr. Kissinger our ideas concerning an Israeli-Syrian separation of forces so that he personally can pass them to the Syrian government," Mrs. Meir said in a speech on national television.

Kissinger said Mrs. Meir had tears in her eyes when he handed over the names written in Arabic and the chief of staff, Lt. Gen. Daviv Elazar, wept when he was called in to get the list.

Mrs. Meir said 62 of the names were those of Israeli soldiers and airmen and the others Arab civilians.

Lt. Calley released

COLUMBUS, Ga.—Army Lt. William L. Calley, serving a 20-year military sentence for murdering 22 people at My Lai, took his case to a civilian court Wednesday and was set free under \$1,000 bond pending appeal.

Calley has been confined to his bachelor officer quarters at Fort Benning since his conviction in the sensational case nearly three years ago.

He told U.S. District Judge J. Robert Elliott he felt he could be "useful to society" and wanted his freedom so he could work to have his sentence set aside.

Calley, the only Army officer convicted in the massacre at My Lai, has also filed a writ of habeas corpus in federal court asking his conviction be set aside. A hearing is pending.

Elliott noted in his order that "the secretary of the Army currently has the petitioner's sentence under review and may order it reduced, and the President, as commander in chief of the armed forces, has stated that he will make a final review of the matter and this could result in further reduction of sentence."

"Since it is uncertain when these reviews will be completed, the effect of this situation is that unless released on bail it is possible that he will be confined for a longer period than would have been required by the terms

of his sentence as it may eventually be reduced," Elliott ruled.

"All of these facts," he said, "lead me to conclude that the petitioner's application for bail should be granted."

Calley was a platoon leader in a U.S. Army operation aimed at routing the Viet Cong from the Vietnamese village of My Lai. Scores of civilians were slaughtered, although the precise number has never been ascertained.

Indictment expected

WASHINGTON—Former White House aide John D. Ehrlichman refused an offer to plead guilty to one count in the Ellsberg burglary in exchange for dropping charges against him in the Watergate break-in, his lawyer said Wednesday.

Ehrlichman now expects to be indicted—probably within 48 hours on more serious charges, the lawyer, Frank Strickler, said in an interview.

"His feeling was that he should not plead guilty to something he did not believe he was guilty of," he said, adding he expects the indictment to encompass more than the break-in of the office of Daniel Ellsberg's psychiatrist, Dr. Lewis Fielding.

