

Soviet Thrust Into Indian Ocean Feared



WASHINGTON (AP) — U.S. naval strategists are expressing concern that an impending visit by Soviet warships to Indian ports may be a first move toward a Soviet penetration of the vital Indian Ocean area.

The United States keeps no navy vessels in the Indian Ocean and U.S. admirals and diplomats fear the planned British pull-out east of Suez will leave a vacuum into which the Soviets may step.

Naval strategists say this would be a further extension of Soviet naval power which Moscow has been sending far and wide in the last few years.

A 19,000-ton Soviet cruiser of the Sverdlov class and two guided-missile destroyers are due to drop anchor at Madras and Bombay late this month and early in April.

The visit appears to underscore a closer relationship between the Indian and Soviet navies and greater cooperation between the two countries.

Pentagon sources said they believed the three warship cruises into the Indian Ocean were arranged last month when Adm. S. G. Gorshkov, Soviet fleet commander in chief, visited India.



SERIOUSLY INJURED — Israeli Defense Minister Moshe Dayan was seriously injured Wednesday and is undergoing surgery in a Tel Aviv hospital. The 52-year-old general was injured in a cave-in at an archaeological excavation at Cholon on the outskirts of Tel Aviv.

Johnson Did Not Consult Reischauer

WASHINGTON (AP) — A former American ambassador in Vietnam says that despite a White House statement to the contrary, he has never once been consulted by President Johnson on the Southeast Asia situation.

Edwin O. Reischauer, former envoy to Japan and now a Harvard professor, said Wednesday in a telephone interview from his Cambridge, Mass., home his only personal discussion with Johnson in recent months was on a matter not related to Southeast Asia.

On Tuesday, White House press secretary George Christian named Reischauer and Gen. Matthew B. Ridgway, former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, as two war policy opponents consulted by Johnson on Vietnam planning.

War Protesters Balk on Paying Telephone Taxes

WASHINGTON (AP) — Americans looking for a cheap and safe way to protest the war in Vietnam are refusing to pay the federal excise tax on their telephone bills, the Internal Revenue Service said today.

But the IRS usually collects the money after all. Last week it issued new rules aimed at speeding up the collection process by cutting out time-consuming hearings on war protest cases.

So far, nobody has gone to jail over the telephone tax protests, and IRS officials doubt if they ever will because, as one spokesman explained: "These people generally only do it once or twice and then start paying again, so the money held back is never great enough to warrant criminal action."

The bargain-basement method of dissent has been operating around the nation for the past 15 months, according to the IRS. But the number of citizens involved is less than 4,000 once-a-month protesters.

The approach is made to order for the timid soul who wants to clear his conscience over a burning issue but doesn't want any risk involved.

It's cheap: The 10 per cent tax on a monthly phone bill is rarely more than a dollar or two, so there aren't any fines or costly bail bonds to pay.

It's safe: No getting trampled in crowds.

And best of all, the telephone service continues without interruption as long as the rest of the bill is paid.

The IRS explained that the phone tax is levied against the customer but is collected by the company. So, as long as the service charge is paid, the phone stays connected. All the company does is notify the IRS when a customer pays all but the tax on a bill.

Westmoreland Forecast For '68 Proves All Wrong

NEW YORK (AP) — A month before the disruptive Communist Tet offensive, Gen. William C. Westmoreland predicted great allied headway during 1968 in military and pacification programs in Vietnam, the New York Times reported from Washington today.

The Times, quoting excerpts from a classified year-end report Westmoreland made to Washington Jan. 1, said the U. S. commander in Vietnam asserted that "the enemy did not win a major battle in Vietnam in 1967" and declared: "We should expect our gains of 1967 to be increased manifold in 1968."

The report reflected the view Westmoreland expressed on his visit to the United States last November, said the Times, namely that allied military pressure was forcing the enemy away from South Vietnam's population centers. In the Tet lunar new year offensive, the Viet Cong wreaked havoc in 35 population centers including Saigon.

Other discrepancies pointed out by the Times between Westmoreland's predictions and the outlook after the Tet offensive were these: —The general said the enemy's recruiting in South Vietnam would fall off. But intelligence analysts now say the enemy's recruiting drive picked up steam in the latter half of 1967 and he has now replaced most soldiers lost in the urban offensive.

—The general predicted combat this year would create about 340,000 new refugees. The Tet offensive alone resulted in about 350,000.

—He said the pacification program was expected to gain considerable headway in the next six months. But the Tet offensive has profoundly disrupted that program.

Billboard Ban Ready To Sign

MONTPELIER, Vt. (AP) — Gov. Philip H. Hoff is expected to sign into law within a week "ban-the-billboard" legislation that would eliminate all off-premise advertising signs in the Green Mountain state.

The Senate passed the bill Wednesday. The House passed it previously.

If the bill becomes law, Vermont will be the first state in the continental United States to ban off-premise advertising. Hawaii has a similar law.

Riot Book Sells Well — BALTIMORE, Md. (AP) — A best-selling book in the Baltimore area is the report of the President's Commission on Civil Disorders.

About 4,000 copies of the 657-page paperback have been sold in the area.

Biggest Ship Launched — NAGASAKI, Japan (AP) — The Mitsubishi shipyards today launched the world's largest ship, a 276,000-ton tanker that required six tugboats to tow it into Nagasaki harbor.

ANOTHER DUTY — Pat Nugent escorts his wife, the former Luci Johnson, to a State dinner in the White House Wednesday night honoring the president of Paraguay, Alfredo Stroessner. Earlier, Nugent reported to Andrews air force base to begin the process of returning to active duty in the air national guard's 113th Tactical Fighter wing. (AP Wirephoto)

Opposition Is Not Scaring M'Carthy

MILWAUKEE, Wis. (AP) — Sen. Eugene J. McCarthy appeared to be under the gun today from both Johnson administration and Sen. Robert F. Kennedy forces. But the Minnesota Democrat acknowledged he was ready if the fighting gets rough.

With the Wisconsin presidential primary only nine days away, the administration was sending in Vice President Hubert H. Humphrey this weekend, Agriculture Secretary Orville Freeman today, and Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Robert Weaver next Monday.

Both McCarthy and Johnson are on the Democratic ballot in Wisconsin's April 2 primary. Kennedy is not.

Would Humphrey hurt his fellow Minnesotan? McCarthy was asked this at a news conference during visits to several Wisconsin communities Wednesday.

"He might say something that would hurt," McCarthy replied.

"But the last time he and I were in the state together campaigning was in 1960 when I was campaigning for him for president. I don't think he will hurt me very much."

Did the prospect of an invasion by some members of Johnson's cabinet worry him?

"I'd like them to send the whole cabinet," McCarthy said. "I'd like to have them travel together. It would be good for the country to see them all."

Although McCarthy announced last Thursday — the day Kennedy said he was thinking of entering primary contests against Johnson — that he was entering primaries in South Dakota as well as Indiana, McCarthy said Wednesday he was not sure he would be in the South Dakota primary where some of his supporters are understood to have defected to the Kennedy camp, according to sources close to McCarthy.

McCarthy said he had been in touch with Sen. George McGovern, D., S.D., who has been a long-time friend of Kennedy, and who is seeking reelection.

A McCarthy source said there was "no panic." But McCarthy told newsmen he was committed to doing what McGovern wanted in South Dakota. He said McGovern did not want a party fight.

McCarthy was asked if it were possible to have peaceful coexistence with Kennedy.

McCarthy acknowledged there is "some abrasion" in even "the happiest marriage."

McCarthy said since he and Kennedy agree on many issues, there was a strong chance that their contest would get down to personalities.

"I don't know what else you argue about," McCarthy said.

"If he wants to pick on us on size, I'm willing to use that as a determinant, or age."

"I don't think those would be the standards, however. He plays touch football, I play football. He plays softball, I play baseball. He skates in Rockefeller Center, I play hockey. If these are the basis on which you are going to make a decision, why, I mean, it'll become abusive, I suppose."

A newsman asked: "Are you saying that Sen. Kennedy plays girls' games?" "I didn't say that," said McCarthy.

A newsman asked if he was saying that, if it gets rough, "you're prepared to get rough too?"

"Well," replied McCarthy, "my sister used to say to me when I used to play hockey that she didn't know what it was that happened, but that when my line was in, more of the other team fell down."

High-Risk Insurance Pool Muddled

ALBANY, N.Y. (AP) — A proposal by Gov. Rockefeller to mandate a high-risk insurance pool to serve blighted areas is a good idea generally but should be changed to conform to proposed new federal legislation, a leading fire insurance executive says.

Newell G. Alford Jr., vice president of Federal Insurance Co. and a spokesman for the American Insurance Association, offered that assessment Wednesday at a hearing before the Joint Legislative Committee on Insurance.

The state bill would create a fire insurance association to furnish coverage in decaying sections of cities that would be uninsurable in a normal market.

Jack Benny 'Stuff' Is Given UCLA

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Comedian Jack Benny's hapless Maxwell car and his invulnerable vault are at home now at college — where Benny himself was never able to go.

Benny went Wednesday to the University of California at Los Angeles and left 50 years of show business collections, including 900 radio scripts and electrical transcriptions.

As U.C.L.A. Chancellor Franklin D. Murphy smilingly accepted the memorabilia, Benny screamed with the tight-wad facade he nurtured on the airwaves:

"Donation? I thought I was selling this stuff!"

Red Ink Splashed

PARIS (AP) — More than 300 youths smashed windows and splashed red ink on the office of American Express Wednesday night in a demonstration against the war in Vietnam.

Red Jets Over Berlin

BERLIN (AP) — Four Communist jet fighters zoomed over West Berlin today and MIGs were also reported seen in the air corridors connecting the isolated city with West Germany, a British spokesman reported.

The spokesman said the reports were being investigated and he did not know what action—if any—would be taken.

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