

Jack Anderson's Washington Merry-go-round

—With Les Whitten

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WASHINGTON — While the public spotlight is focused on sex in Washington the State Department is quietly promoting sex abroad.

In faraway Indonesia, for example, U.S. Ambassador David Newsom has been notified that he will soon receive a shipment of over 50 million prophylactics as a foreign aid offering from the American taxpayers.

He solemnly pledged in a "priority" cable that he would strive to "greatly expand present usage rates." But he pleaded that the available supply is more than adequate and begged headquarters to "ship Indonesia no repeat no condoms" in the coming year.

The contraceptives have been consigned to Jakarta under a perfectly legitimate program to control birth rates in underdeveloped countries. But, as is their wont, the foreign aid bureaucrats have wound up accomplishing a service far removed from their mission.

Each year, the State Department's foreign aid agency ships millions of prophylactics, birth control pills, inter-uterine devices and cans of contraceptive foam to underdeveloped nations. This year alone, the agency plans to distribute some \$11 million worth of condoms and \$14 million worth of pills around the world.

The bureaucrats run into a problem, however, when they go shopping for the best buy. To get a good price, they purchase huge quantities. This creates a

surplus, which the bureaucrats must dispose of. So suddenly, American ambassadors around the globe find themselves inundated with pills and prophylactics.

This is what has happened in Indonesia. The harassed ambassador was "surprised to learn" he cabled that AID plans supply Indonesia 51,442,757 condoms during 1977.

He took a quick inventory of the birth control devices already on hand and concluded that the Indonesians already have far more than they can be expected to utilize, given the state of romance in the country. As for the 51,442,757 additional condoms about to be shipped, he cabled Washington despairingly that he "never and does not intend request these condoms."

Newsom cited some alarming statistics in his cable. "At March 1976 rate of condom usage (8077 gross) Indonesia has three years condom stock presently in country. Further 200,000 gross from (United Nations agencies) will soon be arriving, which will extend in-country stock to calculated level of over four years supply."

Not that the Ambassador is unwilling to do his part to advance sex in Indonesia. He would "try to greatly expand present usage rates," he promised. But he still felt he must "urge AID ship Indonesia no repeat no condoms during 1976-1977."

But in Washington, officials were not

impressed with his problem. A spokesman told us that the ambassador had based his projections on "last year's figures." Explained the spokesman solemnly: "We're hoping that usage is going to increase, and we're trying to get them to do that."

Footnote: This isn't the first time the bureaucrats at AID have become overenthusiastic about population control. Some time ago, we reported that foreign aid funds were used to circulate throughout Catholic Latin America a birth control comic book written in Spanish.

The cover featured a picture of the Virgin Mary and the caption: "Little Virgin, you who conceived without sinning, help me to sin without conceiving."

WATCH ON WASTE: Coal companies will save millions of dollars at the taxpayers' expense if the Army Engineers have their way.

Millions are going into the mammoth Tennessee-Tombigbee Waterway, which may turn out to be the biggest boondoggle of the decade before it is completed.

The Tenn-Tom project, as it is known less formally, will be a connecting canal along the Alabama-Mississippi border. Already, a staggering \$1.8 billion construction bill has been run up.

The purpose of the waterway ostensibly is to cut freight transportation costs. Coal will be the

main commodity that will be hauled on the canal. Army engineers estimate that the coal traffic will reach 40 million tons a year when the waterway operates at full capacity.

This means the private coal companies, which will pay nothing for the use of the waterway, will get their transportation costs subsidized by the taxpayers to the tune of millions.

About half the coal that travels on the canal won't even be used in this country but will be shipped overseas. The Army Engineers contend that the coal exports will help the national trade balance and will create additional employment.

CIA FOOTNOTE: A group of conservative leaders, led by Rep. Philip Crane, R-Ill., were entertained and briefed on the wonders of the Thieu regime during a visit to Saigon in 1974. Now it turns out that their sponsors were secretly funded by the Central Intelligence Agency.

The trip was partially financed by the Vietnamese Council on Foreign Relations. The American Guests' name back parroting the council's line about the glories of South Vietnam. They also denied the existence of the vicious "tiger cages" where Thieu's prisoners were kept.

No mention was made that the council got \$170,000 in 1974-75 from the CIA. Not even all the directors and patrons of the council knew about the secret CIA support.