

Russian Leader Perched Atop Secret Installation

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THURMONT — One of life's little ironies is taking place as Leonid I. Brezhnev, general secretary of the Soviet Communist party, now sleeps at night nearly atop America's underground Pentagon.

With Brezhnev and his party spending their nights at Camp David near here, one wonders if they know (and likely Soviet intelligence does) that less than four miles away down beneath the mountain is one of the United States' "hush-hush" installations.

While it is called "hush-hush", it must be admitted that the use

of the term is only rhetorical, for the area natives are fond of explaining how the heads of the Pentagon in Washington fly up here on occasions like a host of locusts.

"Sometimes the military has maneuvers and they lift the top people and papers up in 20 or 30 helicopters from the Washington Pentagon and bring them up here at night," an Emmitsburg native said.

He explains that the "place" is a tremendous installation which was carved out of the rocks in the mountain west of Emmitsburg.

The work on the project was started back in the Truman administration. The size of the

underground hideaway is not stated but it is understood to extend so far back under the mountain that it connects with the underground elevator shaft at Camp David.

"The security is strong there. When you have clearance to get in to the place you are given a colored ID card which they place on you. And you had better not go into any of the areas which require other colors on the card," said one man who had worked on the installation.

Supposedly, the underground Pentagon is made up of huge sections which were excavated from the mountain and these sections are divided for the work

See SECRET, Page A-5

SECRET

(Continued From Page A-1)

required by different sections of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

A hint of the installation is seen from Md. 97 west of Emmitsburg as the steam rises from the ventilation shafts halfway up the mountainside.

Natives believe that besides the underground connection that ties the "Little Pentagon" in to the elevator shaft at Camp David, that there may be another underground connection to Ft. Ritchie which lies even closer as the crow flies to Camp David.

Ft. Ritchie is now the headquarters for the U.S. Army Strategic Communications Command - Continental United States.

It is a 638 acre installation with about 3,000 military and civilian employees, many of whose dependents live off-post in the surrounding area of Frederick and Washington Counties, as well

as up into nearby Pennsylvania.

Wednesday the local area was flooded with a horde of news correspondents with the local American Legion Post serving as the office. Some 100 telephone installations and desks have been set up in the building for use by the news services, newspapers and magazines.

Wednesday, a few photographers were bused to Camp David for a rare "photographic opportunity" inside the presidential retreat. Hundreds of other newsmen and photographers milled about the town in search of favorite tobacco, drinks, etc. waiting news developments.

Monday night as the Brezhnev party returned by helicopter it circled the area for about 20 minutes, evidently having landing problems at Camp David.

Finally the copter sat down on the high school grounds here and the party got into cars for the drive up the mountain to Camp David.

One car had mechanical difficulties of some sort and the security men in it got out and joined companions in other cars about 9 p.m. The car with the problems was left behind.