

The Major Events of the Day

International
At least 10,000 — perhaps as many as 20,000 people — in the Indian state of Bihar have died this year from smallpox in what has been described as one of the worst epidemics of the disease in recent years. More than 30,000 smallpox cases were reported in the last five weeks from virtually every village in Bihar, an official of the World Health Organization said in Geneva. [1:6-7.]

Owing to the jump in world oil prices the Soviet Union, which supported the Arab oil embargoes and production restrictions, last year took in nearly a billion dollars more in oil revenue than a year earlier with only a modest increase in exports. The wind-fall profits came from trade with Western countries only, according to 1973 Soviet foreign trade statistics. [1:7.]

Cambodia's Education Minister and his top assistant, who were being held hostage in Phnom Penh by high school students demanding educational reforms, were killed when the Government troops attacked the school. The police said that the two men had been shot and stabbed by the students, but a reporter said they had been shot by military policemen when the students used the officials as shields. [1:8.]

National

A court-appointed panel of technical experts has decided that "the only plausible explanation" for the 18½-minute gap in a crucial White House tape recording is that it was caused by the "pushing of keys" at least five times on a White House tape recorder. The panel's finding, released by the Federal District Court in Washington, rebuts the White House explanation that President Nixon's personal secretary, Rose Mary Woods, may have accidentally caused the gap by mistakenly pressing the wrong button on her recorder. [1:1.]

The House Judiciary Committee heard two White House tape recordings that apparently rebut charges that President Nixon was aware of a plan by the International Telephone and Telegraph Corporation to contribute to his 1972 re-election campaign when he intervened in an antitrust case against I.T.T. in 1971. But the impeachment inquiry pursued the possibility that Mr. Nixon joined in or knew of illegal efforts in 1972 to prevent disclosure of his actions in the antitrust case. [1:3.]

Without publicity, the House Judiciary Committee has intensified its inquiry into 17 so-called "national security" wiretaps authorized by President Nixon beginning in 1969. A series of letters filed in court in connection with a lawsuit by Morton H. Halperin, who was subjected to one of the wiretaps, disclosed that officials of the committee completed arrangements last week for the turnover of highly classified wiretap documents and materials of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. [1:2-3.]

Under a court decision, the Reserve Mining Company may continue to pollute Lake Superior with industrial wastes from its plant in Silver Bay, Minn. Last April, Reserve Mining, owned jointly by the Armo and Republic steel companies, was ordered immediately to stop its waste discharge as a result of a suit brought by the Justice Department, three states and five environmental groups. But a higher court ruling indicates that Reserve Mining will be allowed to continue to use the lake while it converts to on-land disposal of its wastes, a process that company officials said may take from three and a half to five years. [1:5.]

Metropolitan

Mayor Beame challenged what he said were "errors and deficiencies" in Controller Harrison J. Goldin's criticism of the Mayor's proposed municipal budget. Mr. Beame made his rebuttal in a polite, but politically pointed letter that appeared to be his long-anticipated attack on Mr. Goldin, who has said that he wants to be Mayor. [1:8.]

The sudden illness of Peter R. Schlam, the Federal prosecutor in the extortion-conspiracy trial of Representative Angelo D. Roncallo reportedly was under investigation by the Justice Department, the Suffolk County District Attorney and the County Police Commissioner. [1:4.]

Without public announcement, two leading New York banks—the Bankers Trust Company and the First National City Bank — have raised their lending rates on personal loans, except for automobiles. The increases, ranging from 1 to 1.6 percentage points, will affect a wide variety of general-purpose loans, including loans for medical expenses, vacations, and the consolidation of debts. Some of the banks said they were considering similar increases. [1:5.]

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"There can be no positive solution [on Ulster] other than a political solution based on consent. Without this, a decision to withdraw the armed forces would be a purely negative act productive of nothing."—Prime Minister Wilson. [7:1.]

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