

News Summary and Index

NYTimes

THURSDAY, MARCH 20, 1975

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The Major Events of the Day

International

South Vietnamese by the tens of thousands were abandoning their homes in the northern two-thirds of the country, clearly under the impression, despite Government denials, that it might sacrifice the northern provinces to save the core of the nation. The flight seemed to be spreading to the two northernmost provinces, Quang Tri and Thua Thien, and a report said residents of the capital of Phu Bon in the highlands were also heading for the coast. [Page 1, Columns 6-8.]

Gen. George S. Brown, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said that South Vietnamese "backs are against the wall" partly for lack of United States military aid. Unless more is provided he predicted that Saigon would be forced into an increasingly defensive position. His speech reflected the Administration's linking the military withdrawal from the Central Highlands to Congressional cutbacks in military aid. [1:6-7.]

Communist-led insurgent troops broke through Government lines to the east bank of the Mekong River across from Phnom Penh's naval base and about two miles east of the capital. They were apparently seeking to improve their position for mortar attacks on the base. Northwest of the capital Government forces were pushing out from Tuol Leap and the insurgents are apparently retreating to defend the positions from which they have been firing missiles against Phnom Penh's airport. [1:7.]

National

The Commerce Department reported that a big increase in the net outflow of private long-term capital threw the nation's basic balance of payments into a record deficit of \$5.87-billion in the last quarter of 1974. For the year as a whole, large payments for imported oil and a rise in capital outflows produced a deficit of \$10.58-billion, second only to the \$11.2-billion deficit of 1972. [1:1.]

The Supreme Court unanimously struck down as unconstitutional the Social Security provision that authorizes survivors' benefits for the widow of a deceased worker with children but denies them to a widower in the same position. It said this resulted in women workers who pay Social Security taxes providing less protection for their families than men. It was the Court's strongest stand against discrimination based on sex. [1:2-4.]

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Quotation of the Day

"You can pass all the constitutional amendments you want to, but you cannot put equal responsibility on men for being mother."—Former Senator Sam J. Ervin Jr., on women's rights. [13:1.]

Fear of another depression is widespread.

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