

The Major Events of the Day

International

The world's youth was the subject of the traditional Christmas Day's message from Pope Paul VI, who said that "the emptiness" of modern society had turned youth back to religion and away from materialism. He told a crowd of 100,000 people in St. Peter's Square in Rome that it was "consoling" to watch trends in the new generation that young people were rejecting the "specious" wisdom of earlier generations. Those earlier generations, he said, had inoculated youth with concepts of "war for power" and "materialism as the only justice."

Millions of Indians have adapted to the structural alteration that India has undergone in the six months since Prime Minister Indira Gandhi began dismantling some of the institutions of Indian democracy. An Opposition leader, who said last summer that the Indian people would not tolerate for more than a couple of months the emergency that was declared by Mrs. Gandhi, now speaks of "a long, long struggle—five years or more." Censorship of the once lively and controversial press is one of the things the country is learning to live with. [1:1-2.]

High-level Arab consultations are under way over the United Nations Security Council debate on the Middle East scheduled to begin Jan. 12. The policy-making body of the Palestine Liberation Organization has just completed two days of talks in Damascus. Informed press sources expect the subject to be high on the agenda when President Haferz al-Assad of Syria and King Khalid of Saudi Arabia confer. [1:3.]

National

There are many signs that resentment against President Ford is rising among Republican farmers in the Middle West. As prices for wheat and corn continued to slip, the President was being criticized this week for the three-month embargo he imposed late last summer on grain sales to the Soviet Union. Not since 1948, when President Truman swept the Middle West by accusing a Republican Congress of "sticking a pitchfork in the farmer's back" has an issue angered farmers any more than the embargo. [1:7.]

More restrictions on smokers that seek to protect the public from tobacco smoke

as well as fire hazards have gone into effect in about 30 states since 1973. Smokers who ask "Do you mind if I smoke?" are finding that the answer is often "Yes." Jacob Meyer, a New Orleans lawyer, who filed a class action suit to prevent smoking at the New Orleans Superdome is basing his case on the presumption that under the Bill of Rights, people have a right to clean air in all state buildings. [1:4-6.]

The murders last Oct. 18, in a town in Nebraska's cattle country, of a 66-year-old farm laborer, his wife, son and three grandchildren have become the focus of a complex and constitutional issue involving the First Amendment guarantee of a free press and the Sixth Amendment guarantee of a defendant's right to a fair trial. The constitutional controversy began when a Nebraska judge imposed a gag rule limiting the publication and broadcast of testimony given at a pretrial hearing of the suspect in the murders. The judge ruled that the right of a free press "must be subservient to the right of due process" when the rights of a defendant conflicted with those of the press. [2:8:1-5.]

Metropolitan

Maurice H. Nadjari confirmed a report that a few days before his dismissal by Governor Carey as the state's special prosecutor he had instructed his staff to begin an investigation into who leaked information about a vital wiretap. The wiretap was being used to aid an inquiry into a possible connection between high-ranking Democratic officials and judicial corruption. Mr. Nadjari had learned from the wiretap that potential political and judicial targets had been alerted to a grand jury's investigation. Then the tapped line suddenly dried up. [1:8.]

A year and a half after the city asked 87 voluntary hospitals to certify that neither they nor their directors were involved in conflicts of interest—possibly with pharmaceutical companies or law firms that members of their boards are associated with—it has yet to hear from half of the hospitals and has heard from even fewer directors. No charges have been brought against any hospital for failing to comply with the request for a signed statement. Even where hospitals receiving city aid reported cases that the Comptroller's legal staff considered clear violations of the city's conflict-of-interest rule, no action has been taken. [1:4-6.]

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"Maybe in being drawn to the brink so often in the past few months, we have come to a rebirth of faith in New York, to a rediscovery of what our city means to the world and what it means to be a New Yorker."—Terence Cardinal Cooke, in his annual Christmas Day message. [20:1.]

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