

News Summary

NYTimes

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International

A \$300 million loan to Portugal has received the Ford Administration's quiet approval. The United States has decided to join a long-term \$1.5 billion consortium to help the newly formed government of Mario Soares stay in power. Formal announcement is awaiting consultation with key members of Congress, Portuguese officials and other foreign governments. [Page 1, Column 6.]

Quebec's separatists, who won a stunning legislative majority in Monday's provincial election, were under strong pressure from local and national federalists to make no attempt to break away from Canada. Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau, whose Liberal Party was turned out of provincial office, emphasized that the victorious leader of the Parti Québécois, René Lévesque, had a mandate to govern but not to seek independence. [A1:4-5.]

Italy's Prime Minister, Giulio Andreotti, is planning a December visit in Washington to seek aid from President Ford and in hopes of sounding out Jimmy Carter's aides and possibly the President-elect himself on the future Administration's attitude toward Italy. If he comes he would be expected to explain the present role of Italy's Communist Party, which keeps his Cabinet in power by its votes. [A7:1-5.]

National

The Carter transition staff, just assembled in Washington, said the President elect had set Feb. 15 as a target date for presenting Congress his own "budget-in-brief" for the fiscal year 1978. This signals his intent for a rapid takeover and early action on the overall budget, defense spending, including the future of the B-1 bomber; jobs and stimulating the economy, and on incomes policy. [A1:2.]

The patronage powers of the incoming President could be seriously impaired, Federal officials said, by a Supreme Court decision last June denying newly elected local officials the right to dismiss patronage employees merely because they belonged to the opposite party. Seven newly elected governors whose parties have been out of power could also be affected. [A1:3.]

President Ford and Mr. Carter will meet in Washington next week to discuss transition problems, the President-elect announced. He also said Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger would come to Plains, Ga., to meet with him Saturday morning, with Vice President-elect Walter F. Mondale present for their talk on foreign policy and transition. [A15:1.]

An apparent suicide pact between Gary Mark Gilmore, the Utah man condemned to death who has been seeking prompt execution, and his girlfriend sent both to hospital with separate overdoses of barbiturates. His condition was reported as serious, while hers was said to be critical. [1:4.]

Metropolitan

Two major utilities are asking the New York State Public Service Commission for rate increases. The New York Telephone Company will seek increases of \$393 million for 1978, including the doubling of coin-box rates to 20 cents. Consolidated Edison Company wants natural gas rate increases adding 93 cents a month to the average residential user's monthly bill. [A1:3.]

Proposed car insurance increases were opposed by insurance broker associations who warned a New York State Insurance Department hearing that the higher assigned-risk rates would more than double the price in some cases. They said this would force many motorists to drive without insurance, thus indirectly forcing up the premiums paid by all other drivers. [A1:5.]

New York City would get an additional \$42.18 million for schools at the expense of wealthier suburban school districts under a major change in the form of state aid proposed by the State's Board of Regents. In a separate development, State Education Commissioner Ewald B. Nyquist, under fire by a majority of the board, said flatly he would not resign. [A1:5-6.]

Samuel Bronfman 2d, the liquor company heir, took the stand for the first time as a witness in the trial of two men accused of kidnapping him for ransom. He gave new and personal details but no major surprises. [A1:2-3.]

Business/Finance

The Federal Reserve Board chairman, Dr. Arthur F. Burns, has indicated that he would be willing to support a tax cut of what he considers the right kind to stimulate the rate of economic growth and reduce unemployment. But his associates say he believes a "quickie" cut in the form of a rebate focused on lower-income taxpayers would be the wrong kind, and might do damage to the economy. [A1:6.]

Housing starts in October dipped slightly from the September level but still remained above any other month in more than two years, the Commerce Department reported. They were 25 percent above the October 1975 figure. For single-family houses, the starts were the highest since February 1973, but apartment buildings remained sluggish and were down again. [D1:6.]

A postponement is being weighed by the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries of its December meeting on oil prices at which increases might aim a new blow at the world economy. OPEC is under pressure not only from the United States and other Western nations but also from third-world countries that do not produce oil. [D1:1-2.]

Stock prices were buoyant until mid-afternoon when a continuation of Monday's rally slumped, with the Dow Jones industrials down 0.08 points, closing at 935.34. [D1:3-4.] New bond issues sold readily despite their heavy volume, with prices moving higher. [D2:3.] Soybean futures moved up 23 cents, erasing Monday's decline. [D16:1.]

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Quotation of the Day

"This is a healthy thing. It'll clear the air. Separation has preoccupied our political leaders for the last 15 years."
 —Robert Stewart, an English-speaking Canadian, commenting in Toronto on yesterday's victory for the separatist movement in Quebec province. [A19:1.]

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CORRECTION

An article in The Times last Friday stated incorrectly that Mego International had acquired the Tinker Toy and Child Guidance lines from the Questor Corporation. Mego was actually negotiating to acquire these and other lines of the Questor Education Products unit.