

News Summary

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International

Egypt and Syria plan a "united political leadership," the countries announced following four days of talks by their Presidents, Anwar el-Sadat and Hafez al-Assad. The move seemed designed to strengthen the Arab position for negotiations with Israel next year. Egypt and Syria will also study the possibility of a full union. [Page 1, Column 4.]

Jewish sources in Moscow said that Soviet authorities sought to block a three-day Jewish cultural conference by arresting organizers and participants, but that 50 others managed to meet in a suburban apartment for the day. The authorities had declared the proposed conference illegal in advance. [1:1.]

National

Three Carter cabinet choices were announced at a news conference in Plains, Ga., as the President-elect confirmed his pledge to cut defense spending by \$5 billion to \$7 billion. He named Harold Brown of California Institute of Technology as Secretary of Defense. For Housing and Urban Development he picked Patricia Roberts Harris, a Washington lawyer. Ray Marshall, a University of Texas labor economist, was named Secretary of Labor. [1:6.]

Griffin B. Bell, the Atlanta lawyer and Attorney General-designate, belongs to two clubs there that list no blacks as members and few if any Jews. He said he was "concerned" and would "do something" about membership before going to Washington. President-elect Carter said at his news conference that he hoped his Cabinet officers would give up membership in organizations that discriminated, but would not require them to do so. [1:5.]

A tanker broke in half under the pounding of high seas after running aground last Wednesday on the Nantucket Shoals. Some five million gallons of

thick, heavy crude oil were released from the Liberian-flag vessel Argo Merchant. As the wind shifted the oil slick drifted first toward and then away from the area's prime commercial fishing grounds, but the spill was nevertheless ranked as a major disaster with other threats to fishing and recreation along the coast. [1:3.]

The November consumer price rise was a relatively moderate three-tenths of 1 percent, the same as in October, while food prices actually dropped, according to the Department of Labor. For the 12-month period ending in November, the overall consumer price index rose just 5 percent—the smallest increase in any such period since the one ending in March 1973. [1:4.]

Metropolitan

New York City's plight was outlined to the Senate Banking Committee in Washington by Felix G. Rohatyn, chairman of the Municipal Assistance Corporation. He said the city would almost certainly be unable to re-enter the credit markets in full when its Federal loan program expires in mid-1978, even if it has met its legal deadline for a balanced budget by then. [1:5.]

New York State will take direct charge of ferreting out fraud and abuse in "Medicaid mills" in New York City, according to Dr. Roger Herdman, deputy state health commissioner. He told a legislative hearing the state had not been "entirely satisfied" with the enforcement effort of the city's Health Department. Dr. Lowell E. Bellin, the city's commissioner, called the move "political posturing" and the state's record "miserably inept." [1:2.]

Dozens of New Jersey towns that had been expecting millions of Federal dollars in public works funds faced an impossible deadline in recent days. Instead of notice of approval they found in their envelopes requests for addition-

al information that had to reach the Economic Development Administration in Philadelphia by Dec. 9. The Christmas mail rush compounding the recent parcel post strike frustrated their hopes for the funding. [33:1-2.]

Jury deliberation began in the retrial in Passaic County Court of Rubin (Hurricane) Carter and John Artis for the murder in 1966 of a bartender and two bar patrons. Judge Bruno L. Leopizzi told them to give the defendants the benefit of reasonable doubts. [18:4-6.]

The trial of Anthony T. Ulasewicz, who was a confidential investigator for President Nixon, on tax violation charges in Federal court in Brooklyn, heard testimony from Herbert W. Kalmbach, John D. Ehrlichman and John W. Dean 3d who were on his White House staff. None testified that the retired New York City police officer actually received the money in salary and expenses designated for him. [18:1.]

Business/Finance

Britain persuaded its partners in the Organization for Economic Construction and Development that it is on the right track for strengthening its economy. As a result, fresh credits are expected to finance both the previously agreed upon loan from the International Monetary Fund and the safety net now being negotiated to protect the international value of the pound from new declines caused by further withdrawal of sterling balances. [41:5.]

New durable goods orders rose by 1.7 percent in November, the Department of Commerce said, while shipments rose 2.8 percent, also for the second straight month. In the defense goods sector, there was a drop of 2.7 percent while new orders for nondefense capital goods rose by 4.9 percent. The department attributed all the November increases to transportation equipment. [41:1.]

Stock prices posted a modest increase, with Dow Jones industrials up 5.98 points to close at the day's high of 978.39. [41:6.] Long-term notes amounting to \$475 million will be sold by three major bank holding companies to institutional investors. [43:1.] Soybean futures after a weak start scored gains in modest trading to close at \$6.88 a bushel in Chicago. [47:1-3.]

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Quotation of the Day

"By all odds, this is the biggest oil spill disaster on the American coast in our history."—Russell E. Train, administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, on the 5 million gallon oil spill off Nantucket. [1:3.]

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CORRECTIONS

Because of a typographical error, an article in The Times yesterday incorrectly reported that officials of the Roberto Clemente Plaza housing development planned to rent 75 percent of the apartment units to Hasidic families. The officials plan to rent 75 percent to black and Puerto Rican families and 25 percent to whites.

Gordon Rattray, a professional psychic, was reported in The Times Dec. 15 to have said he had been retained by lawyers to select juries and "fix" cases. The sentence should have read that he had been retained by lawyers to help select juries in six cases.