

News Summary

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International

The Congress Party, which governed India in all its 30 years of independence, lost its majority in the lower house of Parliament to the opposition alliance. Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, defeated not only nationally as leader of her party but humbled in her quest to retain her seat in Parliament, did not yield to challenges from the opposition that she resign. [Page 1, Column 6.]

The United States was accused by Leonid I. Brezhnev in a speech in Moscow of using the human rights issue to interfere in the Soviet Union's internal affairs. He said that it was "unthinkable" that Soviet-American relations could develop normally on such a basis." He accused the Carter Administration of exerting too little effort to overcome a stagnation that developed in the relationship during the Presidential campaign. Mr. Brezhnev reiterated his Government's interest in negotiating a new treaty limiting long-range nuclear weapons, in reducing barriers to Soviet-American trade, in lowering military-force levels in Europe and in finding a Middle East settlement. [1:3.]

National

A new four-year farm bill that would provide substantial income guarantees for farmers has been recommended to President Carter by Agriculture Secretary Bob Bergland. Mr. Bergland has also recommended a new policy of price supports and tightened import quotas for sugar. Higher Government milk-price supports that the Secretary has proposed and that have been accepted by the President will be announced today, an Agriculture Department official said. The new supports are expected to raise the consumer's price of milk by six cents a gallon. [1:1-2.]

Tax provisions of President Carter's economic stimulus program, including a \$50 rebate for most Americans, were

approved by the Senate Finance Committee. But the rebate, especially, is expected to be challenged by the 38 Republicans, who favor permanent tax cuts instead, when the bill reaches the Senate floor next week. Opposition may also come from some Democrats who believe that the bill does not adequately deal with the problem of more than 7 million unemployed. [1:4-5.]

A battle over the proposed ban on saccharin started in Congress, with officials of the Food and Drug Administration insisting that the artificial sweetener does pose a public health problem. F.D.A. officials said that barring Congressional intervention, the ban would go into effect in July. [18:1-2.]

The Supreme Court unanimously upheld the constitutionality of a former section of the Social Security Act under which millions of retired men were treated less favorably than women in determining insurance benefits. The Court reasoned that the disparate treatment was "purposely enacted" by Congress to "compensate for past employment discrimination against women." [28:3-4.]

Metropolitan

A bill mandating prison for crimes of violence against persons aged 62 or over swept through the New York State Assembly. It would also deny youthful-offender status to people aged 16 to 19 who committed such crimes. Similar bills went through the Senate earlier but a compromise on differing details of the bills was uncertain. [1:1.]

The New Jersey Assembly passed a bill requiring persons convicted of using a gun or any other dangerous weapon in the commission of a serious crime to serve a mandatory minimum prison term before becoming eligible for parole. The bill, passed by a vote of 55 to 0 without debate, would take effect one month after being signed by the Governor. [1:2.]

Warning against "overzealous enforcement" of a civil-rights law, a Federal appeals court overturned a court order requiring two construction unions in New York City to increase their black and Puerto Rican membership. Judge Charles H. Tenney issued the original order last Sept. 1 in Federal District Court in Manhattan. [1:6.]

Two truck drivers who had been arrested for using radar-detection devices in their vehicles will not be prosecuted by the Westchester County District Attorney's office. A spokesman for the office said the statute under which the arrests had been made was inadequate. It was the fourth such case in the state in which local courts or prosecutors have overturned the arrests. [1:1-3.]

Business/Finance

Price increases averaging 5.8 percent on its ingot products, effective Friday, were announced by the Aluminum Company of America, the world's largest aluminum producer. Unalloyed primary aluminum ingot will go up 3 cents to 51 cents a pound. The increases affect about 40 percent of Alcoa's total shipments. The Council on Wage and Price Stability said that Alcoa had notified it of the increases last "Wednesday or Thursday." [51:6.]

Major changes in United States nuclear policy were recommended by a panel of 21 scientists and economists. The panel suggested an indefinite postponement of plutonium reprocessing and an end to the crash program to build a commercial breeder reactor. The panel's work was financed by the Ford Foundation and the group included two top members of the Carter Administration. Thus, its recommendations were thought to reflect the Administration's views. [51:4.]

Whether the LTV Corporation can persuade Congress to authorize an appropriation for six Navy attack planes at a cost of \$24.4 million may determine the company's future as a major defense contractor. The planes, Vought A-7E's, have been cut from the 1978 budget, but the company wants to keep the plane in production until a new generation of military plane contracts is ready for bidding. About 7,000 jobs at LTV's Dallas plant are at stake. [51:2-3.]

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Quotation of the Day

"Everyone should bow his head before the mandate of the people."—Ram Lal, Chief Minister of State of Himachal Pradesh and staunch supporter of the Government of Indira Gandhi. [1:4.]

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CORRECTION

The site of the 32d Ball of the Year for Boys' Towns of Italy was inadvertently omitted from the Future Events column on Sunday. The ball will be at the Waldorf-Astoria on March 31.