

News Summary

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International

It is very doubtful, Secretary of Defense Harold Brown said, that the United States and the Soviet Union can reach agreement on a reduction of their strategic weapons arsenal before the current freeze on those weapons expires next October. He said that defense spending by the United States would increase by \$2 billion annually if President Carter ultimately decided that the Russians were not negotiating in good faith and consequently ordered an acceleration in the development of American weapons. [Page 1, Column 6.]

The mood and intention of the Soviet leaders apparently was miscalculated by the Carter Administration before and during Secretary of State Cyrus R. Vance's trip to Moscow. Members of the American delegation and others say that the White House did not take seriously the warning signs from Moscow and that the flat rejection of the American arms proposal was unexpected. [1:5.]

Brazil's Congress was dissolved by President Ernesto Geisel for an indefinite period after the center-left opposition blocked the passage of a Government bill on judicial reform. The opposition objected to the bill because it did not restore the right of habeas corpus for political prisoners or guarantee the independence of judges from Government pressure. President Geisel was expected to enact the bill by decree. [1:5-6.]

National

An ethics code was approved by the Senate in an 86 to 9 vote. The bill was more stringent than a similar one approved last month by the House. Senator Lowell P. Weicker, Republican of Connecticut, voted against the bill, while the other senators from the New York metropolitan area voted for it. He said: "It couldn't be more appropriate than to pass the so-called ethics bill on

April Fool's Day," because "in a knee-jerk effort to quiet some criticism over a pay raise we have done fundamental, institutional harm to the Senate. [1:1.]

Unemployment declined to 7.3 percent of the work force last month, two-tenths of a percentage point below the February level, the Labor Department said. The decline reflected in part the return to work of people who had been laid off because of the winter's cold and fuel shortages. Total employment rose by 500,000 in March, the fifth consecutive month that there has been an increase. There was, however, an increase in the number of jobless teenagers. The unemployment rate among teen-age blacks rose by nearly 3 percentage points to 40.1 percent. [1:4.]

Most Vietnam war deserters will qualify for an upgrading of their undesirable discharges under the review authorized this week by President Carter. The scope of the President's order is much broader than was first understood, its practical effect appears likely to go far toward ending official punishment of the war evaders. Pentagon sources said that about 60,000 of the 69,170 deserters eligible for relief under the President's order, or more than 85 percent, would satisfy the criteria for an "automatic" improvement in their discharges if they apply to review boards within six months. [1:3-4.]

Texas oilmen and anti-Castro Cubans conspired with Lee Harvey Oswald to kill President Kennedy, according to hearsay testimony given to the House assassinations committee by a Dutch television newsman. Willem Oltmans was called before the committee after he had said in press and television interviews that the conspiracy to kill President Kennedy involved not only Lee Harvey Oswald but George de Mohrenschildt, who apparently killed himself several days ago; the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Central Intelligence Agency, the late H. L. Hunt, the Texas oil millionaire; and Jack Ruby, Oswald's assassin. An F.B.I. spokesman

said "all the information from Mr. Oltmans about Mr. deMohrenschildt is all new to us and probably all new to reality." [1:3.]

Metropolitan

Samuel D. Wright, Democratic Councilman from Brooklyn, one of the city's most powerful black political leaders, was indicted by a Federal grand jury on charges of extortion and conspiracy. He was charged with having asked for and received a \$5,000 bribe to help a California education-services company increase its sales while he was chairman of the Community School 23 in the Ocean-Hill Brownsville section of Brooklyn. [1:2.]

A Manhattan grand jury has found no corroboration to allegations that Christopher Boomis, a real estate developer, was promised a role in a lucrative building project in return for secret contributions to the 1973 campaign of Mayor Beame, according to informants. Mr. Boomis told investigators that such an offer had been made to him. [1:2.]

Business/Finance

Higher tariffs on shoe imports were rejected by President Carter. The International Trade Commission, a Federal agency, had recommended a tariff increase over a period of five years. The President instructed his chief trade negotiator, Robert S. Strauss, to seek agreements with Taiwan and South Korea, major exporters of low-priced shoes, to restrict their shipments and ordered that adjustments in Federal trade regulations be made to help shoe manufacturers in this country become more competitive. The President's decision was not welcomed in Congress, where there was strong support for the commission's recommendations. [1:1.]

The recession hardly touched the energy-rich states of Texas, Oklahoma, Alabama and Louisiana and in the current recovery they are overtaking the rest of the South in prosperity. This was reported by the Southern Growth Policies Board, an agency formed by 13 Southern states to monitor and aid growth. The report also said that the energy states have grown more rapidly in population, income and employment. The even economic growth of the South is threatened, the report said. [25:5-6.]

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Quotation of the Day

"It is absurd that the Senate has to demean itself by enacting a code of conduct, but in a climate of public distrust it is a necessity."—Senator Robert C. Byrd, majority leader and champion of the Senate's code of ethics. [1:1.]

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CORRECTION

Due to a typographical error, the name of a Washington law firm mentioned in yesterday's Management column in The New York Times was given incorrectly. The firm is Surrey, Karasik & Morse.