

Nixon Insists on Deregulating Gas

Jack Anderson

President Nixon served notice on Republican leaders at a recent White House strategy session that he is determined to take natural gas out from under federal regulation even though it will drive up the cost of heating homes and fueling plants.

"Do you want natural gas at a higher price," he demanded, "or no more natural gas?"

He also believes the chance of avoiding gasoline rationing, according to confidential minutes of the meeting, is now "better than even." But to make sure of this, he would like to call in the oil barons for some straight talk.

This was suggested by Rep. Wilmer Mizell (R-N.C.). "Bring the oil companies in and bump their heads together," he urged.

"We're already having woodshed sessions with them," piped up federal energy czar William Simon.

But the President agreed he should huddle personally with them "at least once."

Any presidential round with oilmen, cautioned Senate Republican leader Hugh Scott, should be public "to avoid criticism."

"I'd want the Attorney Gen-

eral there," said the President, "to make it clear there's no anti-trust violation."

Then he stressed again that "deregulation of natural gas is really the No. 1 priority."

"Elk Hills, too," chirped Simon. This was a reference to his efforts to open up the Naval petroleum reserve at Elk Hills, Calif., a move that has stirred strong opposition in Congress and the Pentagon.

"Fine, Bill. Take your purple heart and go," cracked the President wryly.

He also pleaded that "we must stop being scared of developing nuclear power industrially."

He pooh-poohed the threat to the environment. "Streaking is the only answer if you are to have a completely pure environment," he snorted.

Press Suppression — As the United States emissary to the swearing in of Brazilian President Ernesto Geisel, Pat Nixon could have picked up for her husband some expert advice on how to silence an obstreperous press. Geisel is a master at it.

On the same day the First Lady left for the presidential pomp and circumstance of Brasilia, a courier delivered to us

new evidence of how Brazil stifles its press. In the messenger's battered portfolio were page proofs and original stories that had been fully or partly deleted from Brazilian newspapers by the censors who now serve at the pleasure of President Geisel.

The suppressed stories show that even Brazil's distinguished Cardinal, Paulo Evaristo Arns, has been censored to keep his messages from reaching his parishioners.

Not only liberal but conservative papers, like Sao Paulo's respected O Estado de Sao Paulo, have been smothered. And the zesty newsmagazine Veja, at deadline time, is invaded by government censors who rule on every story prior to printing.

When Cardinal Arns' archdiocesan radio station was shut off the air after 17 years last October, his church newspaper was allowed to continue, but under erratic censorship. Still, Arns tried to publish a mild protest over the arrest of 30 people, many of them social workers.

Even as Geisel prepared for his inauguration, the censors banned Arns' message from his own paper. What was this supposedly treasonous message?

The excised material said only this:

"We still do not know the real motives of the arrests, even though we know that many interrogations dealt with the program and organization of the Church. Some of the (arrested) suffered very much. The Church cannot in any circumstances abandon its sons and daughters."

Meanwhile, O Estado de Sao Paulo tried to encourage the new president to stand up to the police, who sometimes seem to be a government unto themselves in Brazil.

Among the most poignant examples of censorship was one article that decried censorship itself. This was written by the general secretary of the Brazilian bishops, Ivo Lorscheider.

"Censorship of the Press," said the suppressed story, "is the most indecent thing about the present government. It is a weapon that does the greatest of disservices... for it leaves many things that the people ought to hear denounced both unknown and undenounced."

When Pat Nixon returns to the White House, she can assure the President that Watergate would never have surfaced in Brazil.

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