

WXPPost

## The Washington Merry-Go-Round

## Navy Builds Paraguayan Gunboats

By Jack Anderson

The U.S. taxpayers have been building gunboats for the Paraguayan Navy, which has been hauling narcotics downriver to Asuncion, where the dope is flown to the United States.

The secret reports, which tell of the Navy's involvement in the dope smuggling down the Paraguay river, don't specify whether American-built gunboats were actually used to transport narcotics.

But classified Pentagon documents show the Navy contracted with the Sewart Seacraft yards in 1970 to build three 40-foot patrol craft. The deal was arranged through the U.S. Navy's New Orleans office.

Paraguay's little navy operates on the river, which bisects the country, as part of the personal fleet of the strongman, General Alfredo Stroessner.

Six of the same 40-foot gunboats were also built for Iran in 1970, the confidential documents show. In 1972, the U.S. contracted to build another six 50-foot patrol boats for Cambodia, an 85-foot patrol craft for both the Dominican Republic and Guatemala and a 40-foot plane personnel rescue ship for the Philippines.

When we questioned the Navy about this gunboat diplomacy, a horrified spokesman

declared: "It's classified. That document has been compromised."

The arrangements had been approved, he said, by the White House, the Pentagon and the Congress. But he refused to say how much it cost the U.S. Apparently, it's all right for a dictator to know how much he is getting from the American taxpayers, but illegal for the taxpayers to know how much they are helping the dictator.

**Dead or Missing?**—President Nixon has promised a "full accounting" of the men still missing in action in Southeast Asia. However, he quietly blocked a Marine Corps "change of status" report, which would have declared the missing men as officially dead.

This is the private conclusion of the experts who have been trying to trace the missing men. Pentagon spokesmen acknowledge that they know of only one man on the missing list who may still be alive. Most of the others, numbering between 1,200 and 1,300, would be presumed dead.

The Marine Corps was about to make this official for its own missing troops on June 29. But apparently, the President stopped the announcement because of the an-

ticipated protests from parents.

A secret Navy survey of the MIA wives found that 88 per cent of the women hoped for the change of status. They reluctantly feel that it's time to start building a new life for themselves and their children, accepting the reality of their husbands' deaths. Until the men are officially declared dead, however, a new start is impossible for obvious psychological and financial reasons.

Most of the missing men's parents, on the other hand, are opposed to a change in status. With no more children to raise in most cases, they cling desperately to the slimmest hope of finding their sons alive.

**Footnote:** The parents control the "League of Families" organization, which continues to press for facts on the missing men.

**Flap Over Firing**—President Nixon's top woman appointee at the Commerce Department, Dr. Betsy Ancker-Johnson, had hardly settled in her new office as Assistant Secretary when she summoned Patent Commissioner Robert Gottschalk and demanded his resignation.

The astonished Gottschalk returned to the Patent Office to think about it. A week later, as he was about to leave for an important treaty-sign-

ing conference in Vienna, he got another summons from Dr. Ancker-Johnson. Gottschalk describes the conversation this way:

"I want you to understand that you are not to leave the country unless I have your resignation," said the peppery Ph.D.

Retorted Gottschalk: "Now wait a minute, Betsy, you're asking me to choose between giving up the treaty and giving up my job."

"No matter what," she said, "I'm asking for your resignation today."

With his tickets purchased, his passport in hand and the trademark treaty in the balance, Gottschalk dashed off his resignation and submitted it to Dr. Ancker-Johnson.

"I had to pay the ransom of quitting to get that treaty signed," Gottschalk told us angrily.

Dr. Ancker-Johnson denies saying the exact words attributed to her by Gottschalk but admits she was eager to get his resignation in hand before he left for Vienna.

She claims she had management reasons for firing the veteran patent attorney, but Gottschalk's friends insist his only offense was to ruffle feathers by trying to clean up the inefficient and contention-ridden Patent Office.