

News Summary and Index

NY Times

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 19, 1975

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The Major Events of the Day

International

It was estimated that 100,000 persons were streaming down the one remaining road from South Vietnam's Central Highlands to the safety of the seacoast. Behind them, Communist forces were poised to occupy the vast important area they had never before fully conquered. The exodus began with the fall of Ban Me Thuot but became a flood Sunday night after the Saigon Government decided to evacuate its forces from the highlands. Its commanders were said to feel that this would give them a strategic reserve, ease supply problems and permit a credible defense of the heart of the country. But the psychological effect is incalculable. [Page 1, Columns 1-2.]

United States military sources in Washington believe that the North Vietnamese have entered the second phase of an offensive designed to cut South Vietnam in half. The North's deepest penetration appears to be east of Ban Me Thuot where South Vietnamese forces were reported to have fallen back to within 60 miles of the coast, apparently hoping to hold Route 1, the main north-south artery. The sources said a successful drive to the coast would not necessarily wreck Saigon's plans to defend its northern provinces, since they have the ships and transport aircraft for supply and reinforcement there. [1:1-2.]

Portugal's military rulers banned the center-right Christian Democratic party and two militant extreme left-wing groups from participation in the elections scheduled for next month, accusing them of employing and stirring violence and of showing "disrespect" for the program of the armed forces. A major effect of the decision was to strengthen the hand of the Communist party against strong rivals on the left among workers, peasants and students. [1:5-6.]

The British Government decided to recommend a vote to remain in the Common Market in a referendum next summer, but the Cabinet was split on the issue. In a meeting preceding the announcement, seven of the 23 ministers called for withdrawal. Prime Minister Wilson said in the House of Commons he would allow the opposing ministers to speak out freely. [1:7.]

National

The Central Intelligence Agency financed the construction of a multi-million-dollar

The Other News

International

fallbreak attempt near Dublin fails. Page 2

Industrial states agree on emergency fund. Page 2

Brezhnev, in Budapest, stresses détente. Page 3

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Israel and Egypt at hard-bargaining stage. Page 4

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Quotation of the Day

"We ran to the airstrip where there were helicopters. We closed our eyes. We did not want to open them. Everywhere there were bodies, there were shells flying all over. I knew I would die."—Ly Thi Tinh, who fled from Ban Me Thuot. [18:6.]

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Tenth suspicious fire hits telephone company. Page 45

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CORRECTION

The listing of nominations in history for the National Book Awards that appeared in the New York Times on Monday inadvertently omitted Shelby Foote's "The Civil War: A Narrative, Red River to Appomattox," published by Random House.