

Kennedy plot theory arouses new interest

WASHINGTON (UPI)—A spreading strain of suspicion that John F. Kennedy might have been the victim of a plot involving the Central Intelligence Agency has aroused President Ford's curiosity and stirred new excitement among advocates of the conspiracy theory.

"If I were a betting man," says trial lawyer Bernard J. Fensterwald, "I'd bet the full story will be known within a year."

"A year? I'm surprised at Fensterwald," said Dr. Richard Popkin, a philosophy professor at Washington University in St. Louis. "I'd make it six months."

Both men have noticed in recent months a growing web of unrelated disclosures, events and allegations which they believe will provoke the first serious re-examination of the Warren Commission's conclusion that Lee Harvey Oswald acted alone as Kennedy's assassin in Dallas.

President Ford, who was a commission member, also apparently noticed the resurgence of interest in the circumstances of Kennedy's death, particularly when the CIA was mentioned.

Some time in March, the White House said, Ford looked up the precise language of the Warren Commission's findings which he had helped write. So, when he got a surprise question about the matter April 3 at his San Diego, Calif., news conference, Ford was prepared. He defended the commission's "very carefully drafted" statement that "we had found no evidence of a con-

spiracy, foreign or domestic," but he did not dismiss the possibility.

"So far, I have seen no evidence that would dispute the conclusions to which we came," he said.

But "if the facts seem to justify it," Ford said, the Rockefeller commission and the special House and Senate committees investigating CIA domestic activities might investigate.

Fensterwald, a dapper little Tennesseean whose clients have included Watergate burglar James W. McCord Jr. and James Earl Ray, said he believes something big is about to break in the Kennedy case.

"I have the same feeling I did about Watergate, the feeling the game was up," when McCord broke his silence with a letter to U.S. District Judge John J. Sirica charging high-level political pressures to cover up the scandal.

"There's just too much evidence around that the Warren report is not correct, that the CIA and the FBI both know a huge amount they didn't tell the Warren Commission," Fensterwald said.

But neither the Rockefeller commission nor Congress seems to share his sense of urgency.

The executive director of the Rockefeller commission, David Belin, is a former Warren Commission counsel and staunch defender of the single-assassin argument. A spokesman said: "No evidence has been submitted to indicate any CIA involvement."

The Senate committee staff has acknowledged it will study the question, but only as a peripheral CIA issue.

Fensterwald believes the trigger for what Popkin called the "amazingly rapid buildup" of interest in the Kennedy case—the equivalent of a McCord letter—was disclosure of CIA involvement in assassination plots against several foreign heads of state, including Cuba's Fidel Castro.

Rep. Henry B. Gonzalez, D-Tex., who has called for a new inquiry, says his suspicions were aroused by Watergate revelations of CIA activities and the Bay of Pigs.

The Executive Director of the presidential commission investigating the CIA said yesterday so far there has been no evidence to support allegations it was involved in the 1963 assassination of President John F. Kennedy.

Belin talked to reporters following the 13th closed meeting of the Commission headed by Vice President Nelson A. Rockefeller.

"Thus far we have not found any credible evidence that the CIA was involved as a party in the assassination," he said in answer to questions. He said any other queries would have to wait until the commission finishes its work June 15 and makes its report.

"We will not comment on what will or will not be discussed," Belin said.

He said that Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger had been tentatively scheduled to appear before the commission yesterday but that it would not have been appropriate with the absence of Rockefeller, who left for Taipei over the weekend to represent President Ford at the Wednesday funeral of Chiang Kai-shek.



Photo by Kathy O'Donovan

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT GOVERNMENT Parliamentarian-elect Ken Eckard (seated), USG Vice President Leo Lachcik (standing left) and Frank Muraca, chairman of Pennsylvania Student Lobby (standing middle) listen as Joe Seuffer, USG President asks students and their parents to write to Pennsylvania legislators to protest the proposed tuition hike.

Fight against tuition hike to begin on Wednesday

By GAIL SNYDER
Collegian Staff Writer

Students complain about higher tuition but now they may be able to do something about it.

Undergraduate Student Government President Joe Seuffer announced last night that START-UP (Students Against Higher Tuition at University Park) will begin Wednesday.

An emergency meeting of all student organizations will take place 7:30 tonight in the HUB Assembly Room, to pick up support for the project.

Frank Muraca, Pennsylvania Student Lobby (PSL) chairman, said a \$150 tuition increase would create financial problems for some students.

He said a PSL study indicated that 30,000 students will not be able to return to school and countless more unable to enroll because of the proposed budget cuts.

PHEEA loans have not increased so more people will be applying to get less dollars, he said.

Muraca said if students unite through writing letters of protest to their legislators they can have a tremendous impact. He said a letter could mean millions of dollars from Harrisburg.

The University of Pittsburgh, which is threatened by a \$250 tuition increase, held a START-UP day that had a tremendous impact on Pittsburgh legislators, according to Muraca.

"We're going to need 30,000 letters

from students and 60,000 letters from parents," Seuffer said.

There will be tables in the HUB, and during dinner at the dining halls Wednesday, Thursday and Friday with sample letters and lists of legislators by districts.

"Even if you only know your town you will be able to write. We must start up now or pay later," Muraca said.

In other action, the Senate re-elected Al Heard pro tempore and appointed six committee chairpersons. They were: Rules: Bernie Campbell, Judiciary: Gary Bizal, Appropriations: Stephen Wickrizer, Government Operations: Judy Johnson, Student Affairs: Ken Dandar and Trustees: Dale Ginsberg.

Defense perimeter pierced Phnom Penh infiltrated

PHNOM PENH (UPI) — Khmer Rouge rebels smashed through Phnom Penh's defenses yesterday and all but sealed the city's fate as the first capital to fall to the Communists in the Indochina war.

Government defenses deteriorated rapidly on Cambodia's Buddhist New Year's Day and Phnom Penh's fall—and with it the fall of Cambodia itself—appeared imminent, perhaps only hours away.

In a broadcast monitored in Saigon, Phnom Penh Radio said last night Communist-led insurgents pierced the city's northern defenses and battled to within "several hundred" yards of the French Embassy in the heart of Phnom Penh.

But early today the radio began broadcasting at its usual time with no indication of a major change in the situation. The radio asked the people to remain calm and assured residents of the refugee-swollen city there would be continued supplies of rice and food. The radio gave no report on overnight military activity.

sent thousands of families fleeing toward what seemed certain to be only temporary safety closer to the center of Phnom Penh, only to be turned back by military police at the city limits.

Recoilless rifle shells fired by rebels less than 500 yards away hit the University of Phnom Penh faculty of letters building at the western edge of the inner capital city, wounding two students.

A dissident Cambodian air force pilot, identified as Lt. Khieu Yossavatt, bombed—but missed—the high command headquarters in downtown Phnom Penh.

Unconfirmed reports said government artillerymen turned their guns toward the city and joined rebel forces in heavy shelling barrages.

The government clamped a 24-hour curfew on Phnom Penh and threatened arrest of civilians and court martial of soldiers if they were caught on the streets.

Radio Phnom Penh appealed for calm and said U.S. aid would arrive soon by parachute, in broadcasts interspersed with music such as "Marching Through Georgia" and "Old Folks at Home."

American supply planes quit landing at the airport with the U.S. pullout of Saturday, but U.S. civilian-flown jets began airdropping food, fuel and ammunition to

Phnom Penh's defenders during the weekend. The worsening situation Monday all but closed the airport even to Cambodian military planes.

Acting president Sak Sutsakhan, pleading for calm, said, "I and military and civilian leaders are actively continuing to work without fear in order to lead our republic toward achieving our final goal."

Only hours earlier, Sak Sutsakhan was appointed to head a last-ditch "High Committee of the Khmer Republic," to lead the nation and to try to negotiate with the insurgents. There was not even a pause in the fighting.

Rebel forces also infiltrated Kauk Khleng village one mile to the north and a string of refugee villages along the northwest perimeter. Fleeing refugees from Kauk Khleng, once a placid rice-growing village, said the insurgents killed 10 villagers and abducted one-third of the population. How many persons lived in Kauk Khleng was not known.

Weather

Clearing and cool today. High 46. Clear and cool tonight. Low 36. Mostly sunny and mild tomorrow. High 57.

S. Viet airbase shelled

SAIGON (UPI)—Communist artillery thundered closer to Saigon than ever before last night, bombarding a former American airbase where earlier in the day saboteurs blew up South Vietnam's biggest ammunition depot.

The attack with 130mm artillery, the biggest and most accurate guns in the North Vietnamese army, came hours after saboteurs crept inside the American-built Bien Hoa airbase 14 miles northeast of Saigon and touched off explosions that shook the capital itself.

Military sources said the 20-round artillery attack caused light damage to one taxiway at the huge airbase, which houses the headquarters for the South Vietnamese military command. It was the first time in the war that the long-range 130mm guns had been employed in the provinces around Saigon.

The Soviet-made field pieces are considered accurate to within five yards at a maximum range of 17 miles and are the most feared weapons in the North Vietnamese arsenal.

There was no immediate word on casualties or overall damage at the Bien Hoa bomb depot, which is the largest air force ammunition dump in South Vietnam.

The massive explosions—four major ones shook Saigon early today—indicated losses were high.

It was the second major ammunition loss for the South Vietnamese army in just over 24 hours.

South Vietnamese forces yesterday took more territory around Xuan Loc, 38 miles northeast of Saigon in the sixth day of a battle which may decide the fate of the capital itself.

Field officers said South Vietnamese forces had enlarged their defense perimeter around Xuan Loc. But North Viet-

namese forces still had the devastated city surrounded and were still hitting the defenders with mortar and artillery fire.

Xuan Loc is important as a key point on one invasion route to the nation's capital and its defense a morale boost to a nation hungry for a victory.

The Viet Cong and the North Vietnamese already control 19 of South Vietnam's 44 provinces and two-thirds of its land area.

The struggle for Xuan Loc is also vital to the defense of Bien Hoa itself. Should Xuan Loc fall, Bien Hoa could be next on the Communist target list in any preparations for an assault on Saigon.

In neighboring Cambodia, Khmer Rouge rebels smashed through Phnom Penh's defenses yesterday and all but sealed the city's fate as the first capital to fall to the Communists in the Indochina war.

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Israeli forces go on alert

By UNITED PRESS INTERNATIONAL
Israel yesterday put its forces on alert against possible Arab guerrilla attacks during the nation's Memorial and Independence Day holidays.

In neighboring Lebanon an uneasy truce enabled warring Palestinian guerrillas and rightwing Lebanese commandos to bury their dead after fighting on Sunday and during the night that claimed between 22 and 45 lives.

Israeli officials unveiled the country's first domestically produced warplane, a supersonic fighter-bomber, as the nation prepared to honor its war dead.

A one-minute wail of sirens country-wide at 8 p.m. signaled the beginning of memorial services for more than

10,000 Israeli war dead since 1948. Flags dipped to half staff, cafes and movie theaters shut down and solemn assemblies and prayers were held throughout the nation.

Celebration of Independence Day begins tonight and continues tomorrow.

In Lebanon's worst civil strife in two years, the government moved in troops and armor to the Beirut suburb of Ein Rummaneh, stronghold of the Phalangist Party, where the fighting began Sunday.

The Phalangists, who have an armed militia of 5,000, are opposed to the Palestinian guerrilla presence in Lebanon.

The Israeli plane, called the

Kfir—"Young Lion"—resembles the French Mirage and is powered by the U.S. General Electric J79 jet engine.

In other Mideast developments:
—In Washington, President Ford met with U.S. ambassadors to Israel, Egypt, Syria and Jordan in the continuing reassessment of American Middle East policy following the collapse of Kissinger's shuttle diplomacy.

—The Israeli Parliament met in special session to discuss Ailon's trip, but the opposition could not get enough votes for a motion to open debate. Opposition leaders argue that the timing of the visit was wrong because of the U.S. policy reassessment.

Senators agree to consider Vietnam aid

WASHINGTON (UPI)—President Ford apparently won agreement from key senators yesterday for speedy consideration of his emergency requests for military aid to South Vietnam and contingency powers to help in any evacuation.

Sen. Clifford Case, ranking Republican on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee which met with Ford for 90 minutes at the White House, told reporters the panel was working to give President Ford "a degree of discretion" in providing limited military aid to Saigon.

Earlier in the afternoon, Senate Democratic leader Mike Mansfield told the Senate Democratic caucus that South Vietnam could not expect anymore U.S. aid if it insisted on continuing the fighting rather than seeking to negotiate with the Communists.

Asked if the committee was ruling out President Ford's request for \$722 million in military assistance, Case said: "I would not rule it out if you don't use that high a figure. I think we would allow a degree of discretion for the President."

"There is not a disposition to be stiff-backed on

the part of the Congress or over-insistence on the part of the President."

Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger and Defense Secretary James R. Schlesinger will testify to congressional committees today, Sen. Frank Church, D-Idaho, said after the meeting. Church said the White House meeting with committee members was "very serious" and that its purpose was "to discuss ways and means to expedite the President's request."

Meanwhile, Mansfield announced after a meeting of Senate Democrats that floor sessions would be cut as short as possible to enable the appropriate committees to hold prompt and comprehensive hearings on Ford's requests.

Mansfield cautioned the caucus that U.S. participation in Indochina hostilities could not be resumed without express congressional consent.

In a particularly blunt statement, Mansfield said, "The sooner everyone in this government, in every branch and service, recognizes their constitutional responsibility, the better for all concerned."

"To find any pretext to the contrary is to raise

once again the specter of Watergate—the specter of gross illegal behavior on the part of officials of the U.S. sworn to uphold the Constitution and the law."

"It would seem to me," Mansfield told the Senate Democratic Caucus, "that a prerequisite of any kind of aid program, if it is to have a constructive impact in this critical situation, would be a good faith effort by the Saigon government to open urgent negotiations seeking to establish a tripartite National Council of National Reconciliation under Article 12 of the Paris peace accords of 1973."

The peace accords, which ended direct U.S. involvement in the Vietnamese War, called on South Vietnam and the Viet Cong to create such a national council to negotiate Vietnam's political future. Early negotiations under that provision failed.

Mansfield did not mention Thieu by name, but he clearly was referring to the South Vietnamese president when he said:

"At this point, there is no room for adamancy on the part of any individual in the Saigon govern-

ment."

Earlier yesterday in Saigon, Thieu had presented his "War Government of Union" and vowed never to surrender.

"It would be well to remember that what is at stake is not the reassertion of Saigon's control over thousands of square miles of territory which its forces have abandoned," Mansfield said.

"What is at stake is the prevention of a final Gotterdammerung at Saigon."

At stake was Ford's request for almost \$1 billion in aid for Vietnam and an administration plan to use American troops to evacuate both Americans and sympathetic Vietnamese from the Saigon area, where the Communists are encroaching.

Mansfield, chairman of the Far East subcommittee and a life-long expert on Asian affairs, said Ford's request for aid "borders on the irrational."

Committee met with Ford, the White House made public a letter which the President had sent congressional leaders over the weekend to advise them that the evacuation of Americans and Cambodians from Phnom Penh was achieved "without incident."

Ford's letter said the Cambodian rescue was ordered and conducted under his constitutional "power and authority as commander-in-chief of U.S. armed forces."

But top administration officials claim the President does have the same authority to order U.S. military forces used if necessary for a massive evacuation of South Vietnamese.

Philip C. Habib, assistant secretary of state for Far Eastern affairs, told Congress meanwhile that a plan would be ready in two days for evacuating what one congressman estimated to be as many as 400,000 persons whose lives would be at stake in South Vietnam.

He told a closed session of a House Immigration subcommittee that part of the planning problem was in arranging for other nations to share in the asylum plan for Vietnam evacuees.