

The Times' opinion and comment:

Bigger federal tree harvest

JOHN T. DUNLOP, director of the Cost of Living Council, was right on target yesterday when he told a Senate subcommittee that the lumber-supply pinch "can be eliminated only by increasing supplies from the national forests."

In a welcome announcement, Dunlop said the government will authorize more tree-cutting on federal land this year. Agriculture Secretary Butz will head an interagency committee to guarantee production of 11.8 billion board feet of logs from national forests, compared with 10 billion board feet last year.

In another welcome move, Dunlop pledged to work with the Transportation Department to eliminate railroad bottlenecks that contribute to the shortage of lumber and grain, another commodity in which demand is out-running supply.

ANOTHER step involves hearings, to open April 4, "to determine what wage- and price-control actions might effectively contribute to restraining lumber prices."

Certainly controls must be considered, but it should be kept in mind that the partial price controls in effect during the Phase II control period only added to the chaos in wood-pro-

ducts markets. Dealing with the lumber-industry price structure has been as difficult and complex a problem as food prices for the administration.

Another complex part of the lumber-pinch problem involves log exports to Japan. Dunlop said government negotiators are trying to persuade Japan to reduce its purchases of United States logs.

That voluntary approach would appear to be preferable to a total ban on log exports as called for in a bill sponsored by Senator Packwood of Oregon.

Packwood's measure represents—as Merle D. Aldum, chairman of the Mayor's Maritime Advisory Committee, aptly put it—a "meat-ax approach."

Certainly log-export questions need prompt and extensive exploration, keeping in mind though that it is easy for an Oregon senator to urge a total ban on log exports, 80 per cent of which pass through Washington ports and support some 8,000 Washington jobs directly and another 8,000 indirectly.

At any rate, the time is overdue for the federal government to take a less-passive approach to the timber pinch, putting primary emphasis on stepping up the harvest of renewable forest resources on federal lands.

Senate should nix port-change bill

A DOZEN years ago, King County voters radically changed the structure of the Port of Seattle Commission. A change made sense at the time because the port was in sorry shape, losing business to more aggressive and better managed ports up and down the Pacific Coast.

But the proposed change in the commission's structure, voted last week by the State House of Representatives, makes no sense whatsoever.

Seattle is blessed at present with one of the most successful and well-run ports in the West. And—contrary to the demagogic assertions of Representative King Lysen, a sponsor of the ill-conceived port-commission-overhaul measure—the existing Port Commission is responsive to the wishes of its constituents.

Virtually all large airports have problems with nearby prop-

erty-owners because of jet-aircraft noise. The port-operated Seattle-Tacoma International Airport is no exception. But the Port Commission is doing more than most airport authorities to try to solve the problem—including participation in a \$642,000 noise-alleviation program.

The port is spending more than \$1 million to make its grain elevator the most dust-free such installation in the world.

Beyond these and other examples of responsiveness to citizens complaints, the present commission—elected at large by the voters of King County—has made the port a well-diversified mainstay of the Puget Sound economy.

Why change a successful system? The obvious answer to that question should give the State Senate reason enough to reject Lysen's bill.



Rowland Evans and Robert Novak:

Trying to read Hanoi's mind

WASHINGTON—Quite apart from its widely publicized infiltration of men and arms into the south, the North Vietnamese army has quietly acted—in the 60 days since the "cease-fire" began—in a way that logically suggests only one conclusion: A major Communist offensive in South Vietnam, sooner or later.

In fact, Hanoi's Politburo probably has no set plans for escaping the present low point in the long Communist struggle for Indochina. Nevertheless, considering the events of the past two months, the tentative conviction of United States policymakers that Hanoi plans no offensive in the foreseeable future must be largely attributed to wishful thinking.

ALTHOUGH HANOI AS usual is pushing the limit to see what resistance is met, it is the obvious, long-term preparation for offensive action that is disturbing. With an audacity that has surprised even jaundiced Hanoi-watchers, the Communists have already taken these hard steps:

- Relieved of United States air raids, the Communists have made impressive progress on a new network of military roads running into South Vietnam. One of these, west of the demilitarized zone, runs into the Ashau valley, establishing a new supply route from North Vietnam to supplement the Ho Chi Minh Trail through Laos.
- Simultaneously, the last two months have brought near-completion of a petroleum-oil lubricants pipeline into the battle zone. This could have real value.
- Fearsome 130-millimeter artillery pieces, whose deadly accuracy at 27-mile range beats anything in the United States—South Vietnamese arsenal, have been introduced into the heart of South Vietnam since the "cease-fire" began. These are useless in guerrilla operations and can be utilized only in a major offensive.
- Some Communist military operations in the past two months seem directed less at gaining territory or punishing South Vietnamese troops than in tactical preparation for a major offensive by eliminating government outposts in the line of possible attack. In addition, the North Vietnamese

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have disrupted Saigon's logistical system in the north; Communist troops recently grabbed 20 kilometers of Route 1 along the coast, reluctantly giving it back after days of hard fighting.

THESE STEPS, MAKING but a partial list of the most visible activity, do not guarantee a major offensive. But they go well beyond the limited motives generally ascribed to the Communists by United States policymakers in explaining the recent infiltration.

The theory of "limited motives" derives from problems faced by Hanoi when the peace agreement was signed. With its regular troops chewed up from the unsuccessful 1972 offensive and its political cadres dispirited by the peace agreement, Hanoi could solve two problems by heavy infiltration—bringing its military forces back up to par and showing the local political cadres it still cares. Besides, it is holy writ in Hanoi to try always to get away with as much as possible.

But none of this solves Hanoi's longer-range problems. With Saigon government control over the populated countryside firmer than ever before, the Communists do not have a prayer in free elections and scarcely more hope in renewing guerrilla warfare.

THE HANOI POLITBURO'S patience is proverbial, but its leaders are now in their 60's. Will they wait patiently for a crack in President Thieu's regime that now seems so stable? For this reason, some experts have always believed Hanoi was thinking ahead to a massive offensive at the moment it was making all those concessions in Paris. Nothing in the past 60 days has changed this view.

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Jack Smith:

Triumph (sort of) over machine

LOS ANGELES — (Los Angeles Times Service) — There is no use cursing machines. We are all dependent on them. They have brought ease and adventure into our lives. They have taken us to the moon. If in time they destroy us, it will be our fault, not theirs.

They can be exasperating, though, as everyone knows; and too often, when they break down or refuse to perform their tasks, they are disowned by their creators, guaranteed or not. Finally, they are hard to dispose of. A machine, as the ecologists say, is non-biodegradable.

We have all had classic struggles with machines that have quit on us or decided to rebel. Our victories have been few. In the end the machine wins, by sheer inertia; but unlike a sick horse, it may not be shot.

I WOULD have said there is no hope for us, but now a light has been turned on at the end of this tunnel by a reader, Marvin D. Mossmond, of Santa Monica, who has achieved an exciting victory over a garbage-disposal unit.

Up to a point, Mossmond's story is familiar enough. His disposer broke down, and to save the cost of a house call, he disconnected it himself, took it out from under the kitchen sink and drove it to the appliance-repair center at one of our big merchandising chains.

"It was an older model, to be sure," he said, "at least 10 years old. But it seemed to be in fine condi-

tion. The motor buzzed, but the grinding wheel wouldn't turn. No amount of effort with broom handles or wrenches could dislodge it."

Before taking his disposer in, though, Mossmond thoroughly cleaned and polished it, the way a mother cleans and dresses a child to take him to the doctor.

At the appliance-repair center the diagnosis took two days. Then Mossmond was told that the disposer couldn't be repaired because parts for that model were "no longer available."

In vain he argued the lack of logic in the situation. There were plenty of parts for the newer models, which shouldn't need them, but none for the older model, which was just about due.

HE TOOK his unit home. Nothing would be lost, he thought, if he tried to repair it himself. When he tried to take the machine apart,

however, he found that the screws he was able to take out had nothing to do with holding the machine together.

"In vain I tried to loosen the grinding rotor by hammering upon it, and here I found the unexpected dividend," he said. "For I discovered that the more I hammered, the better I felt. Abandoning my plan to fix the thing, I just hammered away."

"I felt great. Taking a large screwdriver, I used it as a chisel and hammered upon what seemed to me to be a particularly vulnerable spot. With great satisfaction I felt metal giving way. When I held the unit up to the light I could see that I had penetrated from the upper housing into the motor itself. Now, indeed, the unit was unrepairable. I felt immeasurably better."

MOSSMOND'S triumph, of course, was not without its price.

"I am not by nature a destructive man," he said, "and the realization that I felt good about destroying an American appliance holds some misgivings for me. But this is overshadowed by the realization that I have found an excellent use for things that have worn out and for which 'parts are not available.'"

To me, the Mossmond method sounds a great deal more therapeutic than group encounter, psychoanalysis or the primal scream. I'm thinking of using it on my electric rocking chair, which hasn't vibrated since the Super Bowl of '72.

Nick Thimmesch:

A bad week for the President

WASHINGTON—Last week was a very bad one for the President. He might have more. The Watergate case, I. T. T. and former Attorney General John N. Mitchell, L. Patrick Gray's downfall, soaring food prices, disgruntlement in Congress (especially with his own Republicans) wound the spirit and halt the cause.

But Mr. Nixon asked for it. He and Henry A. Kissinger spent much time finagling us out of Vietnam and building new relations with the Communist world. They used secrecy, stealth and shrewdness to accomplish those worthy goals.

Along the way, however, the President seems to have forgotten that domestic problems and Congress are not dealt with in the same way. White House secrecy and power work better in foreign affairs than domestic. Though the President has spent long hours with George P. Shultz and John Ehrlichman, his two top domestic advisers, it will take plenty of unraveling before Mr. Nixon gets his domestic house in order.

FOR OPENERS, THERE'S Watergate. We have James McCord, former Central Intelligence Agency man and White House consultant, and later convicted in the Watergate case, writing the judge that he and other defendants were under political pressure to plead guilty and remain silent. Moreover, McCord says perjury was committed in the trial.

Meanwhile, on the Hill, senators, Democratic and Republican, want the White House to tell all on the Watergate case, something that won't happen unless John W. Dean, 3rd, the President's counsel, testifies, as he should.

The most forlorn figure in Washington today is L. Patrick Gray, 3rd, abandoned by Mr. Nixon though still the administration's nominee as F. B. I. director. Gray is caught between the President's insistence that Dean not testify before a Senate committee and the Senate's anger over Dean's role in the Watergate case. Gray pulled the

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coffin lid over himself last week by telling the truth—namely, that Dean probably lied to his F. B. I. agents but, even so, he continued sending Dean confidential reports on the Watergate case.

ANY REPUBLICAN SENATOR or congressman worth his salt is disgusted with the situation wherein Dean was investigator for the President and also the man in position to hurt people who gave confidential information. Mr. Nixon should talk to some of his Republicans on this one. The President's invocation of "executive privilege" is thin excuse.

We also have the revelation that I. T. T. documents show that John N. Mitchell helped I. T. T. settle its anti-trust suit with the same Justice Department Mitchell was then heading.

Last week, also, Senator Peter Dominick, a conservative Republican from Colorado, introduced the Better Schools Act for the administration "out of courtesy to the White House," but is fuming over the way he and his staff were treated on the bill.

MR. NIXON'S BEST friends on the Hill say he is blundering in his relations with Congress, he is blowing the advantage he gained in his November landslide, and the new direction in which Republican programs could steer the country is not assured at all.

In defense, White House officials say the President devotes hours to study of domestic matters, has done his best on the Watergate case and had eight "wild card" senators and congressmen sit in on his last two congressional-leadership meetings at the White House.

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William F. Buckley, Jr.:

Allende more than an 'internal' matter

NEW YORK—it is by no means obvious why everyone persists in referring to the election of Salvador Allende as a purely "internal" matter. It was never any such thing, and if only Harold Geneen, president of International Telephone & Telegraph, recognized the character of the Allende victory, why then Harold Geneen is a lot smarter than most of the senators who are interrogating officials from I. T. T. and drinking deep draughts of sanctimony over I. T. T.'s offer to contribute one million dollars toward any government-sponsored plan to prevent the installation of Allende as President of Chile.

We are talking about September of 1970. On September 4 Allende won a plurality, which did not automatically entitle him to be named President of Chile. That decision was for the Parliament to make at a scheduled session on October 24. The question is whether I. T. T. had a legitimate interest in adding its pressure to that of others to persuade the Parliament to name someone other than Allende or, better still, to call for a new election between Allende and Frei, which election, by the way, Frei would easily have won.

'If only American business had one tenth the toughness and sense of solidarity its critics impute to it.'

How can the Chilean outcome be said to have been purely an internal matter? The officers of I. T. T., having carefully observed the campaign of Allende and the promises he made, concluded that he would certainly proceed to nationalize the Chilean Telephone Company. By everyone's reckoning the value of I. T. T.'s holdings was \$153 million.

THE I. T. T. PEOPLE were smart enough to foresee that when Allende got around to nationalizing the telephone company he would offer for it a small fraction of its acknowledged value. That he would, in effect, confiscate the property. In due course, Allende offered \$24 million for the \$153-million dollar asset, proving the I. T. T. officials to have been altogether accurate in their forebodings.

We return to the question: In what sense is it an "internal" matter if A decides to steal the property of B? The fact that A is a country and B is merely a corporation says only that B is going to suffer considerable disadvantages in attempting to cope with A. It hardly says that B ought not to attempt to cope with A. I. T. T. did not, as it happens, mount its own operation in Chile, attempting to persuade the Parliament not to vote for Allende. It merely offered to contribute to any United States enterprise aimed at the same purpose.

TO SUGGEST THAT FOREIGN governments are not involved or should not be involved in wrestling for the favor of the majority in swing countries which are points of contact in the cold war is simply to beg the question: How is it that the Soviet Union and Castro Cuba were so interested in the election of Allende as to spend millions of dollars and commit entire communications industries to the end of electing him?

Is it the new doctrine of the senators who are grilling I. T. T. that the government of the United States has suddenly lost interest in the extent to which foreign powers attempt to manipulate South American governments?

What Allende finally did to I. T. T. was, very simply, to take over the operation of the telephone company without any compensation whatsoever. Those who are anxious to make any point at the expense of American business who say that I. T. T. got what was coming to it in the light of its proffered intervention make a rather clumsy mistake. It was not until the spring of 1972 that the secret memoranda revealing I. T. T.'s offer of a million dollars to stop Allende were published. But it was in September, 1971, that Allende simply took over the Chilean Telephone Company, more or less without comment: a clean theft of \$153 million. I do not believe that anyone who is a shareholder of I. T. T. believes that that act by Allende is a purely internal affair. There is no internal right of any country to steal the goods of other people.

I WISH THAT THE SPIRIT of I. T. T. were more pervasive. If only American business had one tenth of the toughness and sense of solidarity its critics impute to it. It is as simple as this: Every company of integrity in the world should have announced calmly that it would suspend its dealings with Chile if Chile failed to compensate any company whose assets were taken without compensation.

I'd have liked it better if I. T. T. had mailed its memo to Jack Anderson, instead of waiting for Anderson to steal it.

Carl T. Rowan:

Minnesota example to other states

ST. PAUL, Minn.—A real revenue-sharing plan would not be the failure the Nixon scheme is if more states and local officials showed the courage and farsightedness being manifested here in Minnesota.

A lot of mayors and some governors are now screaming that Mr. Nixon has misled them on revenue-sharing. They say he gives a dollar with one hand and takes two with the other by hatching social programs previously financed by Washington.

Many of these local officials deserve just what they are getting, because they always viewed revenue-sharing as a way to get money without facing the political risks of raising local taxes or revising their spending priorities.

A LOT OF POOR PEOPLE and minorities are screaming about revenue-sharing because they fear that states and cities cannot, or will not, grapple with the immense social problems the way the federal government could.

Their fears are well justified. Most states and cities hardly lifted a finger to deal with the problems of hunger in general, or school lunches in particular, until the national government burrowed in. What state or city ever made a real go at compensatory education for the culturally and educationally deprived, or a "head start" program for 4-year-olds?

The challenge these past several years has not been whether local government would show initiative in the social fields; the question was whether they could be forced to spend federal allocations on the poor for whom they were intended instead of diverting money to luxuries and frills for the already affluent.

Yet, if more state officials had the good sense and the courage of Minnesota's young Gov. Wendell R. Anderson, revenue-sharing would not be such a sham and America's needy would have less reason to be suspicious.

ANDERSON HAS BEEN BOLD enough to raise taxes, something that was political suicide for his predecessors. He has shown a genuine concern for the education of the poor and the handicapped—and has made Minnesota the foremost example of progress toward a public-education financing system that is fair to rich and poor alike.

What he did was badder a Republican-controlled legislature into raising the liquor tax 25 per cent, the tax on a pack of cigarettes by a nickel, the sales tax by a penny (a 3 1/2 per cent boost). He increased the income tax and wiped out the deductibility of federal taxes paid by corporations.

By raising those taxes, the legislature could reduce real-estate taxes by an average of 11.5 per cent and still come up with \$600 million in new money. This money enabled the state to increase its support for the maintenance costs of education from 43 per cent in 1971 to 70 per cent today.

Minnesota officials say they are handicapped because they have no idea what the federal revenue-sharing package for education will do for or to the state. But this is one place where officials are moving on their own to at least try to do what is good for the state.