

Newsweek



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**NIXON
IN
TROUBLE**

Top of the Week

Mr. Nixon in Trouble PAGE 30

"The next President," Richard Nixon said during one of his more thoughtful campaign speeches, "must take an activist view of his office." By that standard, Mr. Nixon's conduct of the Presidency leaves a good deal to be desired, in the view of a rising chorus of critics. Beset by troubles on all sides—over his conduct of the war in Vietnam, his nomination of Judge Clement Haynsworth to the Supreme Court, his civil-rights posture—the President's ability to lead the nation has come increasingly into question—by Republicans as well as Democrats. From Washington, Newsweek White House correspondent **Henry Hubbard** provides an overview of the President's lack of "the cement of moral imperatives," while correspondents **John Lindsay** and **Robert Shogan** report on the Haynsworth affair and the simmering dispute within the Justice Department over the Administration's school-desegregation policies. From their files, Senior Editor **Dwight Martin** wrote this week's cover story on the growing crisis of confidence in Washington. Martin brings solid credentials and long experience to the assignment. Born and bred in Washington, he has served as a foreign correspondent in Asia, Europe and Latin America. As a New York-based writer and editor since 1962, he has contributed cover stories and major pieces on all phases of American domestic politics and on such of its leading practitioners as Dwight D. Eisenhower, Barry Goldwater, Lyndon Johnson, Richard Nixon and the Kennedys. (Newsweek cover photo by Wally McNamee.)



Dwight Martin



Everett Martin, Sydney Liu and Paul Brinkley-Rogers

China: A Troubled Anniversary PAGE 48

In the vast expanse of Peking's Tien An Men Square last week, Communist China celebrated its twentieth anniversary. The occasion brought Mao Tse-tung into public view for the first time in months, but otherwise the ceremony was a strangely perfunctory affair, reflecting China's mountainous domestic and diplomatic problems. In three stories written from files by Hong Kong bureau chief **Everett Martin**, correspondents **Sydney Liu**, **Paul Brinkley-Rogers** and **Mary Conway**, and Assistant Editor **Fay Willey**, Associate Editor **Russell Watson** describes life in Communist China today and the difficulties that have sprung from Mao's "permanent revolution." In another article, General Editor **Angus Deming** discusses the Nationalist Chinese regime on Taiwan, where amid burgeoning prosperity Mao's old rival, Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek, has at last toned down his emphasis on reconquering the mainland.

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Faultless?

Shortly after noon, local time, last Thursday, as seven instrumented aircraft circled overhead and five ships stood offshore to make scientific measurements, a large patch of ground on Amchitka Island in the Aleutians suddenly bulged upward. Seconds later, technicians at a control center 30 miles away at the north end of the island felt the floor beneath them rolling. But that, it would seem, was the only ripple caused by the U.S. Milrow underground nuclear explosion.

The 1.2-megaton bomb, detonated in a small tunnel at the base of a filled-in, 4,000-foot-deep shaft, was designed as a calibration test: a check on how much stress the island could take. Rocky Amchitka, the AEC reported after the blast,

the blow of the test, the AEC invited some 75 newsmen, conservationists and legislators to Amchitka before the blast. NEWSWEEK San Francisco correspondent William J. Cook made the tour:

On the southeastern end of Amchitka, on the spongy, pale green tundra amid shallow, glittering lakes, a crane covered the 4,000-foot-deep shaft where the Project Milrow "device"—as AEC officials prefer to label a nuclear bomb—was planted. Five miles away a second shaft had been sunk to 6,000 feet; there, probably next year, the first weapon—likely a prototype ABM warhead—will be exploded. And 5 miles beyond it, a huge, 142-foot-tall drilling rig was grinding a 10-foot-wide hole 6,000 feet deep—the biggest hole ever drilled—at the agonizingly slow rate of 6 inches an hour.

Upon landing, the group was briefed by AEC officials in one of the temporary camp buildings that serve as a headquarters for the project. Milrow test di-

crowded, AEC public-relations officers told the briefing session, and they discouraged questions, although the group asked them anyway. The visitors wanted to know if the Milrow blast could set off earthquakes in the fault known to run along the Aleutian chain. Or send a huge tsunami, or seismic sea wave, rippling out to the far-distant shores of Alaska, Hawaii, Japan or North America. And what about the wildlife for which Amchitka, bleak as it is, is home?

Answers: The AEC was prepared for these questions. On Sept. 11, they noted, a natural tremor of 6.6 force occurred near Amchitka but was unfelt by mainland Alaskans. And in 1965, another natural quake—recorded at nearly 8.0—did send out a small tsunami whose damage was limited to those remote islands. The AEC was confident that since natural shocks larger than Milrow's force don't trigger earthquakes or big tsunamis elsewhere, Milrow would not either. Nor, they said, would shocks be felt at Anchorage, 1,400 miles northeast, or on the Soviet mainland, 700 miles northwest. However, a Presidential scientific panel warned last year that large underground blasts possibly could trigger damaging earthquakes and tsunamis, and partly as a result the AEC recently ordered additional seismic measurements around Amchitka to pinpoint the major fault that runs somewhere near—no one knew just how near—the island. Dr. Melvin Merritt, charged with evaluating the Milrow effects, admitted that "our own concern has grown" about earthquakes.

The AEC was equally confident that Milrow would do no harm to the sea otters or the bald eagles on Amchitka. To study the water-pressure effects of nuclear underground detonations on the otters, the AEC trapped seven of the sleek, quick little animals and placed them in a pen, in the waters offshore, as close to ground zero as possible. The AEC, which had already tested a few otters in a sealed tank of water with shock waves created by cannon shells, admitted that some of the animals might be killed—pregnant females and pups are more susceptible, the AEC said—but insisted that the number would be quite small. Apparently, the AEC's diligent research showed that an otter can take 300 pounds of overpressure.

Despite the slick public relations campaign being mounted by the AEC, and the six-hour tour of Amchitka, many of those who went to the island remained unconvinced that the bigger blasts planned for the island next year will not trip earthquakes or send sea waves rolling off to Hawaii, Japan or the West Coast of North America. "It was apparent they [the AEC] wanted to hush up any give-and-take," said Ginny Wood, of the Alaska Conservation Society, "and send us out into the boondocks to mill around." And the frustration felt by many was best expressed by Eugene V. Miller, an Alaska legislator: "I felt about as helpless as a man with a sick goldfish."



Newsweek—Bill Cook



Newsweek—Th Ohlsson

Amchitka blast: The newest frontier for the AEC's underground nuclear explosions

apparently survived intact. Seismometers recorded a shock of 6.5 on the Richter scale of earthquake intensity, just as the agency had predicted. But the explosion did not induce an earthquake in the Aleutian fault area, nor did it set off damaging sea waves, as opponents of the test had feared. Radioactivity did not escape into the atmosphere, and a pack of sea otters caged in the chilly waters less than one mile from ground zero showed no signs of injury, according to the AEC.

This was enough to convince the AEC that it can go ahead with plans to fire off at least two more, larger nuclear warheads at Amchitka in the next few years. The warheads are being developed for the Safeguard anti-ballistic-missile system.

Risk: But not everyone was as gratified with the success as the AEC, nor as eager to press ahead with more underground explosions on the island. "They manage to give the impression that you can do all these things without any risk," said one State Department official, "and this doesn't help the effort to stop all nuclear testing." In addition to those opposed to underground testing for political reasons, conservationists and ecologists had protested Milrow because of possible surface contamination and damage to wildlife. In an attempt to soften

rector Dr. William E. Ogle of the Los Alamos (N.M.) Scientific Laboratory explained that the Nevada Test Site, where the AEC has set off more than 180 underground explosions since the 1963 treaty banning atmospheric tests of nuclear weapons, could only take blasts of up to 1 megaton in force. "When we go much higher than that," he said, "we begin to get into trouble with high-rise buildings in Las Vegas." Just how much higher the Amchitka explosions will eventually go is classified information, but some scientists have speculated that the Safeguard warheads will be between 2 and 5 megatons. Amchitka was chosen from a list of possible sites that included Christmas Island and western Australia. "In both these cases," he said, "we felt that going to a foreign country was a last resort." On Amchitka, he added, "we did not see how we could hurt anyone."

Flag: After Ogle finished, the AEC ran a film that was as subtle as a used-car ad. As a chorus sang "America," the film showed the U.S. flag waving and then faded into a scene of small children pledging allegiance to the flag. Then, a narrator intoned: "... only continuous research efforts to advance our nuclear technology can counter similar advancement efforts by other countries."

The Amchitka tour schedule was