

Yuri Gagarin Killed in Crash

MOSCOW (AP)—Soviet cosmonaut Yuri A. Gagarin, the first man to orbit the earth, was killed Wednesday in an "aviation catastrophe."

The crash also killed Col. Vladimir Seryogin, commander of an air unit and a member of the space backup team.

Both men will be buried in the Kremlin Wall facing Red Square, the most honored burial place in the Soviet Union.

Announcements of the deaths made Thursday by Moscow radio and Tass News Agency gave no details.

Gagarin's death was the second tragedy known to have hit the Soviet space program within a year. Col. Vladimir M. Komarov was killed April 24, 1967, when his Soyuz spacecraft crashed to earth.

Seryogin was one of the many anonymous experts of the Soviet space program. The an-

(Continued on Back Page, Col. 3)

STAR RIPES

AN AUTHORIZED PUBLICATION OF THE U.S. ARMED FORCES IN THE FAR EAST

10¢

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We Have the Initiative In Viet, Abrams Says

SAIGON (AP)—Army Gen. Creighton W. Abrams returned to Saigon Friday from a hurried trip to Washington, where he conferred with President Johnson.

"I don't believe we have lost the military initiative," he told the press in Washington before his departure. He said, however, that the enemy "has the capability to conduct offensive operations whenever he feels the time is right."

Abrams, top deputy to Gen. William C. Westmoreland and reted the most likely to replace him as war commander in July, spoke briefly with newsmen in Washington as he completed a two-day secret-cloaked round of talks with President Johnson and other top leaders.

Asked whether Johnson indicated he would succeed Westmoreland, the 53-year-old Abrams replied tersely:

"The White House speaks for itself."

Earlier the White House press secretary had said there had been no discussion about Abrams' future during several talks the four-star general had with Johnson, the National Security Council and senior military and civilian leaders.

In the planeside interview, Abrams said that although the Communists have the ability to launch new offensives, "I don't know about" the magnitude of such ability.

Military and civilian officials have been forecasting that the enemy will attempt another thrust like the Tet offensive which rocked American and Vietnamese forces and dealt what some leaders have acknowledged were serious psy-

(Continued on Back Page, Col. 5)

F111A Lost On Mission In S.E. Asia

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Defense Department announced Thursday one of the Air Force's new F111A fighter-bombers was missing on a mission in Southeast Asia.

The Pentagon said the military command in Vietnam had reported the F111A—developed from the old controversial TFX warplane—was overdue on a flight.

"For security reasons, no other details will be made available at this time," it was stated.

The loss of an F111 could mean more than the destruction of highly expensive equipment. The enemy could gain considerable knowledge of the latest U.S. aircraft capabilities if portions of the plane were retrieved.

The F111s carry sophisticated radar equipment which allows them to fly automatically toward a selected target at night and during bad weather.

A squadron of the 1560-mile-an-hour F111s arrived in Thailand March 17.

The supersonic, swing-wing (Continued on Back Page, Col. 1)

You're Getting Warm!

PORT HURON, Mich. (AP)—Elmer Zimmer of Port Huron reported his snowplow stolen several days ago, but now he says it has been located. Zimmer found it buried under a snow drift in his yard.



COL. VLADIMIR S. SERIOGIN (LEFT) AND COSMONAUT YURI A. GAGARIN. (AP RADIOPHOTOS)

U.S. Sends Sympathy

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Johnson and the U.S. space team extended deep sympathy Thursday to the family of Soviet cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin who, Johnson said, "set a brilliant example for the spacemen of our two countries."

Johnson, in a statement described as similar to a formal message he sent to the Soviet government, said:

"Yuri Gagarin's courageous (Continued on Back Page, Col. 2)

Planes Collide in St. Louis; 2 Die, 49 Aboard Jet Unhurt

ST. LOUIS, Mo. (UPI)—An Ozark Air Lines DC9 jet collided almost head-on with a light plane while making a landing approach Wednesday night at Lambert-St. Louis Airport. Two persons aboard the light plane were killed.

The twin-jet airliner with 45 passengers and crew of four landed safely despite damage

to a wing, fuel tank and one engine.

The airliner was Ozark's flight 965 from Chicago to St. Louis.

The single-engine light plane crashed at the end of a road north of the airport in suburban Hazelwood. Bodies of John Brooks, 34, Hazelwood, and Bob Allen, Piedmont, Mo., were found nearby.

The small Cessna "disintegrated in the air" after the impact. "It just busted all apart," a policeman said.

An Ozark spokesman said the Cessna struck the DC9 under the right wing of the larger craft, which was on a final landing approach. Police said the impact ripped a hole in the (Continued on Back Page, Col. 1)

B52s Hit Depots Near Hue to Stop N. Viet Buildup

SAIGON (AP) — America's biggest bombers, the Air Force B52s, turned their attention Thursday from Khe Sanh to a

North Vietnamese buildup area in the A Shau Valley 50 miles to the south. The area poses a new enemy threat to the old imperial capital of Hue.

While waves of the eight-engined Stratofortresses worked over the western approaches to Hue, a South Vietnamese Army-Navy task force and U.S. helicopter gunships raked enemy forces menacing national Highway 1 to the east. Military spokesmen said 117 enemy were killed, 60 by rocket and machine-gun firing helicopters, while allied casualties were only five wounded. The wounded were South Vietnamese troops.

Thirty-five B52s rained nearly 1,000 tons of explosives along the A Shau Valley in five separate missions. It was the biggest single raid of the war on the North Vietnamese supply depots and command posts in the valley.

The saturation bombers, flying high and unseen from the ground, mounted three raids Wednesday afternoon on truck parks, gun positions, bunkers and storage depots in the valley. They returned Thursday morning for two more missions.

During the same period, the B52s flew only two missions against North Vietnamese ammunition depots and troop concentrations around Khe Sanh. For the third consecutive day, Marines at Khe Sanh reported relatively light shelling.

The B52s have been averaging about five missions a day in support of Khe Sanh.

Russian Zin 150 and 151 trucks have been spotted regularly in recent weeks working westward from the A Shau Valley toward Hue with ammunition and other war materials.

Lt. Gen. Robert E. Cushman, commander of the northern I Corps, said North Vietnamese engineers have rebuilt much of old provincial Route 547 running 40 miles over mountains from the A Shau Valley to Hue. He said this was done while Allied forces were tied down fighting inside Hue.

The A Shau Valley has served as a massive North Vietnamese supply depot on the Ho Chi Minh network of trails from Laos ever since North Vietnamese troops overran the U.S. Special Forces camp there two years ago.

Elsewhere, the U.S. Command announced that the Viet Cong have lost nearly 2,000 men dead in the biggest Allied offensive of the war around Saigon.

U.S. Toll For Week Under 350

SAIGON (UPI)—Allied forces last week reportedly killed 2,223 Communists, their lowest enemy kill total since before the Tet offensive, U.S. spokesmen said Thursday.

For the second straight week since the offensive began, American combat deaths remained below the 350 mark, further substantiating reports of a general lull in the Vietnam war.

The U.S. Military Command said 349 Americans died on the field of battle during the week ending last Saturday, an increase of 13 over the previous week.

A total of 1,965 Americans were wounded during the week ending Saturday, an even 1,000 of whom were seriously hurt enough to require hospitalization, the weekly casualty report said.

Though Communist deaths dropped to 2,223, the lowest total since the week ending Jan. 20 when 1,842 were reported killed by the allies, American casualties were up slightly, particularly in the wounded column.

Prince Claims Reds Smashed

PHNOM PENH (UPI)—Chief of State Prince Norodom Sihanouk said Thursday he had crushed a Peking-backed Communist rebellion in several Cambodian provinces.

Sihanouk announced at the same time that Communist Chinese Foreign Minister Chen Yi had invited him to pay an official visit to Peking with Son Sann, the vice president of Cambodia.

Sihanouk did not say whether he had accepted the invitation.

He said Yi had assured him Communist China "recognized the legal Cambodian government headed by Prince Sihanouk and would not interfere in Cambodian domestic affairs."

U.S. Lieutenant Rescues 7 Viet Troops

SAIGON (UPI) — A young American Lieutenant from Ohio was dropped by night into "VC Island", a small outpost in the swamplands outside Saigon, and rescued seven badly wounded South Vietnamese soldiers, military spokesmen said Thursday.

Lt. Robert D. Cozart, 24, of Euclid, Ohio, was the only American on duty at Thu Duc subsector headquarters Tuesday night when the call for

help came from Ap Dong Lai, a small triangular fortress manned by South Vietnamese Irregular Defense Forces.

"The first call came about 8 o'clock that night," Cozart said.

A Vietnamese patrol group hit a mine and the group that went out to reinforce them was hit with mortars, small arms, and rocket-propelled grenades.

"We called for gunship support and the ships came with the stipulation that an American go with them."

"I went but no contact was made."



Safe Way at Khe Sanh

Marines watch supplies floating down into the transport. Most supplies are parachuted into Khe Sanh base drop zone from an Air Force C130 Sanh. (AP Radiophoto)

'U.S. Must Decide'

3 Choices in Viet, Shoup Says

PUTNEY, Vt. (UPI) — Gen. David M. Shoup, former Marine Corps commandant, said Wednesday night the United States has a choice of continuing a war of attrition in Vietnam, changing the policy to one of destroying the enemy, or following a policy that provides for talks.

Shoup told a Windham College audience of 500 that the war of attrition is not worth the cost of money, men and

materials.

He said a decision to destroy the enemy would increase the chances that Communist China would enter the conflict.

"The number of boys coming to draft age every day in China is greater than the number of bullets we can manufacture," the general said.

Shoup said he submitted an alternative plan last spring to former Defense Secretary Robert S. McNamara that would

provide that President Johnson and President Nguyen Van Thieu of South Vietnam send a joint message to North Vietnamese President Ho Chi Minh, setting a time and place for negotiations to begin.

He said such negotiations would include the Viet Cong.

"When the gavel strikes we will cease all offensive operations, and as long as negotiations are in progress we will refrain from any and all offensive operations," the general said.

"Naturally," he said, "we reserve the right to defend ourselves and to engage in reconnaissance in the air and on the ground. When the negotiations begin to demonstrate promises of useful results, we will begin withdrawing combat units from South Vietnam."

N. Viet Soldier Slain By 'Neglected' Chinese

HONG KONG (AP)—A North Vietnamese soldier recovering from war wounds in a mainland Chinese hospital was thrown to his death last week in Kwangsi Province where hostility to the Vietnamese is growing rapidly, arrivals from China said Thursday.

The story of the soldier being thrown to his death from a hospital window followed reports that the people of Kwangsi and Yunnan Provinces, which border on North Vietnam, are bitter because North Vietnamese in China are being treated better than Chinese inhabitants. Travelers earlier this week

said rioting and demonstrations have erupted in the two provinces this month over food being sent to North Vietnam.

Chinese premier Chou En-lai was said to have failed in a recent visit to the area to soothe the people and travelers said "thousands" of Chinese army troops were sent to Kwangsi and Yunnan this month to keep the peace.

"The people resent being neglected while care is taken of the Vietnamese soldiers," said an arrival Thursday.

"Recuperating troops are being given the best food, clothing and treatment."

Freed POW Denied Tour

WASHINGTON (AP) — Army Sgt. Edward R. Johnson, who spent 3½ years as a Viet Cong prisoner, won't be going back to Vietnam as he has requested, the Army said Wednesday.

A spokesman said no former prisoner of the Vietnam war has been returned to Southeast Asia. He declined, however, to say that it was a flat policy of the Army not to return former POW's to battle.

Johnson was freed last year along with two other American servicemen and has spent the past two months recovering from malnutrition and other effects of his imprisonment.

He returns to active duty April 11. In his first interview since his release he told The Associated Press Tuesday he had asked to go back to Vietnam.

Thais Lose Vacation

BANGKOK (AP) — The Thai government has canceled the traditional two-week hot season vacation for civil servants because of the Communist threat to northeast Thailand.

A Rainy Morning Walk in the Viet Jungle

By SPEC. 4 RON MURPHY

CHU LAI, Vietnam (IO)—In the chill that swept the mountains just before dawn, Sgt. Michael J. Hedderich moved from position to position making sure that the men in his squad were ready.

The company had to move out even before the sun began to light the grey clouds that for the past three days had concealed their mountaintop perimeter.

The slopes of Hill 410 were steep and slick with the red mud caused by the constant rain. B Co. had to be down, ready for helicopter pickup at 8:30. They had no time to waste.

Hedderich's squad, two machine gunners and their assistants, six in all, waited quietly for the word to move. Preparation took only a few minutes. Hedderich had seen to it that they were ready the night before. No one smoked; it wasn't light enough yet.

The rain still fell, lightly, but the canopy of jungle above held the water until it became too heavy and slid from

the leaves and branches in great, syrupy drops. Hedderich's short black hair was plastered to his head as he signaled to the men to move.

The column snaked its way down the slopes, the men slipping, cursing silently in the half-light that was breaking through. Just before they disappeared into high elephant grass farther down, their silhouettes against the sky, they seemed stripped of their separate identities, with a common name: Part of the 198th Inf. Brigade's 1st Bn., 46th Inf. Soldiers. Infantrymen. The sky was indifferent.

The company stopped for a short break when they reached a stream bed. Because of the rain, the stream was swollen and all but the biggest rocks, great black boulders, were submerged, slippery. Hedderich had slipped and wrenched his knee coming up the few days before. Like the rest who had fallen, he said nothing of it.

He had a quick, light laugh that

drifted across the stream bed when someone related a misadventure they had had in Australia.

They reached the pickup zone in the Americal Div. area west of Chu Lai, and Hedderich began placing his men in the order they were to board the choppers. It was a hostile area and the job had to be quick. The men sat in small groups of three or four, almost covered by the tall grass that held the clearing. A couple, who hadn't eaten earlier, rummaged through their rucksacks for a saved can of fruit to hold them until they could get resupplied.

Hedderich sat with the platoon leader and two other squad leaders, comparing information about the area where they were headed. A few minutes later the helicopters swarmed in.

The new landing zone was "hot", and mortars pocked the ground in front of the six aircraft touching down. In a matter of seconds, the choppers were

airborne, leading back to pick up the second lift. One of seven rounds had missed the lead chopper by fifty meters.

An hour later two men from the 2nd Platoon were dead and several more wounded, the platoon leader included. The enemy had put a booby trap near the landing spot. Hedderich, now the ranking man, was in charge of the platoon.

Hedderich, shaken, tried not to let it show. He took the added responsibility as he always had, with competence and coolness, and went on with the mission. The wounded were evacuated and the company moved forward.

Hedderich, of Shirril, N.Y., raced stock cars in the summer after graduating from high school. When he completed college he found a job with an insurance firm and worked there until he was drafted. The job is waiting for him when he gets back. It is a job with responsibilities—something he is getting a taste of every day in Vietnam.

Hawaiians Aid Viet School

DA NANG, Vietnam (ISO)—"Tell the wonderful people of Hawaii that 500 Vietnamese schoolchildren thank them for what they are doing."

Le Thi Bach-Ly, a young teacher at Nam-O school near Da Nang, spoke for her students as they crowded around boxes of school supplies sent by the Honolulu Junior Chamber of Commerce.

The children were given a recess to see the boxes of supplies delivered by U.S. Marines.

The Jaycees had heard of the school, supported by Marines of the Force Logistic Command near Nam-O, from a Marine radio correspondent based in Hawaii.

"The next thing we knew," recalls 1st Lt. Tom Loftis of Grand Rapids, Mich., "we got a call to pick up 27 boxes in Da Nang." Loftis, who is the civil affairs officer of FLC's Headquarters and Service Bn., administers Marine aid programs in Nam-O.

The boxes, which contained writing paper, pencils, pencil sharpeners, notebooks and tablets, were distributed to the eager children by the school's teachers.

The school survived the Tet offensive but did suffer minor damage when Marines and Vietnamese soldiers rooted out VC who had sneaked into Nam-O village.

"We are repairing the walls and floors in a few places where the school was damaged," says Loftis, "but damage was not serious enough to hold up any classes." The school was not in session during the Tet holiday.

Word has reached Loftis that the Jaycees are planning to send playground equipment for the school.

"This we can certainly use," says the school's headmaster, Nguyen Van Song. "To keep children in school and happy, a little recreation is necessary." Now, the kids play on makeshift swings and see-saws built by Marines from scrap lumber.

Given Firing Squad

SAIGON (AP) — A South Vietnamese Army lieutenant has been sentenced to die before a firing squad for embezzling more than \$28,000 from military funds. This is the fourth such sentence in the past six months. He is 2nd Lt. Do Van The.



Build-Up at Khe Sanh

When you spend a lot of time in bunkers with Red artillery pounding your area, the muscles

tend to get out of shape. These two Marines at Khe Sanh find a bit of exercise helps keep them fit. (AP Radiophoto)

Ky Hoa Hails Medical Aid

Isle Gung Ho for Corpsmen

CHU LAI, Vietnam (ISO) — A Navy doctor and his assistants have won the friendship and respect of the people of Ky Hoa Island through their work with the island's sick.

Islanders waved and smiled when Navy Lt. John A. Emery, 28, of Seattle, Wash., of the 2nd Light Antiaircraft Missile Bn., and his crew of Navy corpsmen drove their truck down the ramp of a landing craft and onto the beach. The team travels from their headquarters at the Chu Lai Marine Air Base three times weekly.

On the beach they picked up two boys, Kim and Tom, who acted as interpreters and guides. They then moved along the narrow, sandy roads to An Binh hamlet. More smiles and waves greeted them.

At An Binh the sick gathered

as Emery and his men quickly set up their treatment center.

"Medical problems here are much the same as they were in the States 100 years ago," said Emery. "Most of the patients can be cured quickly with a few modern drugs."

The doctor's time is spent examining patients and advising the corpsmen. Soap is distributed to cut down cases of skin infection.

"The medicine we practice is simple but effective," said Emery.

President Sports a Korat Bush Hat

KORAT ROYAL THAI AFB (OI) — The Korat bush hat worn by Air Force personnel stationed at Korat in northeast Thailand, has joined the tennegallon hat as a favorite headgear of President Johnson.

The President recently thanked the 388th Tactical Fighter Wing for the hat, presented to him as a souvenir of his visit to Korat RTAFB on Dec. 22-23, 1967.

The hat was given to Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. John P. McConnell for later presentation to the President, and McConnell recently forwarded a copy of Johnson's response to the 388th TFW.

In his letter to McConnell, the President said: "I am happy and proud to accept the Korat bush hat. It will always remind me of the courage and determination I found among the Air

U.S. Army Rushes Aid To Needy

SAIGON (IO) — In refugee camps there are always problems for which solutions must be given or found if the people are going to be healthy.

The Vinh Nghiem Refugee Camp in Saigon had trouble with supplying enough water for drinking or bathing and with acquiring materials to build shelters.

Immediately after the fighting started in Saigon the unfinished Vinh Nghiem Pagoda was turned into a refugee center under the auspices of the Venerable Thich Tam Giac, director of ARVN Buddhist chaplains. The camp took over 2,000 refugees in the first few days of fighting. Since then the number has grown to over 4,000.

The Venerable Tam Giac went to the Saigon mayor's office to seek assistance. Hard-pressed with other requests from camps throughout the city, the mayor asked for help from U.S. Army Headquarters Area Command's Civic Action's Office.

Lt. Col. James F. Bodine, 34, of El Paso, Tex., USAIAC's Civic Actions officer, met the Venerable Tam Giac.

"The camp needed aid and fast," said Bodine.

"We decided to hire a Vietnamese contractor to dig a well for the camp. He dug the well, put in a pump, and laid the pipes for 68,000 piasters, about \$750. We then sent the center 2½ sheets of tin roofing, 35,000 board feet of lumber, canvas tarpaulins, carpentry kits, saws, nails, and barbed wire to help protect the place."

Recently Bodine was presented a certificate of commendation from the Venerable Tam Giac "for his willingly devoted time, effort and cooperation with the Buddhist Chaplain Directorate in assisting the Vietnamese people who were victims of the Viet Cong attacks."

Force personnel of Korat. Please convey my warmest gratitude to all whose bright spirit is represented by this gallant symbol. They are all in my prayers as we continue our struggle to uphold freedom and restore peace to our world. Sincerely, Lyndon B. Johnson."

Senate Panel Kills F111B; Navy to Pick Replacement

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Senate Armed Services Committee shot down the overweight, expensive F111B warplane Thursday and told the Navy to specify what it wants as a replacement.

The panel apparently killed the F111B project—at least for the moment—by knocking out of the defense budget a Pentagon request for \$460 million in research and production funds for the Navy fighter.

The committee voted 11 to 2 to exclude the entire F111B project from the defense budget.

The Air Force's F111A had flown its first combat mission over North Vietnam only three days ago.

The Senate committee's rejection of the swing-wing F111B came shortly after the Pentagon laid out a compromise plan which would have cut back planned production of the fighter from 30 to only eight.

A joint statement by Secretary of the Navy Paul R. Ignatius and the chief of naval operations, Adm. Thomas H. Moorer, said a special study group recommended fewer planes be bought while a possible alternate was kicked around.

The study group, whose findings were endorsed by Ignatius and Moorer, recommended that several aircraft companies propose contract packages outlining "firm cost, production and performance figures" on a possible F111B successor.

Persons who knew him said that he lived frugally and gave no outward indication of being wealthy.

'Poor Old Bachelor' Leaves \$1.4 Million

ST. LOUIS, Mo. (UPI)—Retired electrician Anthony V. Tackes was a bachelor and lived alone in an old, rundown section of St. Louis.

Tackes, 82, lived in the rear of a house about six blocks from the Mississippi River. When Tackes died Feb. 10, his death notice went almost unnoticed.

Thursday, Tackes' will was filed in probate court. His estate was valued at \$1,437,490.

James A. Kearns Jr., investment broker and executor of Tackes' estate, said that Tackes was extremely astute in the purchase and sale of stocks and bonds.

Tackes held corporation stocks in 65 companies—the value, \$1,276,757.

Other assets included about \$50,000 in bonds and more than \$111,000 in bank accounts.

Tackes left the bulk of his estate to the University of Notre Dame, where he was baptized as an infant, and to various Catholic institutions and charities.

Lost—

(Continued From Page 1)

fighters cost several million dollars each.

Search operations have turned up no trace of the fighter-bomber.

Sources indicated the Pentagon had no word on what may have happened to the F111.

Six of the F111s had only recently been based at Ta Khli, Thailand.

The first combat mission was flown only three days ago when the variable-sweep-wing craft struck against bivouac and truck and storage areas in the southern panhandle region of North Vietnam.

The initial mission, staged in dark and overcast skies, was portrayed as successful.

The F111 is an offshoot of the TFX warplane which brought Robert S. McNamara so much controversy while he was secretary of defense.

The plane that is presumed lost is called the F111A—the Air Force version.

Collide—

(Continued From Page 1)

fuel tank of the jet and it landed spewing kerosene.

The jet roiled to the end of the runway, where fire trucks spread foam to prevent the spilled fuel from igniting. Those aboard were quickly disembarked.

The Ozark flight had originated in Denver, Colo., and had made stops at Sioux City, Iowa; Sioux Falls, S.D.; Chicago and Peoria, Ill., before heading for St. Louis.

Weather

Ason Weather Central

TOKYO AREA

Friday Night: Mostly cloudy; Low: 50
Saturday: Cloudy with rain; High: 65

TEMPERATURES

March 28			
	H	L	H
Bangkok	91	79	70
Chitose	37	50	93
Hanaka	64	48	55
Manila	96	75	68
	H	L	H
Albany	64	37	80
Albuquerque	70	25	71
Anaheim	65	42	74
Atlanta	75	44	74
Birmingham	55	33	45
Boston	64	35	76
Chicago	60	35	69
Cincinnati	74	45	63
Cleveland	71	43	69
Denver	66	23	66
Des Moines	70	35	73
Detroit	70	34	85
Fort Worth	51	41	71
Fort Worth	51	41	71
Honolulu	81	71	79
Houston	72	58	79
Indianapolis	75	46	61
Jackville	79	48	61
Jakarta	88	72	75
Kansas City	75	41	66
K. Lumpur	96	75	66
Los Angeles	75	41	71
London	64	44	75
L.A.	87	54	80
Louisville	74	43	81
			79

24 Pacific Stars & Stripes
Saturday, March 30, 1968



A Fan of Peggy's

President Johnson pins a magnolia blossom on Peggy Fleming, Olympic Gold Medal skulding champion, in the White House Rose Garden. Miss

Fleming was the only U.S. Gold Medal-winner in the Winter Olympics at Grenoble, France. Story on Page 17. (AP Radiophoto)

Sympathy Cosmonaut Killed

(Continued From Page 1)

and pioneering flight into space opened new horizons and set a brilliant example for the spacemen of our two countries. I extend the deep sympathy of the American people to his family and to relatives of Col. Vladimir Seryogin."

Joining Johnson in expressing sorrow over the deaths were Vice President Hubert H. Humphrey, former astronauts John Glenn and Scott Carpenter and the U.S. space agency.

"It was with the greatest sorrow that we learned of the tragedy involving Yuri Gagarin," Humphrey, chairman of the National Aeronautics and Space Council, said in a message to the Soviet government.

"He was a space pioneer—a man of great courage who spurred progress in outer space," Humphrey added. "The Soviet nation and the families of Gagarin and also of his associate, Vladimir S. Seryogin, have my deepest sympathy."

"We at NASA were saddened this morning to learn of the tragic accident which cost the lives of Cols. Gagarin and Seryogin," James E. Webb, administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, said in a message.

(Continued From Page 1)

announcement said he held the title of Hero of the Soviet Union which suggested that he played an important role, although he might have won the nation's highest award for deeds in other fields.

Gagarin was a popular, handsome man of 34 who acted as a main spokesman and celebrity to publicize the Soviet space program.

Gagarin's historic flight on April 12, 1961, propelled him from obscurity into the world spotlight. He remained a modest, unpretentious person despite his success.

Gagarin leaves his wife, Valentina, and two daughters, 9-year-old Yelena and 7-year-old Galya.

The radio bulletin and Tass News Agency announcements gave no details, reporting only that the men "died tragically while carrying out a training flight."

It did not say where the accident occurred or whether other persons were involved.

In the absence of details, this suggested that they were on a flight to maintain or improve their flying proficiency.

Nine U.S. astronauts have died, including Air Force Col.

Virgil I. Grissom, Air Force Lt. Col. Edward H. White II and Navy Lt. Cmdr. Roger B. Chaffee, who were killed in January 1967 when a huge Apollo 1 spacecraft designed to go to the moon burst into flames on a ground training exercise.

The others were Air Force Capt. Theodore C. Freeman, Air Force Maj. Charles A. Bassett II, civilian Elliot H. See Jr., Air Force Maj. Edward G. Givens, Marine Maj. Clifton C. Williams and Air Force Maj. Robert H. Lawrence Jr.

Jet Fuel Pipeline Explodes in N.M.

ALAMOGORDO, N.M. (AP)—A pipeline used to pump jet airplane fuel from El Paso, Tex., to Holloman AFB erupted Wednesday night. It demolished a nearby railroad bridge and stopped freight traffic.

Authorities say there were no injuries. Spokesmen say a road grader apparently punctured the line 10 miles south of Alamogordo.

Four fire-fighting units from Holloman, including a 4,000-gallon tanker truck, put out the blaze with chemicals.

Dirksen In Hospital

WASHINGTON (UPI) — Sen. Everett M. Dirksen, of Illinois, was hospitalized Thursday after an accidental fall at his Virginia country home.

The Senate Republican leader, who suffered a fractured hip in May, 1966, fell on his right side late Wednesday while changing a light bulb over the dining room table of his home.

A preliminary check at Leesburg Hospital showed Dirksen had suffered no new fracture, his office said, but he was taken to Walter Reed Army Hospital here for a checkup.

Meanwhile, the senator's wife was wearing a hip-to-knee cast to help heal a pulled ligament in her knee that she suffered in California last winter.

Abrams—

(Continued From Page 1)

chological and other setbacks.

However, Abrams denied that the American and allied troops had lost the initiative in the war.

Asked what he foresees as the course of the war in the months ahead, Abrams rapped out:

"I look for more fighting."

Asked how many more U.S. troops are needed in Vietnam and how many he expected to get, Abrams responded—not with a comment on U.S. troop numbers—but by saying he had been in Washington to report on the performance of the South Vietnamese armed forces and plans to improve their equipment.

He dismissed as a "wife-beating question" a query which suggested that the South Vietnamese forces had performed badly and that this contributed to the Communist Tet offensive successes.

"I think the performance of the South Vietnamese forces in the Tet offensive was great," said Abrams, who has been spending much of the past 10 months working with the South Vietnamese in an attempt to instill greater aggressiveness and leadership. He said "that's what I reported" to Johnson and other senior officials.

Cow Scratches Power

ROWNEY GREEN, England (UPI)—Hundreds of homes in the Rowney Green area southeast of Birmingham went without electricity for four hours because a cow had an itch. The cow scratched its backside on some power cables, causing a short circuit and blackout.