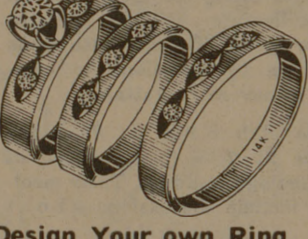



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Nixon orders limit to use of secrecy label

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Nixon, declaring that bureaucrats have been using secrecy stamps too often, ordered sweeping new procedures Wednesday aimed at ending "the many abuses of the security system."

In essence, Nixon directed that fewer documents be classified in the future and that those already designated "top secret," "secret" and "confidential" be made public more quickly than in the past.

In a statement issued as he signed an executive order for the first major overhaul of classification procedures since 1953, Nixon said:

"The many abuses of the security system can no longer be tolerated. Fundamental to our way of life is the belief that when information which properly belongs to the public is systematically withheld by those in

power, the people soon become ignorant of their own affairs, distrustful of those who manage them, and — eventually — incapable of determining their own destinies."

The President contended that the old set-up "failed to meet the standards of an open and democratic society, allowing too many papers to be classified for too long a time." He said "classification has frequently served to conceal bureaucratic mistakes or to prevent embarrassment to officials and administrations."

Aides acknowledged that the impact of Nixon's directive could only be determined after it goes into effect on June 1. But they predicted a significant reduction in governmental secrecy because the President is sharply reducing the number of officials authorized to impose the "top

secret" classification.

In like vein, the top-secret designation in future can be used in only a dozen departments and agencies plus the executive office of the president. Under the old rules, 24 departments and agencies had such powers.

A key Nixon proviso sets up automatic timetables for downgrading and eventually declassifying all secret documents except the most sensitive. In most cases, documents are to be made public in from 6 to 10 years after being classified.

The aim is to release secret information after 8 years and confidential documents after 6 years.

Even where the most sensitive information is concerned, automatic declassification is called for after 30 years unless the head of the department involved states in writing that it should

continue to be withheld on grounds it is essential to the national security or its disclosure would place an individual — typically an intelligence agent — in immediate jeopardy or physical harm.

In future, classification stamps can be employed only if unauthorized disclosure of a document "could reasonably be expected" to damage the national security. Heretofore, material could be classified if there were any expectation of damage, however remote.

The top-secret classification would be reserved for items that could cause grave damage to security if made public. The criteria for a secret designation would be serious damage and for confidential, simply damage.

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Nebraska to investigate Indian death

GORDON, Neb. (AP) — Nebraska's Legislature ordered the state attorney general Wednesday to investigate the death of Raymond Yellow Thunder last month and the protests from Indians which followed.

The purpose of the attorney general's probe would be to bring recommendations to the legislature for possible action.

Sen. Terry Carpenter of Scottsbluff, sponsor of the motion, said the legislature has a duty to let Indians who feel aggrieved know "that we are concerned."

The motion passed in Lincoln by the legislature specified that such an investigation should not interfere with or preclude a grand jury investigation.

American Indian Movement leaders met with local officials

Wednesday to discuss the grievances which brought an influx of 1,000 Indians into the community Tuesday. About 500 of the Indians remained in this Sand Hills town of 2,106 persons.

Russell Means, an AIM spokesman from Cleveland, Ohio, said he feels the mass gathering has "focused attention on the problems of the Indians in this area, on the problems of racism in Gordon against the Indians."

The Indians — most of them Sioux from the Pine Ridge reservation in South Dakota, about 50 miles to the north — came here to protest official handling of the death of Yellow Thunder, 51, an Oglala Sioux from the reservation.

Yellow Thunder's body was found Feb. 20 in a used car lot

in Gordon, eight days after he allegedly was accosted outside an American Legion hall where a dance was in progress. He was stripped from the waist down and shoved onto the dance floor, according to Sheridan County Attorney Michael Smith, who is handling prosecution of the case.

Five persons have been charged in connection with the death and a preliminary hearing for the five is set for next Tuesday.

An autopsy report listed the cause of death as a brain hemorrhage. Smith said authorities have theorized that Yellow Thunder suffered the fatal injury the day of the incident at the Legion hall.

Indians claim Yellow Thunder was tortured and castrated by the persons who attacked him

at the Legion hall. Smith said there were no marks on the body.

The death of Yellow Thunder has become a rallying point for Indians in the area, who have voiced a wide-ranging list of complaints, including discrimination in jobs, housing, law enforcement and education.

Many of Gordon's white residents appeared to be in sympathy with the Indians' complaints.

But the residents deny charges by the Indians that widespread discrimination exists in the community. About 10 per cent of Gordon's population is Indian.

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Texas water operations improved, Yantis says

Texas municipal water and sewer operations have shown a marked improvement due mainly to training programs, Hugh C. Yantis of the Texas Water Quality Board said here Wednesday.

The board's executive director reported 252 training courses were held state-wide during 1971, with 6,728 utility operators completing the sessions at an average of 20 hours each.

Yantis noted while the basic concepts in utility work have not changed, public attitude and support have because of the interest in the environment.

Yantis spoke at the general session of the 45th Texas Water Utilities Association's Short Course at A&M. Approximately 900 water and wastewater operators-managers are participating in the educational program.

To back up his emphasis on proper training, Yantis reported only 129 of Texas' 1,000 municipal systems are without operators certified by the Texas State Department of Health. Most of the non-certified systems are in small, neighborhood communities.

He also pointed out two-thirds of the non-certified systems are not meeting permit requirements. Yantis said most of the permit problems could be solved through proper training.

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