

in the practical nurses, orderlies and food workers have been striking the Stootons Medical College Hospital and the Charleston County Hospital since late March for union recognition and the reinstatement of 12 discharged workers.

The strikers make from \$1.30 to \$2.10 an hour, and wage increases had been an issue, but strike leaders say that wages are no longer an issue because the state has announced the minimum wage for the strikers and other state employees will go up to \$1.60 an hour July 1. Administrators of the hospitals, supported by McNair, say the state cannot negotiate with three unions.

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Ecuador's navy releases four U.S. tuna boats

QUITO (AP) — Ecuador's navy seized and released four U.S. tuna boats in the Gulf of Guayaquil Friday, naval authorities reported.

The navy gave no reason for its action. Reports received in Washington said the four boats — Royal Pacific, Neptune, Bold Venture and Marietta — were not damaged and that no fines had been imposed.

U.S. diplomats were said to have strongly protested the incident to Ecuador officials.

Recent fishing boat seizures have stemmed from a dispute over territorial limits in the Pacific off the coast of South America. Ecuador, Peru and Chile claim their boundaries extend 200 miles offshore, but the United States, like most other maritime nations, recognizes

American casualties.

The Ben Het Special Forces camp was one of 33 allied bases

Lt. Ashburn loses life in Vietnam

Mr. and Mrs. George W. Ashburn, 1320 21st Ave. S., were notified Friday in a telegram from the Defense Department that their son, First Lt. Jerry Ashburn, 22, had been killed in action Tuesday in Vietnam.

Lt. Ashburn was serving with a unit of the 12th Infantry, 25th Armored Division. In Vietnam since last October, he had been home on leave in March, called by the illness of his father.

The Ashburns recently moved to Wisconsin Rapids from Port Edwards.

The Defense Department message stated that the lieutenant's body will be flown here for burial, possibly within a week. Funeral arrangements are being made at Baker-Wilkinson Mortuary.

Lt. Ashburn enlisted in the Army in January 1967 and qualified for officer training, after completing one year as a student at Whitewater State University.

Born in Port Edwards on Feb. 21, 1947, he was a graduate of John Edwards High School.

Surviving, in addition to his parents, are three brothers, Robert G. Ashburn, discharged from the Marine Corps one week ago; Carl J. Ashburn, who completed Navy service in May, and William D. Ashburn, Port Edwards; two sisters, Mrs. Robert Ahles, Wisconsin Rapids, and Mrs. Leonard Schmidt, Nekeosa; his grandfathers, Jesse A. Ashburn, Port Edwards, and Carl Carnell, Memphis, Tenn.; four nieces and a nephew.

30 per cent increase in deserters seen

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Army expects 50,000 soldiers will have deserted by the end of the current fiscal year, an increase of nearly 30 per cent over 1968, according to testimony released Friday.

Clint Murchison dies

ATHENS, Tex. (AP) — Mil-

government study on June 21, 1969

SAIGON (AP) — President Nguyen Van Thieu of South Vietnam reportedly has asked his advisers and cabinet ministers to consider setting up a joint commission of government and Viet Cong representatives to study procedures for electing a post-war government.

Informed sources said today that Thieu was trying to get solid governmental and military backing for the proposal before it is put before the Viet Cong.

The man mentioned to represent the government on the commission is Duong Van Minh — "Big Minh" — the popular general who led the 1963 overthrow of President Ngo Dinh Diem. Minh returned to South Vietnam from political exile last year but has stayed out of the limelight.

Government and American sources would not comment on the report.

Usually reliable informants said Thieu was not likely to disclose his plan but was mainly concerned with insuring support from his generals, who are suspicious of any dealings with the Viet Cong.

Thieu reportedly told President Nixon during their Midway talks June 8 that he would press the Viet Cong delegation in Paris

to discuss election procedures. His moves in Saigon were seen as a preliminary step.

Informants said the South Vietnamese president wanted such talks with the Viet Cong to be secret and might refuse to discuss the issue at the peace table or in public.

Prior agreement within the South Vietnamese government on a specific proposal would strengthen the government delegation's position in Paris, and Thieu evidently is striving for that.

It also would enable the delegation to respond quickly if a proposal were to come from the Viet Cong.

The sources in Saigon added that the Viet Cong's provisional revolutionary government had made no election proposal in Paris and that no change in the current stalemate there is seen for at least two or three months.

In addition to the discussion on election procedures, Thieu reported considering action on such measures as land reform and some administrative changes to strengthen his government. But reliable informants said no decisions have been taken on those matters.

Says 'gestapo tactics' greet U.S. deserters

VANCOUVER, B.C. (AP) — A Vancouver lawyer says Canadian immigration officers are using "gestapo tactics" to stop U.S. military deserters from entering Canada.

John Taylor, a former member of Parliament, said Friday he has handled about a dozen cases in the past month in which actions by immigration officers conflicted with the stated Canadian federal policy on deserters.

Taylor contended deserters are not being treated like any other persons seeking entry to Canada—in direct opposition to a policy established last month by Immigration Minister Allan Maceachren—and said he is convinced his country's immigration officials are assisting their U.S. counterparts in apprehending deserters.

"This gestapo arrangement lessens the respect for Canadian officials," Taylor said.

tion office at Kingsgate, B.C. He described the youth as a deserter from the U.S. Army.

Taylor said the youth was told by the Canadian officer that his application for entry would have to be approved by a senior officer so he would have to return to the American side of the border until the next morning.

But once back on the U.S. side, Taylor said, the youth discovered the Canadian office had telephoned the U.S. Immigration office to report that youth had been turned back.

Taylor said the young Californian was told to report to the sheriff's office in Bonner's Ferry, Idaho, but did not do so. He said three days later he entered Canada—as a tourist—at Blaine Wash., 30 miles south of here.

Lyaal Hawkins, regional director of immigration here, defended the actions of the unidentified Kingsgate immigration offi-