

The Press Attacks Carter On:

THE NEUTRON BOMB...

Washington Post, Evans and Novak column, April 10:

President Carter's decision to put the neutron bomb in cold storage has created a dangerous leadership crisis not only in the Western alliance he is supposed to lead but at the bewildered highest levels of his own administration as well.... An attempt to trace what happened finds disconcerting answers. Although the decision-making process is chaotic, blame attaches directly to the President, not to his aides.

Sun, Baltimore, editorial April 10:

The end result was essentially a non-decision — a continued deferral of production while awaiting concessions the Kremlin promptly announced it would not make. This sorry record strongly suggests the President was not in control of a key issue that could endanger prospects for a second American-Soviet strategic arms pact (SALT II).

Christian Science Monitor, Joseph Horsch, April 13:

The main damage is probably to relations inside the alliance. The Western allies had been led to expect the decision to build ERW (the neutron bomb). They were dismayed by the sudden change. There was also damage in Washington. The appearance of Presidential vacillation on a military issue was fresh and welcome ammunition for the opponents of the Panama Canal treaties and of a SALT II agreement.

THE PANAMA CANAL TREATIES...

Washington Post, editorial, April 13

There is a limit to what even as hard pressed a President as Jimmy Carter ought to accept in bargaining with the likes of Dennis DeConcini. He blundered sorely in failing to anticipate the explosive Panamanian reaction to his acceptance of the DeConcini reservation the first time around....

VANCE'S MISSION TO AFRICA AND THE SOVIET UNION...

New York Times, Bernard Gwertzmann, April 13:

The dual mission of dealing with the Rhodesian crisis in Africa and making progress in the arms talks in Moscow faces major substantive obstacles. But in addition, the Vance mission has been burdened by other problems — what some see as a weakening of President Carter's stature abroad and disagreements within the Administration.

New York Times, James Reston, April 12:

There is a tendency now to mock Jimmy Carter, to suggest that he is not big enough for the job, that he is confused and "indecisive," just at the point when his beginning to negotiate a strategic arms limitation agreement with the Soviets and revive the negotiations for a compromise in the Middle east... Accordingly Mr. Carter is not only getting a bad press these days but getting into serious political trouble at home and abroad. Even his most enthusiastic supporters complain that he does the right thing many times but does it in the worst possible way.

Panama:

Canal Treaty— Round Two In Danger

Carter Juggling Act on Panama

The second Panama Canal Treaty, due to be voted on April 18, will be the first test the Administration will have to face in Congress since the escalated attacks began. The latest flap to endanger an affirmative vote on the treaty concerns a memorandum now circulating on Capitol Hill, which is based on notes of the meeting held between Frank Moore, the Administration's chief congressional liaison, and the Panamanian Ambassador.

In it Moore is described as agreeing to circulate an Administration-drafted counter resolution to the "DeConcini reservation," already tacked on to the first treaty. The DeConcini reservation would allow U.S. intervention into the Canal zone after the year 2000 in the event of an emergency. The Panamanians have now stated quite openly that they doubt the Treaty, if sub-

jected to a new plebiscite, will be accepted in Panama. The DeConcini reservation "threatens Panamanian sovereignty," they argue, and they are worried about the establishment of limited sovereignty and are being urged by other Latin American governments, including Mexico and Colombia, to reject it. Now Senator DeConcini (D-Ariz.) is threatening to attach another reservation to the second Treaty giving the U.S. an immediate right to send troops into Panama to keep the canal open — a right which was renounced by the United States itself in 1936!

Senator Edward Brooke (R-Mass.) now complains that "the Carter Administration had misled the Senate by not conveying Panama's objections to Mr. DeConcini's first reservation."

According to Washington sources, Senator Paul Laxalt (R-Nev.), who has been leading the treaty opposition in