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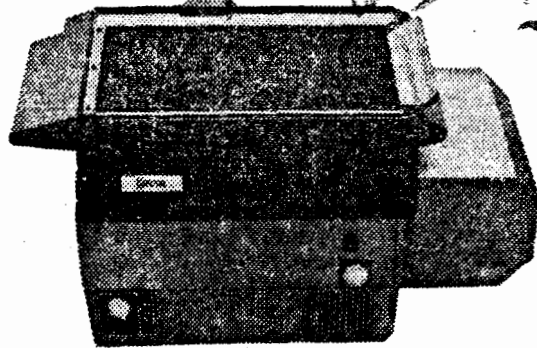
February 11, 1976

Dick Cheney -

- The attached was returned in the President's outbox.

Jim Connor

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Kentucky to Try Again on Blackbirds

FRANKFORT, Ky. (AP) — Kentucky officials say they aren't about to give up in their battle to exterminate millions of blackbirds that have plagued the state for years.

Gov. Julian Carroll made that point yesterday when he asked the federal government for permission to use a controversial chemical on seven more large blackbird roosts in the state.

The state's initial attempt last week to kill some 6 million blackbirds near the Logan County town of Russellville by spraying the roost with the chemical was a failure.

Only a handful of the birds died.

"I TOOK a body count of 17," quipped an aide to the governor who was in Russellville for the operation.

Under a bill signed last week by President Ford, each blackbird roost the state wants to spray with the chemical must first be certified as a hazard to human health. Once that certification is made by the governor, U.S. Interior Secretary Thomas Kleppe must give permission for each roost to be sprayed.

The chemical, PA-14, is mixed with water and alcohol. When applied to birds

during cold, rainy weather, it causes them to die of exposure, because it washes away natural oils that protect the birds from cold.

THURSDAY night, when a helicopter made 46 passes over the 30-acre roost at Russellville, all the conditions were ideal — except one. It stopped raining after the helicopter completed its final run.

Kentucky Agriculture Commissioner Thomas O.

Harris says the Russellville roost will be sprayed again this week, possibly tomorrow, if adequate supplies of the chemical are obtained and if weather conditions are ideal.

Carroll asked Kleppe for permission to use the chemical to spray a total of 8.3 million blackbirds the governor said are now roosting in seven counties.

The birds are blamed for the spread of histoplasmosis, a respiratory ailment in humans. Health officials

have certified that the number of confirmed cases of histoplasmosis has skyrocketed since the birds first began roosting in Kentucky and Tennessee in gigantic flocks about five years ago.

The chemical was used to exterminate about a million birds at the Ft. Campbell, Ky., military reservation a year ago. After that extermination, environmental groups, through federal court suits, effectively blocked the use of the chemical.