Ford to study busing opt drafted after his request

WASHINGTON (UPI) — President Ford is studying legislation drafted by the Justice Department to "severely limit" court-ordered school busing in some cases and ban it entirely in others, according to an interview with TV station WKRC, in Cincinnati.

"The combination of the proposal made to me by the attorney general and the legislation which was passed in 1974 would severely limit and, in some cases, eliminate court-ordered, forced busing," Ford said.

Atty Gen. Edward Levi has proposed a bill to Ford which would limit court-ordered busing in school desegregation cases to situations where racial imbalances are caused by official actions — such as the drawing of district lines or the assignment of pupils — and not situations such as housing patterns, officials said.

Ford said, "The attorney general has recommended to me some legislation which would limit the remedy of a court when it finds segregation, to correcting those areas of a community where there is segregation instead of giving the court the authority to come in and take over a whole school system, as some federal district courts have done."

"The President arranged a busing conference at the White House with Levi, HEW Sec. David Mathews and Labor Sec. W. J. Usery. A decision on whether to officially ask Congress to approve the draft legislation may result from that meeting.

Ford also said he believes he can improve the busing situation "through some additional federal money (and) school facilities."

"I think we can improve the equipment that is available to make educational opportunities better available to students," Ford said. "I believe that we can inaugurate what they call cluster schools or neighborhood schools in place of crosstown busing. There are a number of alternatives that were written by the Congress when I was in Congress and subsequently signed by me when I became President, in what we call the Equal Educational Opportunities Act.

Ford said the act, more often called the ESCH amendment, lists seven alternatives, "six of them ahead of busing and if the courts would follow those guidelines, I think we could avoid most of the busing that would take place."

The President also said he was totally opposed to busing "to achieve balance in the school system. I think court-ordered forced busing is the wrong approach to achieve quality education."

MISS MYRA LORRAINE WHITE recently recived her Masters of Social Service degree in Program planning and Administration from Bryn Mawr College in Bryn Mawr, Pa A graduate of Eastern High School, Miss White has a B.A. in Sociology from Morgan State. On educational leave from her job as social worker with the Department of Social Services, she was the recipient of a federal traineeship from the National Institute of Mental Health.

Increase in auto insurance

Baltimore (UPI) — The Government Employees Insurance Co., one of the states's largest automobile insurers, said it will ask State Insurance Commissioner Thomas Hatem for a rate increase for of "roughly 20 per cent" by Friday.

If approved it will be the third rate increase for the company in the past seven months. In November a 21 per cent increase was allowed and an 18.8 per cent hike was approved March 31.

Charles R. Davis, a Geico assistant vice president, said higher rates are needed to prevent a recurrence of the company's $15.3 million underwriting loss in Maryland in the 12-month period ending March 31.

The company also began tightening renewal standards after running un national underwriting losses of $153.6 million last year. The number of policyholders has been reduced by one per cent since the beginning of the year.

At a state hearing Wednesday on customer complaints about policy cancelation and renewal practice, state insurance staff members said Geico's frequent rate increase to shore up its financial problems have made a simultaneous tightening of its renewal standards appear unjustified.

"If they tighten up the guidelines at the same time they ask for a rate increase, isn't that a double dose? asked Murray K. Josephson, a assistant attorney general representing the insurance division.

The state has received hundreds of complaints in recent months from consumers whose policies have been rejected by the company. Since February about 50 complaints a week have come into Hatem's office.

"Our standards have become increasingly stringent and increasingly harsh as the company has moved from a position of profit to a position of serious losses." said Bart K. Hendrickson, Geico vice president.

BOY SCOUTS' CHOICE — Three lovelies, finalists in the Coalition for Youths Search for Miss Boy Scout's Sweetheart, are with Coalition chairman, David Sloan and Samuel L. Banks, vice chairman. Chosen Miss Sweethearts was Miss Angela Lewis (center) of Eastern High School; first runner-up, Miss Mary Distel (Southern) to her left; and Miss Denise Pittman (Eastern), second runner-up. The three were chosen from 10 contestants representing local high schools. The Coalition for Youth is a group of volunteers whose work for inner city youth scouting is sponsored by Baltimore Contractors, Inc.

Gov. Mandel now a Jackson delegate

(UPI) — Gov. Marvin Mandel has been named to Sen. Henry Jackson's Slate for Maryland's at-large delegates to the Democratic National Convention.

The governor, who is able to attend the July 12 national convention with the selection of Sept. 8 as his new trial date, was on a list of Jackson delegates filed Wednesday.

Just a day earlier the governor revealed publicly he was interested in serving as a Jackson delegate.

In addition to Mandel, the Jackson at-large list included Sen. Roy N. Staten, the state Democratic party chairman, and Lou Knecht, a labor leader and chairman of the Montgomery County Democratic Central Committee.

Thirteen at-large delegates will be selected at a meeting of the Democratic State Central Committee on Saturday in Baltimore. Jackson is allotted three of those delegates; Jimmy Carter, eight; Morris Udall, one; and uncommitted, one.

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Forty more delegates were chosen in the May 18 primary election.

Staten's slot may be contested because Jackson also approved the candidacies of some long-time supporters and Sen. Harry J. McGuirk, a powerful Balimore politician.

Carter's slate, selected last week, includes Mandel allies Lt. Gov. Blair Lee III, State Comptroller Louis L. Goldstein, Secretary of State Fred L. Wineland and House Speaker John Hanson Briscoe.

Mandel has been sympathetic to stop-Carter efforts.

Senate President Steny H. Hoyer is seeking the one uncommitted delegate slot at Saturday's party meeting.

The Jackson slate was filed on the same day U.S. District Judge John H. Pratt set a new corruption trial date for Mandel on Sept. 8, freeding the governor to attend the national convention. Earlier trial dates were set in May and June.

In addition to the statewide politicians who will be Carter's at - large delegates, the other four are Natalie Bouquet of Montgomery County, Lillian Lewis of Prince George's County, Joe Colegrover of Annapolis and Dwight Petit of Baltimore. Carter's state co-chairman.

Food prices up here

A survey appearing in Thursday's edition of the Baltimore Sun shows that the cost of Baltimore's market basket jumped 5 per cent in May — the largest increase in 18 months.

The cash register receipt for the 15-item market basket was $15.78, compared to $14.96 in April.

Items included in the tabulation were eggs, pork chops, butter, lean ground beef, frankfurters, milk, orange juice, coffee, peanut butter, tomato sauce, deterrent, fabric softener, chocolate chip cookies, sugar and paper towels.

The survey shows sharp increases in the prices of pork chops, lean ground beef, frankfurters and coffee, which went up between 6 and 17 per cent.

Store-brand butter, which was down 7 per cent, was the only item that showed a price decrease.

HEW barred from desegregation action

The department of Health, Education and Welfare has been barred from taking any desegregation action which could result in the termination of funds to Maryland's higher education system and the Baltimore School System.

The 4th U.S Circuit Court of Appeals Tuesday upheld a lower court decision in denying HEW's request for a stay in an order by Chief Judge Edward S. Northrop.

The Maryland judge said that HEW had failed to specify which programs were alleged to be illegally segregated.

Northrop also ruled that HEW must first negotiate in good faith to secure compliance with the 1964 Civil Rights Act before it can begin enforcement actions to terminate federal funds.

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"They (the Federal Government) asked the court of appeal to suspend the effectiveness of Northrop's order until a full appeal could be considered on the merits of the case," said a spokesman in the Maryland attorney general's office.

"That (the ruling) means that despite the government's pleas to the contrary, Northrop's order will remain in effect," he said.

"The Federal Government also asked to advance the brief writing and arguments schedules. That motion also was denied," he said.

"We the state, had suggested to the Court of Appeals that, if this case is appropriate — if it's shown to be of sufficient importance — it be heard before the full court," he added. "The Court of Appeals deferred consideration on this suggestion."

HEW had sought to institute administrative hearings on the possible cutoff of funds, alleging that the state's colleges, universities and city school system engaged in discriminatory programs.

The universities stood to lose $65 million in federal funds. The city schools were threatened with the cutoff of $23 million annually.

Home improvement firms said to cheat the poor

(UPI)—A Legal Aid Attorney says some Baltimore City home improvement firms and finance companies may be cheating the city's poor by inflating bills and doing shoddy repair work.

H. Robert Erwin Jr., a staff attorney with the Baltimore Legal Aid Bureau, told the House Economic Matters Committee Wednesday that his office has uncovered a "pattern" of overcharging by at least three Baltimore finance firms and four home improvement companies.

"What we've found is that prices charged to the hard core poor are invariably tremendously inflated," said Erwin. "This is the pattern we've uncovered and this is what I suspect."

However, Erwin said because his office is continuing to investigate the home improvement business he was hesitant to make outright charges against the firms, which he refused to name. "I'm somewhere between suspicion and conclusion at this point," he said.

Erwin said the typical pattern in the cases is that home improvement companies doing work for poor people will charge an exorbitant fee, sometimes more than double the market rate for the work.

The home improvement firms then let finance companies keep a portion of the inflated charge as a kind of reward for financing the often high credit risk clients, according to Erwin.

Erwin said this practice amounts to "hidden finance charges" which are illegal "usurious contracts." He said his investigation will show that such hidden finance charges violate state laws setting maximum interest rates finance companies can charge.

Home improvement firms benefit by getting additional business from poor people who might not otherwise get financing for the work, Erwin said.

Bishop reads Metholist appointment

Business sessions of the three day meeting of the Baltimore Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church will end today. The conference was held at the Civic Center with 1,600 Methodist attending.

Bishop James Matthews will read the appointment of ministers to serve the 770 churches in the Baltimore conference and President Ford is expected to address the Bicentennial rally tonight 8 p.m. at the Civic Center.

If President Ford is unable to appear, Sen. Mark O. Hatfield will be the speaker.

Members of the conference delt with a variety of business matters, ranging from the internal administration of pensions ad medical insurance for ministers to social cohcerns such as health care and gun control.

The most memorable thing about this label is the Scotch we put behind it.

(Photo by J. D. Howard)

BRIGHT STUDENTS FROM Dunbar Senior High School stated to be graduated June 11 at 8 p.m. in the Civic Center. These 82 honor students are a part of approximately 400 pupils in the 1976 Senior Class. (L to R) Pamela Harrison, Valerie Brown, Rhonda Ayers, Pamela Williams Bernadette Boyd, Dorothy Dixon, Danette Johnson, Sherronda Hunter, Denise Eggleston, Sabrina Shropshire, Yvonne Green, Shirley Barrett, Irene Robinson, Valerie Moaley, Andrea King, Melvin Hope Mary Eagleston, Stephanie Whitehurst, Irene Dickins, Wanda Watson, Audrita Campbell. Carolyn Shields, Theresa Boston, Glenda Cole, Elaine Hopkins, Elenore Johnson, Celestine Parker, Deborah Thorpe and Rhonda Tinson. (Second Row) Robin Mayzzk, Regina Chapman, (unidentified) Gerald Poindexter, Jeanette Boyd, Patrice Brown, Lynn Harris, Darlene Moss, Roscoe Lunn, Angela White, Michelle Crawford, Cornelia Ellis, Gloria Armstrong, Veronica Griffin, Vickie Johnson, Beverly Davis, Sandra Lawrence, Marganette McFadden, Deborah Jefferson, and Sharone Brooks (Third row) Kevin Foxworth, Barry Fortune, William Lewis, Vincent Windell, Maurice Russell, Kurt Davis, Cedric Crawley, Angelea Banks, Alvin Williams, William Fair, Tyrone Generette, Jerome Thompson, Tommie Davis, Rosemary Manigo, Cornel Lumpkin, Evelyn Cook, Yovette Ferguson, Milton Lewis, Vernell Green, Valerie, Brown, Vileen Anaster, Shirley Jones, Barry Thompson Denise Cunion, Rita Frazer Richard Cornish, Karen Hurt, Maurice Crafton, Freddie Poindexter and Larry Johnson.

Zumwalt, Democrats lower boom on Byrd

NORFOLK — As Elmo Zumwalt argued that Virginians feel "Cheated and embarrassed" by Sen. Harry F. Byrd Jr., I-Va., state party Democrats over the weekend passed a resolution aimed at thwarting the senator's standing in Congress.

At the conclusion of the state party's two-day presidential year convention, the Democrats overwhelmingly passed a resolution urging the senate democratic caucus not to seat anyone who runs against a Democrat in the general election.

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The resolution was passed through a voice vote and did not specifically name Byrd. But Byrd is a former Democrat running as an independent against Zumwalt, the Democratic Party's U.S. Senate nominee.

Zumwalt, the retired uniformed head of the Navy who tore down racial barriers confronting black sailors, said Byrd and Sen. William L. Scott, R-Va., have records that he views as backwards. Both Byrd and Scott are ultraconservative with long records opposing black interests.

"Virginians feel cheated and embarrassed by their lackluster representation in the U.S. Senate," he said. "They've had enough of the backward looking philosophy embodied by the do-nothing duo of Harry Byrd and William Scott."

"The record of my opponent is the record of the floogie bird," he said. "It is a record of many votes, but no initiative and no leadership."

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Attorney General Andrew P. Miller, the Democrat who holds the highest elective office in Virginia, called on party members to give the presidential nominee a 100,000-vote margin in November, wider than Lyndon Johnson's in 1964.

Miller, who has endorsed Jimmy Carter, said a rift in the Republican party and a shift in national attitude are working in behalf of a reunited Democraic camp.

"We have come a long way in just a few years and we are gaining momentum," he said. "Democrats everyhere are united. This time it's the Republican Party that is coming apart.

Elmo Zumwalt Jr.

Miller's only announced Democratic opponent in the 1977 gubernatorial race, former Lt. Gov. Henry Howell, agreed, saying Democrats everywhere should focus on defeating the Republicans.

The 4,000 delegates and alternates concluded the convention late Saturday after approving 24 resolutions without debate, including urging that Byrd be stripped of his senority.

Other resolutions approved include a measure urging the Virginia General Assembly to approve the equal rights amendent and a proposal to ban aerosal spray cans for environmental reasons.

The delegates and alternates elected Sandra Duckworth of Fairfax and Ruth Charity of Danville as national committeewomen and George Rawlings of Fredericksburg and W. Pat Jennings as national committeemen.

Joseph T. Fitzpatrick was re-elected to a second four-year term as state party chairman after several Northern Virgina delegates gave up thoughts of challenging him.

Fitzpatrick ran unopposed but there was a smattering of boos and nays from the Northern Virgina Delegation when he was elected by a voice vote in the final hours of the convention.

Fitzpatrick, a state senator from Norfolk, also said the party should unite against the Republicans.

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In a brief victory speech he said, "we are one party . . . West, East, Central and Northern virginia."

Also re-elected as party officers were Newport News Councilwoman Jessie Rattley as first vice chairman and Tim Finchem, an official of Zumwalt's campaign, as second vice chairman.

Several Northern Virginia delegates had considered challenging Fitzpatrick's re-election, saying they were dissatisfied with his management of the party.

W. Raymond Colley, chairman of the 8th congressional district, said he seriously considered opposing Fitzpatrick, but decided not to run because he did not think he had a chance of winning.

Tenth District Chairman Robert Weinberger also said several members of his delegation discussed a possible challenge to Fitzpatrick, but none came forward.

In addition to the party chairmanship, Fitzpatrick was chosen as head of Virginia's 54-member delegation to the Democratic National Convention in New York this summer.

Prior to 1976, the delegates were elected at the state covention, but this year were chosen May 22 at conventions in Virginia's 10 congressional districts.

State to probe low test scoring schools

State education officials, curious because many school children perform below minimum skill levels, will study the schools they attend for clues to why they do.

Dr. Richard K. McKay, assistant state school superintendent for research, said the $75,000 study of 40 low-scoring schools will search for links between test performance and school variables, such as classroom size, type of neighborhood and teachers' training.

The schools, not geographically identified, will be examined to learn why their students have consistently scored low on tests since January, 1975 when the state published its first educational accountability report of comparative scores.

"Just to keep publishing results (of tests) doesn't make much sense unless we do something about them," said McKay.

McKay said the study, the largest of its kind done by the state, will try to determine exactly what happens inside the schools.

McKay said graduate assistants from the University of Maryland will help by observing classrooms and measuring such variables as classroom size, teacher training, school administration, family backgrounds and types of neighborhoods.

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Maryland education officials are concerned by the results of a standardized test — called the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills which showed for the second consecutive year that Maryland students scored slightly below the national norms.

Announcement of the study followed the release of another test this week that measured "survival" skills designed to measure basic reading skills. The test found that slightly more than 65 per cent of the 7th graders achieved the "desired competency level."

The functional test, the first in the country given statewide, was intended to measure a student's ability to read such basic information as newspaper ads, electric meters and telephone books.

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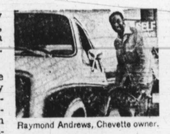

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