

Ford Signs Bill to Avoid Misuse of Records on Citizens

VAIL, Colo., Jan. 1 (AP)—President Ford signed a privacy act today intended to safeguard individuals from the misuse of Federal records, and announced that James T. Lynn, Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, will replace Roy L. Ash as director of the Office of Management and Budget.

In other official action, Mr. Ford pocket-vetoed a bill to increase Government travel allowances and signed an energy research bill.

The President had greeted the new year with friends and staff, holding a champagne toast at his rented vacation home here.

He went skiing this morning and watched the Rose Bowl game on television as he neared the end of his Vail vacation.

The privacy act was cited by Mr. Ford as "an initial advance in protecting a right precious to every American, the right of individual privacy."

Damage Suits Provided

The bill gives individuals the right of access to information on file about them and to have inaccurate data corrected. Exceptions are provided for law enforcement files and other sensitive records.

A commission will be set up to study how to protect privacy further, and is to submit recommendations within two years.

The bill provides for fines up to \$5,000 for violations by Government employes and authorizes damage suits.

The measure restricts the use of Social Security numbers for identification and prohibits any government agency from selling a mailing list unless authorized by law.

"This bill, for the most part, strikes a reasonable balance between the right of the individual to be left alone and the interest of society in open government, national defense, foreign policy, law enforcement and a high quality and trustworthy Federal work force," Mr. Ford said.

However, the President said he felt it did not adequately protect the individual against unnecessary disclosures of personal information.

Returning to Washington

Mr. Ford has 92 bills from the 93d Congress on which he must act by the end of the week. He will return to Washington tomorrow to renew decision-making with his energy and economic advisers, and to take action on the remaining legislation.

The White House press secretary, Ron Nessen, said that Mr. Lynn would continue as Secretary of Housing and Urban Development until he is confirmed by the Senate, and Mr. Ash will

stay on until completion of the fiscal year 1976 budget, probably toward the end of January.

A former Cleveland lawyer, Mr. Lynn first entered Government service in the Commerce Department in 1969 at the beginning of the Nixon Administration. No successor for him in the housing post has been decided upon, Mr. Nessen said.

The veto of the travel expenses amendments bill was Mr. Ford's 21st veto since he took office nearly five months ago.

The President objected to a rider in the bill that made the

increased travel allowances applicable to disabled veterans on authorized travel for treatment in connection with their disabilities. Mr. Ford said he would ask the 94th Congress for a new bill.

He also signed a measure that calls on the Federal Energy Research and Development Administration to conduct a program on research and development of new sources of energy.

One other bill signed relinquishes United States claims to disputed lands along the Colorado River in Yuma County, Ariz.