Sen. Mathias Unveils Jobs, Rights Bills

By Douglas Watson
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Declaring that Republicans need to do less infighting and more to solve the nation's problems, Sen. Charles McC. Mathias Jr. (R-Md.) yesterday unveiled a dozen bills addressing unemployment, energy, civil rights, civil liberties and a variety of other issues that he will introduce in Congress.

Maryland's senior senator and maverick member of the GOP warned that voters won't "be galvanized into action by hearing repeatedly that the old Republican stable full of wind-blown nags are ready to run again in 1978 or 1980.

"What will interest people is not the employment prospects of Republican politicians, but what Republicans can do for the country," Mathias told a press conference.

In outlining his large package of proposed legislation, Mathias declared, "When the people again see

that the Republican Party is a useful institution, they will want to use it and to employ Republicans at the highest levels of national leadership."

Asked whether his unusual press session calling for action in so many legislative areas indicates that he continues to be interested in running for President, something Mathias flirted with last year, the Maryland Republican said only, "I've got a four-year contract with the people of Maryland and I intend to honor that contract."

Mathias' Senate term will expire in 1981 when, President-elect Carter's term does.

Because his progressive-to-moderate positions have put him very much in the minority of the Republican party and had even caused him to consider running as an independent, Mathias has felt the GOP backlash. Last summer, Maryland Republicans denied Mathias, the party's highest elected official, a seat on the platform com-

mittee at the Republican National Convention.

Currently there is talk that Republican right-wingers may seek to punish Mathias for his independence by seeking to prevent him from becoming the ranking minority member of the Senate Judiciary Committee, but there have been no open moves in that direction.

Mathias said he isn't going to let concern about offending more conservative Republicans prevent him from taking a lead in proposing legislation. "It seems to me that unless somebody gets roused up, then nothing's going to happen," the 54-year-old Marylander said.

Mathias again deplored the impact former California Gov. Ronald Reagan has had on the Republican party, saying, "We were pushed and shoved into a position (in the 1976 presidential campaign) that ultimately led to a very shattering defeat."

But Mathias also criticized "continued bickering between the factions within the Republican Party," which he said "is in danger because the two-party system is out of balance and it can't work when it's this far out of balance."

In the 95th Congress convening Jan. 4, Mathias is introducing Senate Bill No. 1, an Employment Resources Act,

that would require the President to adopt fiscal and monetary policies aimed at reducing unemployment to 5 per cent by 1978. Mathias also is introducing a bill to create a "National Youth Service Program" to employ jobless teen-agers.

Other Mathias bills would provide incentives for the construction of oil refineries within the United States and would establish a "Radioactive Waste Authority" to assure safe disposal of nuclear wastes.

Mathias also has drafted legislation aimed at protecting privacy by requiring government investigators to obtain warrants before examining individuals' bank, credit or telephone records.

Other bills call for construction of five regional prisons in which states could lease space to ease their overcrowded penitentiaries, and the broadening of the Civil Rights Act in the face of recent Supreme Court decisions narrowing its applicability.

Mathias further is sponsoring bills to make it easier for would-be home buyers to obtain mortgages; to provide small businessmen a new forum in which to contest lettings by federal agencies; and to offer federal grants to school systems of public education can be made available to handicapped children.