

Ford to ask for changes

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WASHINGTON (AP) — President Ford said Tuesday he will ask for administrative changes in the Central Intelligence Agency but that he will not rule out political activities in other countries if American security is involved.

The President did not spell out what the changes might be. But in an earlier interview with the Chicago Sun-Times he was quoted as saying he may strip the CIA of its authority to conduct covert political operations overseas.

Ford said the White House now is studying proposals about the CIA, "but I don't want to make any commitment one way or another until we actually submit the legislative proposals to the Congress and decide to do whatever we want to do administratively."

Responding to a question of whether he would ban activity by any American agency, or just the CIA, Ford said:

"I wouldn't rule out necessary political activities by the United States if it involves our security."

The President also said federal courts apparently have not taken sufficient notice of 1974 legislation that would make forced busing of school children a last resort.

And he said the United States has made no firm commitment to supply F16 fighter bombers and Pershing Missiles to Israel as part of the new Sinai agreement.

"They are on the shopping list," he said, and they will be discussed "with representatives of the Israeli government."

The President, seated on the front edge of his big desk, held his first news conference in the Oval Office. The conference was called on short notice.

Published reports Tuesday said that there were secret accords in the Sinai

agreement under which Israel would receive the newest weaponry, including missiles that could be armed with nuclear warheads.

"We have for a long, long time supplied Israel with very substantial amounts of military hardware," Ford said. "We have always felt that the survival of Israel in the Middle East was very important and the military hardware that we have (provided) in the past and will in the future provides for that survival."

The President declined to call the defense relationship as a "security treaty." "There is no firm commitment on any of the weapons," he said.

Ford said also:

—He is disappointed in the House Intelligence Committee's release last week of classified documents relating to events preceding the 1973 Arab-Israeli War. Such a breach by a private citizen

in CIA

would represent "serious criminal offenses," he said.

—Stationing of American monitoring technicians in the Sinai buffer zone between Israel and Egypt "is a good contribution to the establishment and permanency of peace in the Middle East."

He said "utmost caution" will be taken for their protection and he did not anticipate their being captured or killed by Palestine guerrillas.

—He still opposes wage and price controls as a means of fighting inflation.

On the issue of school busing, he said he is bothered by the facts that the courts apparently have not taken into consideration a law that he signed in August 1974 which he said "sets forth seven specific proposals that the court should follow before they actually use the busing remedy."

He noted the bill provides for such steps as assigning students to schools closest to their homes, permitting students to transfer from a school in which a majority of the students are of their race to one in which a minority are of their race, revising attendance zones without requiring transportation, and construction of new schools or closing of inferior schools.

Asked whether the United States would consider stationing American technicians on the Jordanian or Syrian

fronts, Ford replied, "I don't think I should speculate about any negotiations or agreements that have not yet begun."

The President said the United States has assured Israel of secure supplies of oil to replace the oil it will lose by giving up the Abu Rudeis fields to the Egyptians as part of the interim agreement.

He defended this as being part of the over-all military, economic package the United States is providing Israel as part of the agreement. He noted that several months ago 76 senators urged him to recommend that more money be approved by Congress for Israel.

"So we not only now have peace and a step toward a broader peace, but it is also at a lesser cost than what the 76 senators promoted," he said.

Ford again said that Vice President Rockefeller is doing an excellent job, but "as a tradition, it is too early at this stage of a political campaign to endorse him as a running mate in 1976."