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White House Press Corps 'Grounded'

Washington

Citing the energy crisis, President Nixon has ordered aides not to arrange a charter flight for White House correspondents who want to cover his planned post-Christmas vacation in Florida.

His decision breaks the long procedure whereby the White House transportation office would arrange charter flights for the press when the President travels. The news organizations paid for the charter.

Under questioning, Deputy White House Press Secretary Gerald L. Warren acknowledged that Mr. Nixon had made the decision.

"We feel it is wrong for the White House to ask airlines to use fuel they need for regularly scheduled flights for special charters," Warren said.

Warren said the President has not decided how he will travel to Florida. Earlier, the White House said Mr. Nixon was considering taking a train but he also is considering other modes of transportation, presumably including the use of a smaller aircraft than his four-engine Air Force One.

The President will be accompanied by a "very minimal support staff," Warren said.

When a newsman suggested that Mr. Nixon was attempting to cut down on the coverage of his trip, Warren responded, "Not at all. I reject that theory."

Associated Press