

CITY EDITION

Weather: Mostly sunny, pleasant day; fair tonight and tomorrow. Temperature range: today 66-82; Friday 62-72. Temp.-Hum. Index yesterday 62. Full U.S. report on Page 38.

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PRESIDENT'S CURB ON SCHOOL BUSING STIRS CONFUSION

AUG 14 1971

Federal and Local Officials
in Capital and in the South
Report Wave of Reaction

MANY EXPRESS ANGER

Wallace Orders Defiance of
U.S. Court—White House
Plans No Move Now

By PAUL DELANEY

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Aug. 13—

President Nixon's new policy of restricting the use of busing to achieve school integration has set off a shock wave of reaction among Federal and local officials from Washington to Dallas.

Coming on the eve of another year of widespread integration, the policy, announced last week and sternly repeated two days ago, set in motion a chain of confusion, anger, bitterness and disappointment.

It extended from the headquarters of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare here to its regional offices in Atlanta and Dallas, where employees struggled to handle the telephone calls and visits from local school officials.

Responds to Wallace

Meanwhile, the White House responded today to moves by Gov. George C. Wallace of Alabama to defy Federal court orders. Yesterday the Governor ordered the transfer of a white student who was assigned to a predominantly black school under a court order. Today he directed the reopening, under a "freedom of choice" policy, of a black school that had been closed by a Federal court. [Details on Page 22.]

Ronald L. Ziegler, the President's press secretary, said that the White House did not plan to do anything now about Mr. Wallace's actions because no law had been violated.

He said it was up to the courts that issued the integration orders to determine whether the orders had been violated. He reiterated the Administration's pledge that it would uphold the law.

Noting that "the executive has the responsibility to act if there is a violation of an order," he said that the White House was watching the situation develop and "will deal with the situation when it forms."

Last week Mr. Nixon announced that he had directed Federal agencies, in approving local integration programs, to seek only the minimum amount of busing that was required by

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law. Two days ago the White House said that any official disregarding this order faced transfer or dismissal.

The Supreme Court has ruled that extensive busing is an acceptable method of achieving integration in the urban South. Regarding the Administration's busing policy, an official of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare said that school officials "are more confused now." He added, "They feel the rug has been pulled from under them."

Typical of the reaction of local school officials was the sentiment expressed by James R. Johnson, a member of the Jackson, Miss., school board, who was interviewed by telephone.

"President Nixon did a darn good job of messing things up for us," Mr. Johnson said. "People here were finally psyched up to accept busing and integration. But now the President has given fire to the conservatives who are for private schools."

Interviews with officials here and throughout the South disclosed the following:

¶There is much confusion over exactly what the new policy means and what is the minimum amount of required busing.

¶Many local officials are angry that the policy announcement came so late in the summer. Most school boards had completed or were completing their budgets, which in many cases included busing. Now the officials do not know whether they will get the Federal money to subsidize the amount of busing they have planned for.

¶Some districts had placed large orders for buses that they now might not be able to pay for or use. Mr. Johnson said that Jackson had 65 buses on order at a cost of \$900,000, including budgeted salaries for drivers and costs of maintenance. "If the Federal Government doesn't pay for them, we sure can't, and we don't know how that will affect integration," he said.

¶To meet court-ordered busing requirements, some school districts might have to cut back on other school programs, officials fear.

¶There are anger and bitterness among employees and officials of the Division of Civil Rights and the Office of Education of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare. Even department employees who supported the limited busing policy were resentful of the threat from the White House that they would be dismissed or transferred if they failed to carry out the policy. One effect of the threat was to cause every department member interviewed to insist on anonymity.

"It seems as if the President wants to punish the whole Office of Education for some unknown sins," one high official commented.

A Flood of Inquiries

Another said, "The feeling here was the Supreme Court had ruled in April and we were following its order. Now we feel the rug had been pulled out from under us."

An official of the Office of Education said that "all hell broke loose" with the President's statement.

"Sure, we've been funding busing all along, and all of a sudden we can't do the things we were doing," he said.

The official reported that the

new policy had caused a flood of inquiries from school officials throughout the South, directed especially at regional offices in Atlanta and Dallas.

"They are asking what the hell is up," he continued. "They have presented plans to us that include busing based on Federal funding. If they have to take out that money, they will have to re-jiggle their budgets and get rid of or reduce other programs if they are under court order to bus."

Funds Endangered

"Some of them will wipe out such things as field trips and maybe even interscholastic athletics. But we will have to wait until later to find out exactly how they're adjusting," he went on.

"Of special concern will be the nearly 900 districts that got emergency desegregation funds last year," this official said. "Many of them included busing in their plans for this year and they expected to pay for it with the emergency funds this year. Under the new policy, this money is in jeopardy, but again we won't know for sure until next month."

Mr. Johnson said that the Jackson school board planned to spend most of its emergency money on buses this year.

Amid a flurry of activity caused by the Presidential statements, officials and rank-and-file employees of the Federal department said that they were shocked and disappointed at the new policy.

"It's shocking, it really is," said a young employe of the Civil Rights Division. "I can only hope that the end result won't hurt quality integrated education."