

PRESIDENT CALLS FOR 'MORATORIUM' ON SCHOOL BUSING

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Says in Nationwide Address
He Will Seek an Immediate
Halt of Action by Courts

NYTimes

ASKS '72 EDUCATION ACT

He Asserts New Legislation
Would Provide \$2.5-Billion
in Aid for Poor Children

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WASHINGTON, March 16—President Nixon said tonight that he would ask Congress for legislation that would call an immediate halt to all new busing orders by Federal courts—a "moratorium," he said, on any new busing of school-children for purposes of racial balance.

In a nationwide television and radio address, Mr. Nixon said he would also propose a companion measure, called the Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1972, to improve the education of children from poor families.

The President asserted that

The text of Nixon's speech is printed on Page 22.

when taken together, the two proposals "would focus our efforts where they really belong—on better education for all of our children, rather than on more busing for some of our children."

More Details Due

The President's brief address constituted a summary of more detailed and comprehensive recommendations he will send to Congress tomorrow.

He did not, for example, explain precisely what the word "moratorium" involved—whether, in other words, busing could be resumed in the future and when.

He also said that the new Educational Opportunities Act would provide \$2.5-billion in the next year for poor children. Yet he did not make clear whether this would all be new money or whether it would include some \$1-billion now provided for disadvantaged children under Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965.

Weeks of Struggle

The President's announcement came after weeks of Congressional struggle over various proposals to restrict the capacity of the courts to order busing to achieve school desegregation.

Some of these proposals have failed while others have succeeded, but the debate on Capitol Hill over the last few weeks has at least suggested that Congress would be eager to entertain and debate a Presidential initiative.

Both the House and Senate have passed antibusing proposals as amendments to the \$20-billion higher education bill. The House amendments are far stronger and would prohibit the use of Federal funds to pay for busing, forbid Federal officials

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to encourage communities to use their own funds for transporting students as a means of achieving desegregation, and delay court-ordered busing until all appeals of the court decision had been exhausted.

The milder Senate bill—sponsored by the Senate Democratic leader, Mike Mansfield of Montana, and the Republican leader Hugh Scott of Pennsylvania—would allow the Federal Government to pay for busing if local officials asked for the money, prohibit busing only if it endangered the health and safety of students or impaired their education, and delay court-ordered busing if it required students to be moved across school district lines.

But while the Senate eventually adopted milder language than the House, it came close to accepting stronger restrictions on the courts, the effect of which would have been to deprive all courts of the power to require any school system to bus children out of their neighborhoods to promote racial integration.

Amendments Beaten

Amendments to this effect offered by Senator Robert P. Griffin, Republican of Michigan, and Senator Howard H. Baker Jr., Republican of Tennessee, were beaten by a 50-to-47 margin on Feb. 29, while a similar amendment offered by Senator Robert J. Dole of Kansas, the chairman of the Republican National Committee, lost by a 48-to-47 margin the next day. The sudden Congressional

anxiety over the busing issue, in turn, had been fueled in part by widespread voter reaction against lower court decisions ordering busing, particularly decisions in Richmond—where a Federal district judge ordered busing between the central city and the suburbs—Indianapolis, Denver and some parts of Michigan.

The Richmond decision, in January, also led to intense discussions in the White House on alternative ways in which Mr. Nixon might respond to what he and his associates agreed was an issue of major social and political importance.

These aides were not unanimous in their recommendations. The then attorney general, John N. Mitchell, and the Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare, Elliot L. Richardson, for example, all made a matter of public record their opposition to a constitutional amendment. They said they favored the legislative approach because it was quicker and would not encumber the Constitution.

Before Mr. Nixon left for China, however, his closest associates reported that he had not foreclosed any option. Position papers were prepared in his absence, and the discussions mounted in intensity on his return from Peking.

Mr. Nixon has gone to Camp David twice in the last week to ponder his decision. He spent last weekend there, poring over various papers and recommendations, and he drove there yesterday with his key advisers on the issue and his top speech writer, Raymond K. Price Jr.

The speech was brought down from Camp David late this afternoon, and was still being reproduced for the press only 90 minutes before Mr. Nixon went on the air.

The White House had said earlier that it regarded the issue as too complex and emotional to permit the President to deal

with it on television and in any form other than a long, written statement. Such a statement will be presented to Congress tomorrow.

Mr. Nixon was said to have changed his mind at Camp David and decided that he should appear on television to establish the tone of his document and explain in simple terms the elements of his thinking and decision.

Earlier today Roy Wilkins, the executive director of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, charged that Mr. Nixon had aligned himself with "the supporters of racial segregation."

"Our President has made his choice," Mr. Wilkins told a House Judiciary subcommittee, which is holding hearings on various constitutional amendments aimed at restricting busing. "He is leading the mob which is tearing at the concept of equal protection of the law."