

OCTOBER 22, 1974

Office of the White House Press Secretary  
(Oklahoma City, Oklahoma)

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NOTICE TO THE PRESS

The President has signed H.R. 9075 - Disposition of Congressional office equipment which authorizes purchases by each outgoing member of Congress of office equipment and furnishings in one of his or her State or district offices.

Under present procedures, office furniture and equipment in Congressional State or district offices is disposed of by GSA under the Federal Property and Administrative Services Act. GSA screens the property for reuse by another member or for some other Federal use. This bill will permit outgoing members to purchase the furniture and equipment.

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The President has signed S. 2220 - Repeal of "coolie trade" laws; which repeals "coolie trade" laws which are no longer necessary.

The "coolie trade" laws were enacted in 1862 and 1875 to correct the practice of exploiting Chinese, Japanese, and other "oriental persons." At that time such persons were procured abroad for importation into the United States under labor contracts. The practice violated individual rights and upset working conditions in areas to which the people were imported.

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The President has signed H.R. 3903 -- Land conveyance in Michigan -- which directs the Secretary of the Interior to convey, at fair market value, certain public land in the State of Michigan to the Wisconsin Michigan Power Company.

H.R. 3903 will direct the Secretary of the Interior to convey title to the island described above to the Wisconsin Michigan Power Company. Conveyance will be subject to payment of administrative costs plus the fair market value of the property exclusive of any increased value resulting from the development or improvement of the lands by the Company.

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The President has signed H.R. 13261 -- Hungarian Claims -- which implements the Hungarian - United States Claims Agreement of March 6, 1973, by providing that payments made by Hungary under that agreement may be used to satisfy certain claims of U.S. nationals, and for other purposes.

This bill will amend the original Hungarian claims statutes to authorize the transfer of sums derived from the recent agreement to the Hungarian Claims Fund, thus making available \$18.9 million for additional payments on certain of the awards previously granted. It will also establish a new program to adjudicate claims based upon the nationalization or other taking of property of U.S. nationals which arose too late to be considered under the 1955 program but on or before March 6, 1973, the effective date of the agreement. The bill will further provide for a maximum period of 6 months for the filing of these new claims and for a 2-year settlement period subsequent to the filing deadline.

H.R. 13261 also contains a number of provisions to ensure that the payments it will provide will be distributed fairly among all successful claimants and to prevent double payments to certain groups of claimants who have made or may make separate settlements with the Hungarian Government.

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