

Office of the White House Press Secretary
(Vail, Colorado)

NOTICE TO THE PRESS

The President has signed S. 3976 which permanently prohibits the piracy of sound recordings; extends the term of expiring copyrights; and establishes a National Commission on New Technological Uses of Copyrighted Works.

S. 3976 deals with three copyright matters. It:

- permanently prohibits the piracy of sound recordings and sets maximum fine and imprisonment penalties for willful counterfeiting of recordings for profit
- extends the term of certain expiring copyrights to December 31, 1976, and
- establishes a National Commission on New Technological Uses of Copyrighted Works.

Piracy Provisions

In 1972 legislation was passed protecting sound recordings fixed, published and copyrighted between February 15, 1972, and January 1, 1975. The terminal date was established to allow Congress to consider the effects of the legislation. The bill removes the expiration date for a limited copyright in sound recordings.

Furthermore, the bill establishes maximum penalties of \$25,000 and/or imprisonment of one year for the first offense and \$50,000 and/or imprisonment for two years for subsequent offenses.

Copyright Extensions

In view of the pending general revision of copyright laws which would give all existing copyrights a total term of 75 years, Congress has authorized since 1962, eight other interim extensions of the term of expiring copyrights.

National Commission on New Technological Uses of Copyrighted Works

The bill establishes a Commission to study and make recommendations respecting improvement in the law relating to the use of copyrighted works in both computer systems and library photocopying. The new Commission is to be created in the Library of Congress with 13 members appointed by the President. Four members will be from each of the following groups:

1. authors and copyright owners
2. copyright users
3. the general public

plus the Librarian of Congress. Within three years a final Commission report is to be submitted to the President and Congress with recommendations for changes in the copyright law. An interim report will be due within one year after the first Commission meeting.

The Commission will be responsible to study and compile data on the use of copyrighted works "in conjunction with automatic systems capable of storing, processing, retrieving, and transferring information," and by various forms of machine reproduction, except for use as teaching aids.