

Office of the White House Press Secretary

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THE WHITE HOUSE

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

The Attorney General has notified me that after a thorough review, he has decided that the Department of Justice should not file a brief in the Boston school desegregation case at the current stage of litigation.

The Attorney General also pointed out that for over two decades the Department of Justice has entered virtually every school desegregation case that the Supreme Court has agreed to review. If the Supreme Court agrees to review the Boston case, the Department of Justice will follow past practice and enter the case at that time.

I have informed the Attorney General that I respect his decision not to intervene at this time and agree with him that the decision in no way reflects upon the merits of the case.

I have directed the Attorney General to continue an active search for a busing case which would be suitable for judicial review of current case law on forced school busing, and to accelerate his efforts to develop legislative remedies to minimize forced school busing. It is my intention to send a message to the Congress recommending such legislation at the earliest possible time. In addition, I shall meet next week with the Attorney General, the Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare, and other members of my Administration to review other possible actions that can be taken to provide communities with assistance in achieving equal educational opportunity for all.

My objective is to create better educational opportunities consistent with the Nation's commitment to justice and equal opportunity. In my view, massive school busing, while done with the best of intentions, has too often disrupted the lives and impeded the education of the children affected. I believe that ways can be found to minimize forced busing while also remaining true to the Nation's ideals and our educational goals. That is my objective.

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