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Monthly Report of the Washington Bureau

Hearings on Civil Rights Bills are now in progress before the House Judiciary Subcommittee No. 5 and are scheduled to begin on February 14 in the Senate Judiciary Subcommittee on Constitutional Rights.

Mr. J. Francis Pohlhaus, Bureau Counsel, has prepared a statement on pending bills. It should be noted that the Pohlhaus comment mentions that the Rodino, Baldwin, and Dirksen Bills are in the form as passed by the House in the 84th Congress. The House amendments are explained briefly on page two of this report where the Rodino and Baldwin Bills are listed.

The following is a comment on some of the important civil rights bills that have been introduced in the 85th Congress.

HOUSE

H.R. 1151 (Keating, R., N.Y.) is similar to H.R. 627, 84th Congress, as that bill was reported out of the House Judiciary Committee.

H.R. 1151 would

1. Establish a non-permanent Commission on Civil Rights with subpoena powers.
2. Provide an additional Assistant Attorney General in the Department of Justice. There is no provision that he shall head a Civil Rights Division, but the Attorney General has promised that he will.
3. Extend civil protection from coercion and intimidation to the right to vote in Federal elections, and from discrimination by state and local officials in all elections. This would include injunctive relief by the Attorney General.
4. Grant to the Attorney General the right to intervene by civil suit, including injunctive relief, for the protection of certain civil rights, including equal protection of the law, where conspiracy to deny such rights exists.
5. In voting and civil rights cases brought under these statutes, eliminate the necessity of exhausting administrative remedies.

Identical bills have been introduced by Representatives Pelly, R., Wash., (H.R. 347); Powell, D., N.Y., (H.R. 887); and Hillings, R., Calif., (H.R. 2153).