

Justice Powell refuses to block court order against redistricting plan

WASHINGTON (AP)—Supreme Court Justice Lewis Powell Jr. refused Tuesday to block the order of a U. S. District Court in Austin that found the Texas legislative redistricting plan unconstitutional.

It was the second time in two weeks that Powell has been called upon to rule in a Texas redistricting case.

Last month, he agreed to block the order of a U. S. District Court in Dallas that found the Texas congressional redistricting plan unconstitutional.

Powell said the state of Texas, which had asked him to block the order of the U. S. District Court in Austin, had failed to show the lower court's order was

erroneous or that implementation of the judgment pending appeal would cause irreparable harm.

Powell on Jan. 28 blocked a U. S. District Court order that found the redistricting plan was in violation of the one-man, one-vote rule. The state had argued in that case that the court's order, which was effective immediately, would have caused mass confusion since the deadline for filing for political office

in Texas was Feb. 7. Texas argued that registration slips already had been sent to voters telling them where they should vote.

The order of the Austin court, however, did not go into effect immediately and Powell, saying he had discussed the case with six of his colleagues on the court, concluded there was no harm done to Texas.

The Austin court found the redistricting plan for the Senate

constitutional but ruled the House redistricting plan violated the equal protection clause because of population deviations in the districts. It also found that multi-member district plans for Dallas and Bexar Counties were unconstitutional.

The district court suspended its ruling on the House redistricting plan to allow the Texas state legislature to adopt a new and constitutional plan. It said the elections Feb. 7 could be held

under the plan found unconstitutional.

The district court also ordered that candidates residing in Dallas and Bexar counties could run from any district in that county rather than from the district of their residence. It said this would minimize the disruptive impact of its ruling.

Powell said the case had received careful attention by the three-judge court in Austin and noted "The order of the court

was narrowly drawn to effectuate its decision with a minimum of interference with the state's legislative processes . . ."

He said although no other justice participated in the drafting of his opinion, "I am authorized to say that each of them would vote to deny this application." He said he had been in contact with all but two justices.

The district court ruling which Powell last month agreed to stay differentiated in the Austin

court's ruling in that the entire redistricting plan was unconstitutional in that it violated the equal protection clause. That court, sitting in Dallas, said the plan would place 4.1 per cent more in the state's largest district in the smallest.

That district court then ordered into effect a redistricting plan that would permit varying the size of the state's 31 and smallest district.

Humble Oil gives \$70,000 for research

The College of Engineering at A&M has received \$70,000 from Humble Oil and Refining Company to continue research being conducted by Dr. Peter D. Weiner, associate professor of mechanical engineering.

Research aims, according to Dr. Weiner, are "to evaluate the effect of the drilling tool joints and the wear characteristics on casing during drilling operations, to determine the optimum stresses on the sizes of drill collars used in the oil industry, and to evaluate the tubing and casing joints currently used in oil field operations."

Dr. Weiner, who joined A&M in 1956, has been a consultant for Humble on tubular goods for the last 16 years and has received several patents in this area.

He has lectured on the make-up goods in Europe and the U.S. and has conducted research at A&M for Humble since January, 1967.

Dr. Weiner is assisted on the project by Dr. Charles Hays, associate professor of mechanical engineering and research assistants Russel McCombs and Roy Marlow.

Insurance change on premium cost made for students

AUSTIN, Tex. (AP)—College students who buy deferred premium life insurance policies in their senior year must be clearly informed they are taking on a debt, the state insurance board said today.

The board issued new rules governing the sale of such policies, which the agency said have certain advantages for the student.

Such policies take effect immediately, but the student does not pay the first year's premium until he leaves school. Instead, he signs a promissory note for the initial premium. His second and subsequent year's premiums fall due after he graduates.

Occasionally, the board said, students do not realize they are taking on an obligation to pay the first year premium at a later date.

"The order is intended to make it very clear to the student that he is entering into an indebtedness," the board said in a statement.

For instance, if the student is a minor, the note must be co-signed by his parent, legal guardian or adult spouse. Also, a \$10 cash down payment must be paid by the student when he signs his application for insurance.

Senate

(Continued from page 1)

ure would, five days after enactment, permit a court to enjoin a strike or lockout affecting military and agricultural cargo loadings, or any shipments to and from Hawaii, Alaska and Guam.

The Rules Committee considered three alternatives which could take responsibility for a decision from the Labor Committee. These were the administration's compulsory-arbitration request, the 60-day partial injunction, and a substitute by Rep. Spark M. Matsunaga, D-Hawaii.

The Matsunaga bill would allow court injunction against a strike for up to 60 days, with both factions required after 25 days to make their "last best offer" on unresolved issues, from which the secretary of Labor or an arbitration panel would select as binding the one deemed most reasonable.

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