

the nation

Civiletti expected to replace Griffin Bell

WASHINGTON — Attorney General-designate Benjamin Civiletti started through the Senate confirmation process Wednesday, and assured the Judiciary Committee he will be completely independent of the White House or other influence.

Civiletti, nominated by President Carter to succeed Griffin Bell at the Justice Department, got a friendly reception from the panel and appeared certain of winning quick approval.

The only dissent came from Hispanic leaders, who accused Civiletti of having a "deplorable" record in cracking down on police brutality against Mexican-Americans.

Civiletti defended his actions in that regard. And he promised the committee he will continue Bell's policy of keeping the department free of politics and outside interference.

"It gives to the assistant attorneys general and their subordinates the actual freedom to make decisions totally without outside influence," he said.

Civiletti answered with a flat "no" when Sen. Strom Thurmond, R-S.C., inquired whether the president exacted any pledge of loyalty before naming him to replace Bell.

Thurmond inquired, "Do you feel you will have complete independence?"

"Yes," Civiletti replied.

Thurmond indicated he would vote to approve the nomination. And Civiletti drew praise from Sen. Edward Kennedy, D-Mass., the committee chairman, and Sen. Paul Laxalt, R-Nev.

Laxalt said Civiletti had turned in an "essentially non-political performance" both as an assistant attorney general and for the past year as Bell's No. 2 man.

On that point, Civiletti told the committee, "I don't know now the party identification of the six members of my staff."

Bell himself, in a statement read to the panel by department spokesman Terrence Adamson, said Civiletti "has never shied from even the toughest issues. He is firm, decisive, a leader and a manager. He is a man of the law, a lawyer's lawyer."

But Ruben Sandoval of the League of United Latin American Citizens told the committee "we find his track record deplorable" on police brutality cases.

Civiletti replied that he has empathy for Mexican-Americans and will try to be "open-minded." But he said in one specific brutality case, every prosecutor involved agreed there was insufficient evidence to seek indictments.

Outside the building, about a dozen of Sandoval's group carried signs with slogans such as, "Civiletti Shields Police Brutality."

Phillips to test market gasohol

United Press International BARTLESVILLE, Okla. — Plans to test market gasohol at 18 service stations in three midwestern cities were announced Wednesday by Phillips Petroleum Co.

C. Kittrell, an executive vice president of Phillips, said the test would eliminate the sale of premium gasoline and substitute

gasohol — a blend of 90 percent unleaded gasoline and 10 percent ethanol — at the stations involved in the program.

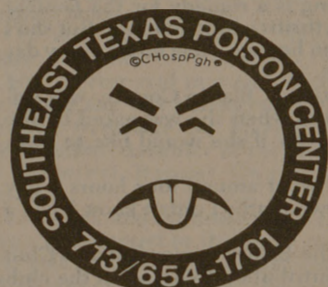
The marketing test will involve nine company-operated stations in Des Moines, Iowa; two in Council Bluffs, Iowa; and seven in Omaha, Neb., Kittrell said.

He said the program would begin as soon as the company obtains necessary exceptions from Department of Energy rules to allow Phillips to designate gasohol as a separate product and to market it in a localized area.

"Phillips is test marketing gasohol because we want to evaluate the

product's handling properties and customer acceptance," Kittrell said. "We also believe gasohol may offer one possibility for increasing supplies of motor fuel during a time when the nation badly needs them."

If initial results are favorable, the test program may be expanded, Kittrell said.



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