

13 Congressmen Fly First Class at U.S. Expense to Lesotho

WASHINGTON (UPI) — Most of the 13 members of a congressional delegation now visiting the African nation of Lesotho are taking \$75 a day in U.S. government funds despite getting their food and lodging bills paid by the host country, it has been reported.

The Scripps-Howard News Service also said Wednesday all but two of the members either flew to the southern African nation first class at State Department expense or on "a luxuriously equipped Air Force jetliner with their relatives and aides getting a free ride except for nominal food-and-drink charges."

According to the report, the two others — Reps. Charles Whalen (R-Ohio)

and Silvio Conte (R-Mass.) — refused both military transportation and the per diem expense money, relying instead on the African-American Institute in New York, which sponsored the conference they are attending.

The institute paid \$1,743 each for the economy-class round trip tickets for Whalen and Conte, the story said. The military jet, it said, will cost the government more than \$57,000.

Also traveling on the military plane, it reported, are "nearly a dozen congressional aides" and also using an Air Force plane to get to Lesotho were Sen. Joseph Biden (D-Del.) and his brother; Rep. Charles Diggs (D-Mich.) and his daughter and Rep. Walter Fauntroy D-D.C. and his father. Six other members of Congress took their spouses along, the story said.

The story also said Diggs, in line to become head of the House International Relations operations subcommittee which oversees committee travel, will have traveled to 14 countries in the month before he returns to the United States next week.

It said Diggs asked for a car from the State Department to transport him around Capetown, South Africa, and Freetown, Sierra Leone, next week while the rest of the delegation is moved by bus.

Rep. Andrew Young (D-Ga.), a confidant of President-Elect Jimmy Carter, is on the trip and asked the Defense Department to provide him with a small plane for a personal trip, the story said, but the Pentagon refused.

Others on the trip are Sen. Dick Clark (D-Iowa) and Reps. Charles Rangel (D-N.Y.), Cardiss Collins (D-Ill.), William Clay (D-Mo.), John Anderson, (R-Ill.), Yvonne Burke (D-Calif.) and Don Bonker (D-Wash.).

News In Brief

Saxbe Not Running

DAYTON (AP) — Former Ambassador to India William Saxbe has squelched, for the time being at least, speculation that he might run for governor of Ohio in 1978.

Saxbe, aboard the Queen Elizabeth 11 in the mid-Atlantic en route back to Ohio, said Wednesday he "has no plans to be a candidate."

The 60-year-old Saxbe has been prominently mentioned as a standardbearer in 1978 to improve Republican fortunes which hit a low point in Ohio in the November elections.

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