

Standard Form For Members of the Legislature

Name of Representative Senator Plymat,
William N. Sr. - Represented Polk County, Iowa

1. Birthday and place 3. Jul 1911 Marquette, Minnesota

2. Marriage (s) date place

Ruth Clark 1940 Signon, Iowa

3. Significant events for example:

A. Business Member of both Polk County and Iowa Bar Association

B. Civic responsibilities Kiwanis Club

C. Profession Lawyer; Law teacher

4. Church membership Methodist

5. Sessions served 65th and 66th General Assemblies 1973-1974, 1975-1976

6. Public Offices

A. Local

B. State Member of Iowa Commission on Substance Abuse

C. National Member of National Safety Council's Committee; Executive Director of the American Council on Alcoholism

7. Death 22 Oct 1993 Dec Moines, Iowa; buried Bethel's Cemetery, Hatfield, Iowa

8. Children William D. Jr.; Amy

9. Names of parents Stetter G. and Ida (Rebel) Plymat

10. Education He was educated in Markato, Minnesota, graduating from Markato High School.

11. Degrees He attended Stanford University and earned a B.S. and LL.B from the University of Minnesota

12. Other applicable information Republican

- He practiced law in Des Moines, Iowa 1937-1941.
- He taught business law at Drake University, Des Moines, Iowa
- He was Chief Prosecution Attorney of Iowa District OPA during World War II.
- He was chairman of the Board of Directors for Preferred Risk Mutual Insurance Company in Des Moines, Iowa.
- He was Board of Directors member for Midwest Mutual Insurance Company
- He was very opposed to alcohol consumption for health and moral reasons. He used this opposition to found Preferred Risk Insurance Company in 1947 as a firm who would issue automobile insurance only to non-drinkers.

FROM REGISTER WITH BYLINE

Washington, D.C. — In an effort to quell her city's problems with drugs and violent crime, Mayor Sharon Pratt Kelly on Friday asked President Clinton to give her the power to call in the National Guard to augment the city's police force.

Traditionally, the National Guard has been called out in urban areas by governors to help maintain order or protect property only during riots and natural disasters.

But if Kelly's request is approved, the nation's capital could become the first major American city to have troops patrolling alongside police officers in non-emergency times.

Kelly sent a letter to Clinton Friday asking him to give her direct authority to call in some of the 3,700 members of the Washington, D.C., Army and Air National Guard.

Clinton said he is "sympathetic" to Washington's problems and is reviewing the mayor's request.

Kelly wants the D.C. Guard to help the District of Columbia's 4,200-member police force with drug interdiction activities.

She stressed that the Guard would work strictly in a support capacity with police officers. Since they do not have arrest powers, Guard soldiers would ride with police officers, Police Chief Fred Thomas said.

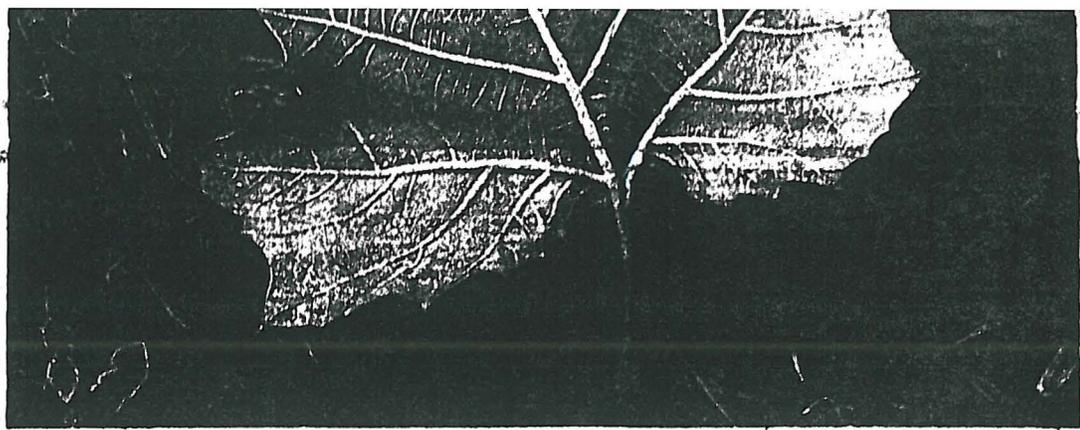
The desire to call in the Guard does not suggest that Washington's police cannot control crime, Kelly said, but "we have a problem of extraordinary proportion."

But some Washingtonians aren't so sure the Guard is the answer.

"The mayor is barking up the wrong tree on this issue," said City Council member Harold Brazil, who added that the district would be better served if it could fill 300 vacancies on the police force.

"This would be an admission that crime-fighting in the district is a lost cause," Brazil said. "This would show the world that America's capital is no better than the unstable capital of some anarchist, Third World nation."

There have been 378 homicides in Washington this year.



BOB HANDELL/THE REGISTER

Despite this weekend's forecast for deceptively warm days, morning temperatures this week have hovered at the freezing mark. Frost highlights the outlines of a maple leaf in a West Des Moines yard one chilly morn recently.

SUMMIT MEETING



Yeltsin Clinton

President Clinton will fly to Moscow in mid-January for a summit meeting with Boris Yeltsin to show support for the Russian leader's drive toward democracy. Clinton's visit to Russia will come after he attends a NATO meeting in Brussels, Jan. 10-11. **STORY: Page 6A.**

Arafat's wife walks fine line trying to coexist with PLO

By YOUSSEF M. IBRAHIM
NEW YORK TIMES

Paris, France — Soha Tawil says that long before she met her husband, Yasser Arafat, she was no stranger to Middle East politics.

"My mother was engaged in dialogue with the Israelis 26 years ago, shortly after they invaded Jerusalem," Soha Arafat said. "I grew up seeing Israelis come and go in our house, so the idea of making peace is not strange to me. I was brought up with the idea that eventually we must coexist."

But for Soha Arafat these days, coexistence with the friends and colleagues of the chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organization might

be harder for her than coexistence with the Israelis.

A high-ranking PLO official threatened to boycott the signing of the peace accord with Israel at the White House last month if she attended.

And when word leaked out last year that the man who was "married to the Palestinian revolution" had secretly married a Christian who was not even half his age, a flood of ink poured forth from the Arab press that has not stopped churning.

"Traitor, Lover"

"Traitor to the Cause — Lover of Young Girls," says a headline in the current issue of Kuwait, a monthly published by the Kuwaiti Ministry of Information. Similarly, the press in

Saudi Arabia and other Arab countries has had a field day.

"A lot of people put their politics wrath against Arafat into this marriage," Soha Arafat said last week in Tunis. "The harshest criticism was in the Arab press, which accused me of marrying him for his money. It is nonsense, of course. . . . Indeed, I lived a much more comfortable life before in Paris and Jerusalem."

Even many of Yasser Arafat's closest associates were not happy about the marriage. They resent Soha Arafat's status, believing that she was crowding them in the tight inner circle around the PLO leader.

The degree of resentment was r

ARAFAT Please turn to Page 2

Preferred Risk founder William Plymat dies

He helped launch a company that issued car insurance only to non-drinkers.

By GENE RAFFENSPERGER and DALE KASLER
REGISTER STAFF WRITERS

William Plymat Sr., who spent his lifetime promoting temperance and helped found an insurance company that rewarded teetotalers, died of a heart ailment Friday at Hospice Kavanagh House. He was 82.

Plymat, who made his home at 9508 Aurora Ave. in Urbandale, op-

posed alcohol consumption for health and moral reasons, but he was able also to use that opposition to make a successful business career. He was one of three men who founded the Preferred Risk Insurance Co. in 1947 as a firm that would issue automobile insurance only to non-drinkers.

Although industry observers scoffed at the thought that an insurance company could succeed solely



Plymat Dies at 82

on such business, the Des Moines-based firm thrived. From a \$30,000 beginning investment (\$10,000 from each of the three founders), Preferred Risk has become a \$300 million-a-year company that insures motorists, homeowners and churches. It also has a life insurance company.

As the company expanded it outgrew its headquarters, first in two rented houses, in the 2800 block of Grand Avenue, then a new building at 6000 Grand Ave. The company now occupies a headquarters in the 1100 block of Ashworth Road in West Des Moines on property once owned by the Des Moines Golf and Country Club.

Plymat held top executive positions with the company throughout his career, including serving as president for nine years. He was chairman for 11 years after that, retiring in 1977.

The so-called "non-drinkers" car insurance was born of the theory that teetotalers would make fewer claims against an insurance firm and therefore the firm could offer its protection at lower costs. The company's chief selling point was to ask drivers why they should pay for the carelessness of drinking drivers.

Plymat traveled the Midwest to rail against the evils of drinking and

PLYMAT Please turn to Page 9A

INSIDE YOUR

CAPITOL HILL SEX DIARIES

Papers kept by Sen. Bob Packwood tell of lawmakers' sex lives **National News, Page 3A**

GAMBLING IN IOWA

A panel's final report on gambling is only the beginning of debate. **Metro News, Page 1M**

NEW ISU SPORTS COMPLEX

Iowa State unveils an \$8 million privately funded project. **Sports, Page 1S**

William Plymat dies at age 82

PLYMAT

Continued from Page 1A

driving, said Bern Mercer, a co-founder and current chairman of Preferred Risk.

"You name it — he was there, always talking about alcohol and its disastrous effects," Mercer said Friday.

Ministers in particular were attracted to the company's car insurance. At one point, when the firm had 150,000 drivers insured, more than 8,000 of them were clergymen.

Sign a Pledge

In return for the lower cost coverage from Preferred Risk, the buyer had to sign a pledge that he was a teetotaler. If subsequently the buyer was involved in an accident and it was proven he was using alcohol, the claim was paid, but the insurance was canceled.

Plymat was born at Mankato, Minn., where both his father and

grandfather had served as county attorneys and municipal judges. Plymat intended to follow their footsteps, and he got his law degree at the University of Minnesota.

Even before he left high school, Plymat showed his interest and leadership abilities in the temperance movement. A group of young men, classmates of his at Mankato High School, got drunk on alcohol-spiked near-beer and caused \$1,200 damage to the local National Guard Armory. Their parents had to come up with the money to pay the bill.

Plymat decided to organize an abstinence organization for young people. He called it the Student Sobriety Society. He wrote letters to 100 wealthy individuals in the United States asking each to contribute \$100 to finance the organization. Three responded, including department store founder J.C. Penney and inventor Thomas Edison.

With the \$300 Plymat set off on a car trip around Minnesota. The trip resulted in formation of 19 Student

Sobriety Society chapters. Eventually the organizations came to be called Allied Youth, and in the 1980s units were still active in such places as Texas, Florida and Canada.

Came to Des Moines

Plymat came to Des Moines in the late 1930s and became an executive in two insurance firms before helping launch Preferred Risk.

A Republican, Plymat was unsuccessful in attempts to win his party's nomination for the U.S. Senate in 1968 and the U.S. House of Representatives in 1970. He was elected to the Iowa State Senate in 1972 and served until 1976.

As a politician Plymat was identified with peace causes and disarmament. He was an early advocate of a freeze on nuclear weapons. In the Iowa Legislature he was a staunch opponent of any move to restore the death penalty.

As a private citizen, Plymat fought hard against the legalizing in Iowa in 1963 of liquor by the drink.

He and his supporters failed to stop that change. So, by the time Plymat reached the Iowa Senate he was concentrating on making Iowa's drunk driving laws tougher.

Plymat was a member of the Iowa Commission on Substance Abuse, executive director of the American Council on Alcoholism, chairman of the International Council of Parliamentarians, a global body that battled drugs and alcoholism, and the Governor's Task Force on Drunken Driving.

He is survived by his wife, Ruth, a son, William Jr., and a daughter, Amy Plymat, all of Des Moines.

Services will be at 1:30 p.m. Monday at McLaren's Funeral Chapel. Cremation will follow, with burial at a later date in Resthaven Cemetery. Friends may call from 5 to 8 p.m. Sunday at the funeral chapel, where the family will be present from 6:30 to 8 p.m.

Memorial contributions may be made to Hospice Kavanagh House.

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Source: Iowa Territorial and State Legislators Collection compiled by volunteers and staff of the State Historical Society of Iowa Library, Des Moines, Iowa

Individual Record

FamilySearch™ U.S. Social Security Death Index

[Search Results](#)

Select record to download - Maximum: 50

 William PLYMAT

Birth Date: 3 Jul 1911
Death Date: 22 Oct 1993
Social Security Number: 477-10-5070
State or Territory Where Number Was Issued: Minnesota

Death Residence Localities

ZIP Code: 50322
Localities: Des Moines, Polk, Iowa
Lovington, Polk, Iowa
Urbandale, Polk, Iowa
Windsor Heights, Polk, Iowa

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