

Nixon Mulls Support Of '76 Candidates

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Associated Press

President Nixon said yesterday that he won't endorse any Republican candidate for the presidency in 1976 "until they are tried in the field of battle."

The President's comments came after he was asked at a news conference whether he would actively oppose the possible candidacy of Sen. Charles Percy, (R-Ill.) for the White House.

Mr. Nixon acknowledged that he said several months ago at a Cabinet meeting that Percy should not be the party's 1976 nominee.

But Mr. Nixon said that statement resulted from a misunderstanding. He said he thought Percy had introduced a resolution opposing the President's choice of Elliot L. Richardson for Attorney General, when, in fact, Percy's res-

olution had been introduced prior to Richardson's nomination and had been misinterpreted.

Mr. Nixon then reviewed the possible field of candidates for newsmen, mentioning Percy by name and saying that the 1976 GOP candidates might include several governors, former governors, senators, House members and the "mayor of Indianapolis."

It was unclear whether the President was referring specifically to Indianapolis Mayor Richard Lugar or was merely using that as an example of how broad the field might be.

The President said he would make no decision on supporting any candidate "until they are tried in the field of battle," an obvious reference to the presidential primaries.