

**Predicts Nixon Veto****Agnew Flays Senators  
On Tax Bill 'Tinkering'**

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HOT SPRINGS, Ark., Dec. 12—Vice President Agnew opened the Republican Governors' Conference here today with a slashing attack on "certain careless men in the Senate" who have "finkered" with the tax reform bill.

Plainly aiming his fire at Democrats who had introduced relief amendments to the tax bill passed yesterday by the Senate (with 18 Republican votes), Agnew accused them of seeking to grant an inflationary windfall to the public in order to "curry political advantages for themselves."

"Their amendments are attention-getting gimmicks which ignore the painstaking work of the Mills committee and the exhaustive efforts of the administration to achieve tax reform in a time of inflation."

**"Going to Backfire"**

Agnew declared, "They resemble children playing with power tools but I believe their grandstanding is going to backfire. They are about to gore their own oxen."

The last remark referred to

Sen. Albert Gore (D-Tenn.), whom Agnew has chosen as a particular villain in the tax bill fight. Gore, who introduced the amendment increasing personal exemption from \$600 to \$800, is up for re-election in 1970, and Agnew has threatened to campaign against him.

The Senate bill, Agnew said, has "turned tax reform into a Rube Goldberg toy to entertain and attract reluctant voters to fading politicians."

"If tax reform deteriorates to tax showmanship—inconsistent with the interests of equity and national economy—the President will veto the bill."

Agnew's address set a political note for the Republican governors, who in January will occupy 32 of the nation's statehouses—the largest majority since 1920 when the figure was 34.

Twenty-six of the seated governors and the governors-elect (Linwood Holton of Virginia and William Cahill of New Jersey) were present in the vast, 11-story Arlington Hotel, site of the two-day conference and hub of Hot Springs' famous Bath House Row.

Discovered by Herando DeSoto four centuries ago, the springs were a major national attraction until three years ago when Republican Gov. Winthrop Rockefeller did away with gambling. Since then the town has declined, retaining a genteel but faded Southern charm as well as some severe economic problems.

Economics and politics dominated the opening session, as the governors heard a panel of professionals urge greater attention to the cities and needs of the disadvantaged.

As some 20 pickets marched across the street protesting failures of the poverty program (while a policeman took photos of each one), Gov. James A. Rhodes of Ohio rebutted the panel with the statement that the key to solving poverty is job training and vocational education. "Unless we break the cycle, welfare is going to break every state in the nation," he said.

**Politics Is Major Topic**

But the central thrust of the conference was inevitably politics and 1970. Thirty-seven governorships are up for election next year, 26 now held by Republicans.

The Vice President, after praising the administration's achievements, took the Democrats to task for practicing oneupmanship.

"They attach like parasites to the carefully-thought-out administration programs and simply clamor for raised figures and higher percentages of assistance."

"In 1970," he added "we are going to put a Republican majority in the Senate . . . and this Republican Governors' Association is going to suffer from a population explosion unknown in our history."