

Tours Reveal Final Strategy Of Candidates

On Corruption

By George Lardner Jr.

Washington Post Staff Writer
SPOKANE, Wash., Oct.

28—A sign bobbing up and down at a McGovern rally outside Los Angeles the other afternoon summed up the final strategy a bit more succinctly than the candidate would probably care to admit.

"I'd rather pick a green apple than a rotten one," it said.

With the election just 10 days away, the distaste and distrust that many voters have always harbored for Richard Nixon has emerged as the basic underpinning of the Democratic Party's long-shot hopes for ousting him from the White House.

Former Sen. Eugene McCarthy has been lending his patrician contempt, Edmund Muskie his Yankee outrage and Edward Kennedy his lilting scorn.

All have been uniting behind the Democratic presidential candidate, Sen. George McGovern, in the effort to convince the voters that the man who sits in the White House has been corrupting the country and its ideals. It is a harsh theme, but at this point perhaps the only one that might work.

McGovern, for one, believes in it as an article of faith. In remarks prepared for an address to a student crowd at Gonzaga University here this afternoon, the South Dakota senator said he felt strongly that the Nixon administration's "shoddy, self-seeking leadership has slowly eroded the strength of the ideals that made us free.

"How long will our liberty last," McGovern warned, "if our highest officials wiretap at will, burglarize the opposition, intimidate the press and engage in forgery, sabotage and spying?"

See McGOVERN, A4, Col. 1

A 4

Sunday, Oct. 29, 1972 THE WASHINGTON POST

McGovern Makes 'Corruption' Plea Along West Coast

McGOVERN, From A1

"How long will our freedom endure if our people must endure a tax system that is not fair? We are not free in the real sense if our government is put on the auction block to special interests and the truth is put into a paper shredder."

McGovern's faith in how the voters would respond to such appeals seemed to be wavering a week ago.

But in the past few days, shored up here by Muskie, there by McCarthy, over there by Kennedy, the tireless, plodding minister's son from South Dakota seems to have convinced himself all over again. Outwardly at least, not even the prospects of a Nixon-arranged peace in Vietnam appear to have shaken him.

At a \$5-a-plate breakfast in Disneyland before leaving California this morning, McGovern reminded his 1,500 listeners that it was he, and not Mr. Nixon, who has been speaking out in opposition to the war for the past 10 years.

Now, in peace in sight, he suggested hopefully, the voters will realize that the Democratic Party can best bind up the wounds and divisions that the conflict has caused, that the "Sargent Shriver-George McGovern"

ticket, as he put it "will be best for the economy in the postwar period."

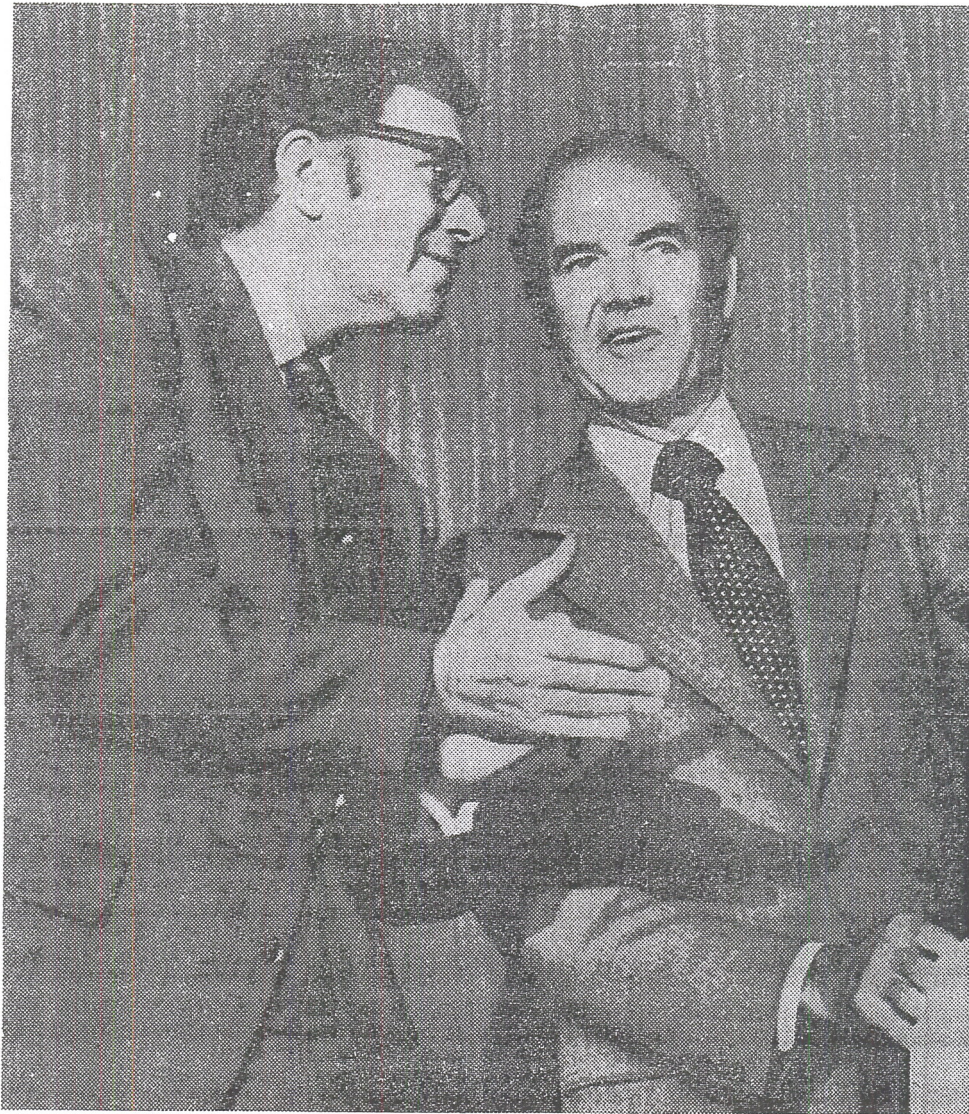
In terms of votes, however, it seems unlikely that the McGovern camp is genuinely expecting a nationwide plurality. Instead, they have been concentrating on selected states, that, taken together, could give them victory in the electoral college despite the top-heavy Nixon margins expected elsewhere.

By the account of the South Dakotan's own top advisers, there are precious few states in which they currently consider McGovern to have an edge.

Frank Mankiewicz, McGovern's National Political Director, said the other evening that he felt his candidate was now ahead in Massachusetts, the District of Columbia, California, South Dakota, Rhode Island and Wisconsin.

Next ticking off states "we think we can win," Mankiewicz confined himself to Michigan, New York, Illinois, Minnesota, Connecticut, Oregon and Washington.

"The real battlegrounds" he said, "are New Jersey, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Texas. There's a common variable in each of those states, and that's the effi-



Associated Press

George McGovern has a word with Dor-man Commons, chairman of the Southern California for McGovern Committee, just before a \$5-a-plate breakfast at Disneyland.

ciency of our get-out-the vote organization."

Mankiewicz stressed that he was not writing off the chances of a winning margin in a string of other states such as Alaska, Hawaii and Nevada, or even Iowa, Missouri and New Mexico.

"Somewhere in all of those," he said, "are the 270 electoral votes we need. Nationally, in the popular vote, I think we're going to come out about even.

A measure of the odds,

however, can be glimpsed by a recent poll in McGovern's own state, where, according to South Dakota Lt. Gov. Bill Dougherty, a close McGovern adviser, Mr. Nixon was last seen leading the senator by a margin of 52 to 48.

Such reports are taken by the McGovern camp as good news, not bad. Persistently, they contend that the momentum is all in their favor, that the "corruption" issue

symbolized by the Water-gate scandal is finally catching fire, especially among Republican and independent voters who might otherwise be inclined towards Mr. Nixon.

Correction

The secondary headline of a story on page 19 in today's Potomac magazine should have appeared with the story on page 12. The error is regretted.