

# Bush Is Pushed For No. 2 Position

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Backers of the vice presidential hopes of Republican National Chairman George Bush pressed a full-scale campaign on his behalf yesterday as the countdown began on President Ford's choice of a new second-in-command.

With ballots from Republican elected officials and party leaders headed for the White House, Bush mobilized an impressive array of support against former Gov. Nelson A. Rockefeller of New York.

But the only man who has a vote in this particular election—President Ford—maintained his silence on his choice.

Richard L. Herman, the Nebraska Republican national committeeman and unofficial leader of the Bush-for-Veep drive, said Mr. Ford would be shown that Bush "is the only one in the race with no opposition. He may not be the first choice in all cases, but he's not lower than second with anyone."

Three GOP congressmen—William Steiger of Wisconsin, Jerry Pettis of California and John Hammer-schmidt of Arkansas—formed a team working for Bush. All were members of Bush's GOP freshman class in the House in 1967.



**GEORGE BUSH**  
... strong contender

Bush also won the backing yesterday of the Georgia Republican Party.

As Herman indicated, an even more impressive indication of Bush's strength was his emergence as the No. 2 choice on lists which spanned the party's ideological spectrum.

A group of House conservative favored Arizona Sen. Barry M. Goldwater for

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# Bush Is Being Pushed For Vice Presidency

**SELECT, From A1**

Vice President—and Bush as second choice. Minnesota Republicans backed Rep. Albert H. Quie—and Bush. Rep. Paul N. (Pete) McCloskey said he supported either Elliot L. Richardson, Rockefeller or Bush.

Bush also apparently was doing well in a poll of Republican governors, state chairmen and national committee members. This sampling of party opinion was being conducted by Mary Louise Smith, co-chairman of the Republican National Committee, after Bush stepped aside on grounds that he was a prospective nominee.

House Minority Leader John J. Rhodes of Arizona wrote every Republican member of the House asking for sealed submissions of their views. One hundred and forty-three of the 187 House Republicans responded, and Rhodes turned their letters over to the White House.

Senate Minority Leader Hugh Scott of Pennsylvania did the same with 35 letters from 36 senators (the two Oklahoma senators submitted their recommendations jointly).

The blitz among Republican congressmen and party officials for Bush was reminiscent of the drive that those same Republicans put on to make Mr. Ford Vice President 10 months ago. But the man who was calling signals for the Ford drive, from his post as a White House counselor, Melvin R. Laird, is on the opposite side this time.

Laird, who publicly urged Rockefeller's selection even before Mr. Ford succeeded to the presidency, was in New York yesterday. Republicans here reported that he and New York Republican Chairman Richard Rosenbaum were mobilizing support around the country for Rockefeller but a Rockefeller spokesman said the ex-governor had ordered that

there be "no organized campaign."

The names in speculation also included Tennessee's two Republican senators, Bill Brock and Howard W. Baker Jr., Gov. Daniel J. Evans of Washington, Goldwater, and Scott.

Evans flew here last night for a meeting of the executive committee of the National Governors Conference with the President today, and a group of his supporters claimed backing for him from several other governors of both parties.

While awaiting Mr. Ford's choice, several Republican leaders began discussing privately the likelihood that the nominee would be tied up in confirmation hearings before Senate and House committees most of this autumn, keeping him or her off the campaign trail.

Herman, working the phones with two others from an improvised "boiler room" in the Statler Hilton, said he was "assisting" those on Capitol Hill and in the party organization who support Bush but was "not campaigning against anyone."

Herman said he supported Bush because "he can do more to help the Republican Party than anyone else and is totally acceptable throughout the country..." He and other Bush supporters noted the advantage Bush has as the son of a Connecticut senator and who served in Congress from Texas.

Herman said Bush was "obviously aware of what we're doing, but is not directing it." However, there was little doubt of the party chairman's eagerness for the No. 2 job.

On Monday night, after President Ford's address to a joint session of Congress, Rhodes made available to one of the networks a room for interviewing political leaders with reaction to Mr. Ford's speech.

As soon as the President had finished, the doors of the room burst open and in walked Bush.