

# Bush Reported Leading In Race for No. 2 Spot

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Republican National Chairman George Bush has the "inside track" for the vice presidency, a source close to President Ford said yesterday.

This same source, who personally favors former New York Gov. Nelson A. Rockefeller, said he was convinced that Mr. Ford had not yet reached a decision. White House officials said later in the day that the decision will not come until next week.

In Columbia, S.C., Sen. Barry M. Goldwater of Arizona said before a Republican fund-raising dinner Wednesday night that he had "a gut feeling" that Mr. Ford would select Bush. United Press International said that Goldwater listed Bush and Rockefeller as the two front-runners. Several Republicans close to Ford, including the source who listed Bush as having the inside track, also said they thought that the choice had pretty much narrowed to either Rockefeller or Bush.

"A lot of people have been sending messages to President Ford through a lot of different channels but the Bush people have been better organized" one of them said.

Hugh Morrow, communications director for Rockefeller, said he felt the situation was "probably 50-50."

"Nelson's attitude is summed up in his feeling that the President has an enormous responsibility and he should be able to exercise it unencumbered by anyone commenting on it," Morrow said. "We're not running a boiler shop or calling anyone or doing anything. Nelson's name is known, his record is known, his advantages and disadvantages are known."

Morrow's comment was a thinly veiled reference to a telephone operation being conducted from a room in the Statler Hilton Hotel by Richard L. Herman, the Nebraska GOP national committeeman who is unofficially heading the Bush drive.

Herman and two assistants have been telephoning Republicans around the country urging support for Bush.

The Republican chairman's name has been a recurrent one on lists of vice presidential suggestions submitted to Mr. Ford by congressmen, governors and party officials. Others who have been mentioned frequently include Rockefeller, Goldwater, Sen. Howard H. Baker Jr. of Tennessee and Gov. Daniel J. Evans of Washington.

Evans, who also said that Bush and Rockefeller are the most likely choices, met with reporters at the Seattle airport after returning from Washington, D.C., and said he still considers himself an outside possibility for the

nomination.

Baker said in Knoxville, Tenn., that he did not expect but would accept the vice presidential nomination.

The White House continued to emphasize — as it has all week — that Mr. Ford has made no decision on the nomination. When press secretary J. F. Ter Horst was asked whom the President was conferring with about the selection, he replied:

"He's conferring with himself."

Ter Horst said the nomination would be announced by the President as soon as he decides.

Some Republicans who are concerned about the vice presidential selection expressed the hope that Mr. Ford would not delay in making the choice.

"If this goes on too long, you're going to have rival camps battling and lobbying over their choices and a lot of extraneous issues being drawn in," said one Ford intimate. "The President doesn't need that."

There is general agreement on Capitol Hill that Mr. Ford will have no difficulty in winning confirmation for his vice presidential selection, whoever he is. However, some Republicans expect extended confirmation hearings in both houses of Congress.

Under the provisions of the 25th Amendment, by which Mr. Ford himself became vice president, the selection must be confirmed by a majority vote of both the Senate and the House. It took just under two months for Mr. Ford to be confirmed after he was nominated by President Nixon.