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Liberal GOP

Group Hits

Nixon Tactics

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The liberal Republican Ripon Society said yesterday that despite President Nixon's landslide re-election, the GOP was weakened because it lost strength in the Senate and because of the lingering effects of the Watergate affair.

In an editorial in its monthly magazine, Forum, the society said the "Watergate affair and wheat scandal are probably criminal, the political sabotage is inexcusable and the failure to disclose campaign financing sleazy.

"Moreover," it added, "Mr. Nixon's failure to debate issues directly was based on a tactic of presidential invisibility that is hard to square with the ideals of American democracy."

'SHADY'

The party is weakened, it said, "not merely because it lost seats in the Senate, but because it will have trouble dispelling the shady image of Watergate without a presidential house-cleaning."

The Republicans lost two Senate seats, but gained about a dozen in the House.

The President has been reshuffling his administration ever since the election but there has been no outward evidence thus far that the break-in and attempted bugging of Democratic headquarters at the Watergate has played a direct role in his action.

The editorial also called on Mr. Nixon to develop a "coherent domestic policy" by using the Republican party as an instrument of change.

'DIRTY'

In another election post-mortem, White House assistant Patrick J. Buchanan accused Democratic presidential nominee George S. McGovern and his running mate, Sargent Shriver, of conducting "just about the dirtiest, meanest presidential campaign in this nation's history."

In an article written for yesterday's editions of the New York Times, Buchanan said some Democrats seem to want to enshrine McGovern as a martyr; but, he said, "there is no precedent for and no defense for the slanders and contumely he visited upon the character and administration of the President."

He said McGovern's and Shriver's campaign statements drew a more tolerant response from the media than did Vice President Spiro T. Agnew's comments two years earlier.

United Press