

Ford to GOP:

Nixon no issue

By Sidney Kossen
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SAN JOSE — Vice President Gerald Ford urged California Republicans yesterday to be on guard against an attempt by Democrats to turn November's elections into a national referendum on President Nixon.

"The issue is not R.M.N. but is as simple as ABC, it is whether Republicans can mobilize a return to the ABC's of politics on a personal precinct level," Ford said.

"It is whether we can ring doorbells, organize meetings and stand at factory gates."

Ford appeared before delegates to the GOP State Central Committee's Spring Convention at the Le Baron Motel and at a rival meeting staged by Republican Congressman Paul M. McCloskey.

At the convention, Governor Reagan told more than 1200 delegates and spectators that Ford's travels about the country have done much to shore up Republicans' faith in their party.

Ford paid tribute to Reagan as another traveling unity force for the GOP. The two are potential rivals for the 1976 Republican presidential nomination.

McCloskey of Menlo Park, a sometime GOP maverick, sponsored a forum on the future of the GOP starring Ford and a supporting cast consisting of Rep. John Roussetot of San Marino, one of the most conservative house members, and the moderate George Milias of Gilroy, a former Assemblyman running for congress.

McCloskey's primary opponent, Gordon Knapp, accused him of exploiting Ford's presence.

On the sidelines, there was much competition for con-

vention attention by GOP candidates for state offices. Busy hospitality suites were operated by the two top GOP contenders for governor, Controller Houston I. Flournoy and Lt. Gov. Ed Reineke.

Reineke denied again that his campaign would be affected by the fact that he has been indicted for perjury by the special Watergate grand jury in connection with his testimony before the Senate Judiciary Committee.

"I am not going to bow out because someone threw some weak, flimsy, charges at me," he told reporters.

Reineke was given an ovation when introduced to a luncheon audience by State GOP chairman Gordon Luce.

Senator James Buckley, New York conservative, told the delegates that Reagan's welfare reform program has been a model for other states and the federal government. Buckley did not mention his recent call for President Nixon's resignation.

Ford attempted to separate the party from those guilty of corruption.

"I am disgusted with political trickery of the CREEP (Committee for the Re-election of the President) variety or any other creeps who are looking for an easy but unethical or illegal road to victory," he said.