

# Watergate and Nixon Fill Wilson's New Spots for TV

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In a reversal of strategy, Governor Wilson yesterday taped a new spot television commercial telling the voters that he had no responsibility for Watergate, the Nixon pardon or the Rockefeller gifts.

"Don't blame me," is the message, in effect, of the commercial, according to campaign aides.

The Governor, a Republican, had begun his campaign for a full term by playing down the effect that such issues might have on the race with Representative Hugh L. Carey, his Democratic opponent.

But now he has decided to alter television plans for the last week of campaigning and to raise Watergate and the other subjects himself. His aides insist that these are "nonissues" that should not be a part of the campaign exchange.

However, Harry J. O'Donnell, the Governor's press secretary and close adviser, summarized the change in strategy yesterday when he said of the subjects of the new commercial: "It's actually the biggest burden he's carrying in the election."

## Reaction Causes Concern

The new theme was first brought up in a 15-minute TV message prepared over the weekend for limited use, and the decision to seek a larger TV audience through the use of various brief spot commercials went ahead yesterday when the Governor put on makeup and went before the cameras in private session. The text of the commercial, which is to go on the air in the next day or two, was not available.

The Governor, who had avoided criticism of former President Nixon and the Watergate affair until late on the eve of Mr. Nixon's resignation, showed his current concern with voters' reaction in remarks yesterday at a news conference in Syracuse.

"Too many people incensed over Watergate and the pardon are going to vote against Ford or Nixon by voting Against Republican candidates," he said. "And then they are going to wake up and find they've got some big-spending liberals in Albany."

Mr. Carey had a relatively light day of public campaigning, canceling a New York City press conference after a morning appearance in Buffalo. The candidate made time for interviews with reporters from national news organizations, but aides denied that this meant Mr. Carey might be coasting a bit in the light of strong leads that he has scored in public-opinion pollings.

Mr. Wilson, when asked about his weak position in the polls, found comfort in the 1948 Presidential-election victory of Harry S. Truman in face of negative poll predictions.

"Ole Harry Truman just kept plugging along," Mr. Wilson said of the Democrat who defeated the late Thomas E. Dewey, the former New York Governor whose record and style have been cited for

months by Wilson strategists as one of their guiding lights.

Mr. Wilson began his day with an early visit to Phoenix, a village north of Syracuse, to attend a funeral mass for Emerson J. Dillon, a state trooper who was shot to death last week.

At his next appearance, near Stuyvesant Town on First Avenue in Manhattan, the Governor hit repeatedly on the crime issue, urging extension of the death penalty. The Governor talked to a crowd of about 150 people about rapes and muggings.

Vincent Albano, the Manhattan Republican chairmank had assembled a fairly friendly crowd, but there were some hecklers, such as a gray-haired man in a lumberjacket who listened only briefly to the Governor's description of the crime problem, then shouted at Mr. Wilson: "Why don't you get Rockefeller to give us money for that?"

The controversy of Vice President-designate Nelson A. Rockefeller's gifts to public figures during his tenure as Governor will be touched on in the new commercial, a Wilson aide said, without indicating how.

The Governor received the endorsement of another major upstate newspaper, The Rochester Democrat and Chronicle.

The New York Post endorsed Mr. Carey yesterday, saying in an editorial that the Democrat "has shown his capacity to bring a new spirit of progressive leadership to Albany." The Post called Mr. Wilson's campaign "querulously negative, largely devoid of substance or humanity."