

Nixon Reaffirms a Pledge To Seek Tax Aid for Aged

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WASHINGTON, Oct. 30 — President Nixon, in a special campaign appeal to elderly voters, reaffirmed today his pledge to ask Congress next year for property tax relief for older Americans.

In another of a series of radio speeches, Mr. Nixon listed the efforts he said he had made to improve the lot of those over 65 years old and placed special emphasis on the Social Security bill he has decided to sign.

He did not, however, mention two bills aimed at the elderly that he vetoed this morning—the older Americans comprehensive service amendments and the research on aging act, which he said were too costly and duplicated other programs.

Meanwhile, there were these additional political developments today in the Republican camp:

Mr. Nixon canceled a campaign trip to Chicago tomorrow after learning of a commuter train crash that killed 44 persons and injured 320. He ordered Secretary of Transportation John A. Volpe to Chicago to guide relief efforts and, in a statement, he expressed "deepest sympathy and concern."

The Committee for the Re-election of the President released a series of critiques of Senator George McGovern's positions written by nine key Administration officials, including eight members of Mr. Nixon's cabinet.

John D. Ehrlichman, assistant to the President for Domestic Affairs said that the White House had not requested that a directive be sent by the Federal Bureau of Investigation to its field offices soliciting information on crime for the President's re-election campaign.

A Routine in 'Briefing'

Mr. Ehrlichman responded this morning to questions about an article in this week's Time magazine stating that the Federal Bureau of Investigation had sent a telegram to 21 field offices, allegedly at Mr. Ehrlichman's request, seeking information.

Mr. Ehrlichman said that each time the President travels into the country, he routinely asks government departments for information on local problems and local issues that Mr. Nixon might encounter in his travels. Mr. Ehrlichman called

this part of the standard presidential "briefing" process.

After he sent one such request to the Justice Department, Mr. Ehrlichman went on, a junior official in the office of Deputy Attorney General Ralph E. Erickson forwarded the request to the F.B.I. Mr. Ehrlichman said that the subordinate, whom he did not identify, had made a mistake and "it will not be done in the future."

The Presidential aide said he saw nothing wrong with Justice Department involvement in politics because, like all other agencies, it must remain "responsive to the will of the people." But he also said that the F.B.I. should remain non-political to insure its "credibility and objectivity."

Appeal to Elderly

In his speech to the elderly, Mr. Nixon did not explain how he planned to reduce their property taxes. There is some thought here that he might model his proposal on plans now operating in 14 states under which homeowners are refunded part of their property taxes if the tax exceeds a certain percentage of their income.

Mr. Nixon has made a systematic effort—through his programs, the publicity machinery of the Federal agencies, and his campaign apparatus—to woo the elderly vote. A recent survey taken by Daniel Yankelovich, the public opinion expert, showed Mr. Nixon ahead by a 57-to-25 margin among voters over 65 in 16 key states.

In his speech today, he referred to older Americans as "our seasoned veterans." The country, he said, "can never be at its best if we keep them on the bench."

In the next four years, he said, "we must develop a new attitude toward aging in America, one that stops regarding older Americans as a burden and starts regarding them as a resource."

Mr. Nixon's decision to cancel his trip to Chicago surprised and disappointed some local Republican candidates who had hoped that his noontime motorcade would give them exposure in the heavily Democratic city. Mr. Nixon had also planned to play host at a reception in Chicago for Republican leaders from 25 states ranging from West Virginia to Oregon.