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# A Friendly Response to President SFChronicle

Sandusky, Mich.

President Nixon took the burdens of Watergate to the campaign trail for the first time yesterday and got a generally friendly reception from a heavily Republican farm area.

But even here, Mr. Nixon was greeted by demonstrators who apparently prompted him to address a crowd of several thousand through the open roof of his bullet-proof limousine instead of from a special platform that had been prepared for him.

The tour was made for James Sparling, a Republican congressional candidate who invited Mr. Nixon, but who has said he wouldn't hesitate to vote for impeachment if the facts warrant such a vote.

Republican leaders said afterward that they believed Mr. Nixon's visit helped Sparling, but local Democrats claim the visit could bring home Watergate to local voters and help elect a Democrat to Congress for the first time in 40 years.

Everywhere Mr. Nixon went during the 57-mile motorcade that rambled through eastern Michigan's "Thumb," he was greeted by cheering crowds that outnumbered and outshouted protesters calling for his impeachment.

When the President spoke, it was on issues with appeal to the area.

At the Tri-City Airport, be-

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tween Saginaw and Bay City, he told an estimated 5000 persons that the Democratic-controlled Congress is holding up programs that might help the area's sagging auto industry.

In the countryside, where navy beans and sugar beets are the principal providers, Mr. Nixon promised to send federal energy chief William E. Simon to try to alleviate local fertilizer shortages.

And in Saginaw, he re-emphasized to a predominantly white audience his opposition to school busing and to any interference with local schools.

The President greeted Air

Force Captain Robert Abbott of Deckerville, Mich., and said: "For the first time in 12 years we have peace. For the first time in 25 years not one young American is being drafted. Every American is home where he belongs, not in a prison camp in Hanoi."

There were demonstrators at every stop, particularly in Sandusky.

In Saginaw, as Mr. Nixon leaned from the top of his white Buick convertible to shake hands with well-wishers, protesters began shouting "Pay Your Taxes." The car speeded up as it passed the booing section of the crowd.

After the trip, Senate Majority Whip Robert P. Griffin (Rep-Mich.) said he believes the President will help Sparling, who is opposed by Democrat J. Robert Traxler. Griffin said the visit is bound to increase the voter turnout in an area where a heavy turnout would normally favor a Republican.

Sparling carefully avoided either praise or censure in his remarks.

Before the motorcade began, he told a reporter: "Nixon is not here as a campaigner. He's here to address himself to the issues."

Traxler, a state representative, has said that Mr.

Nixon and his record are the only issues in his campaign. He said he believes Mr. Nixon's visit helped him. The election is next Thursday.

The Thumb, named because it sticks up like a thumb from the rest of the state, has been described as so heavily Republican that a Democratic candidate for governor in the 1930s who came from the area could manage only two votes from the 2000 residents of his home town.

When Mr. Nixon returned to Washington, press secretary Ronald L. Ziegler said Mr. Nixon "was very pleased" by the reaction he received.

*Associated Press*