

Help Overcome Watergate, Ford Urges GOP in Hawaii

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HONOLULU, May 18 — the "horrors" of Watergate are not their responsibility and they should not be discouraged by them, Vice President Ford told Hawaii Republicans here.

Addressing a Republican state convention dinner Friday night, the Vice President urged Hawaii Republicans to do their share in not permitting Democrats to turn November's election "into a national referendum on Watergate."

Ford struck no new themes in a rambling after-dinner speech in a packed banquet hall.

He said Republicans hold integrity and honesty to be primary virtues and "are the first to condemn illegal and unethical practices." He said he does not condone the mistakes by "a limited number of people in the Committee to Re-Elect the President," and said, "If they are wrong, they'll go to jail."

He reiterated his belief that President Nixon had nothing to do with the planning, execution or cover-up of Watergate.

In a section in his prepared text that he did not deliver, Ford said this year's poor Republican record in

special off-year congressional elections has been due primarily to poor efforts by party members and is not the result of a Watergate backlash.

Ford and his party flew this morning to Hawaii, the big island of the Hawaiian group, and are to spend today and Sunday there golfing and swimming. He is to return to Washington Monday.

Ford's busy day Friday included speeches before a national Boy Scout convention, a luncheon speech at an award ceremony for federal employees, and an afternoon visit to Pearl Harbor, where he was briefed on the strategic and political situation in the Pacific at the headquarters of Pacific Commander Noel Gaylor.

He later went to a reception for Republican Party members at the home of Clare Boothe Luce before attending the Republican dinner.

Bush Sees His Party Healthy in November

George Bush, chairman of the Republican National Committee, said he doubts the GOP would be better off if President Nixon were not

in the White House in November.

He acknowledged that Watergate is causing him more concern than ever before and that in the five special House elections this year, in which Democrats took four seats that had been held by Republicans, Watergate "measured out to be more of an issue" than anticipated.

Asked if the Republicans would be better off if Mr. Nixon were not in office in November, when elections are held, he said: "I have my doubts. The easy, quick answer would be that obviously the party is better off."

The party could "indeed be better off in the fall" as long as the constitutional procedures surrounding impeachment continue to work, regardless of results, he said in an interview last week.

However, stating that speculation over impeachment and the future of the party "seems to divide, rather than unite," Bush said he was confident Mr. Nixon would finish his full term.

"I have not had the feeling, disturbing as the tone of the tapes has been, that it has brought him any closer to impeachment," Bush said.