

GOP Candidate's Watergate Lament

State Senator H. L. (Bill) Richardson complained yesterday that "Watergate slop-over" is hurting him with fellow Republicans in his Uphill campaign against Democratic U.S. Senator Alan Cranston.

Richardson also said that he was "frankly upset" that Cranston has been "ducking" a face-to-face debate on television.

"But my biggest handicap is Watergate," the 47-year-old arch-conservative from Arcadia said at a lightly-attended news conference at the Airport Hilton.

Richardson, a former salaried organizer for the John Birch Society ("I quit because I didn't agree with some of their policies") accused Cranston of "hiding behind the Watergate affair."

The latest California Poll

gave Cranston a 35-point lead in his campaign for re-election to the U.S. Senate, with pollster Mervin D. Field finding that Cranston is "actually drawing more support from Republican 'liberals' and 'middle-roads' than is Richardson."

Richardson, a boyishly-handsome former advertising man, said aggrievedly:

"Cranston acts as if it were in his hip pocket, as if he had the election pretty well wired, as if he had no reason to debate me.

"But if he's so far ahead, he has nothing to lose — nothin'."

Richardson said that when he bumped into Cranston recently at a Los Angeles TV station where the two were doing "back-to-back" interviews, Cranston said, "I guess we had to meet sooner or later."

But he said that when he asked Cranston why he wouldn't agree to a face-to-face debate, Cranston "did not respond — no reply at all."

Richardson bragged that he has distributed five million political and economic "tracts" during the campaign.

One is an attack on the decriminalization or liberalization of marijuana laws, called "Mary Jane is No

Another is "The Christian's Role in Politics."

When a woman television reporter asked, "What do you tell your Jewish constituents?" Richardson's press aide, Gloria Palter, piped up:

"I'm Jewish and he's not anti-Semitic."

Richardson turned his chair around, sat down straddling it and launched into his favorite subject — inflation and protecting the

dollar from "ruination."

"Inflation problems started because of deficit financing," said Richardson.

"That speech the President made last week was an inflationary speech. Does anybody like that new surtax? In one fell swoop the President alienated every young person." Lady."