

Ford Ad

REPUBLICANS HERE BACK FORD FOR '76

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Act Despite Conservatives'
View—Rockefeller Support
Withheld, as He Asks

NYTimes

By FRANK LYNN

Countering conservative Republicans, including Senator James L. Buckley, who have expressed reservations about a Ford-Rockefeller ticket next year, New York Republican leaders endorsed the nomination of the President yesterday but, bowing to the wishes of Mr. Rockefeller, did not endorse him for Vice President.

Mr. Rockefeller, who has been the principal target of the conservatives, said in an unusually deferential letter to the New York leaders that he did not want his home state party "putting pressure on the President in my behalf."

At the same time, the New York Republicans delivered a second rebuke to Senator Buckley by declining to endorse him for the Republican nomination for the United States Senate. "The jury is still out on Senator Buckley," said the Republican state chairman, Richard Rosenbaum, a Rockefeller protege.

The Senator has angered many leaders of the state Republican party, which is still heavily Rockefeller-oriented, by his continuing close ties with Ronald Reagan and other conservative Republicans who are almost certain to oppose Mr.

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Rockefeller's nomination next year.

Mr. Buckley served as chairman and spokesman for 20 conservative Republicans who earlier this month agreed that since neither the President nor Vice President had been elected, "it would be in the best interests of the Republican party and of the country" to have these nominations decided at an "open convention."

The timing of the rebuke of the Senator was particularly significant since he and the Vice President were sharing the dais several hours later at the annual Republican State Committee dinner at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel. About 1,500 attended.

Mr. Rockefeller's continuing control of the state party was evident not only in the pro-Ford resolution adopted by the state G.O.P. leaders but also by the fact that he was the host at, had paid nearly \$3,000 for, lunch at the Waldorf-Astoria for about 300 state committee members and other G.O.P. officials.

In speeches at the luncheon and dinner, Mr. Rockefeller lavished praise on President Ford as "a true leader, a statesman."

The lavish praise of the President, the refusal to allow his New York supporters to pressure the President on his behalf and the figurative rap on the knuckles of Mr. Buckley made it plain that Mr. Rockefeller was putting his future political career entirely in the hands of President.

"There will be no effort on my part to put the slightest restraint on his complete freedom to make that choice," Mr. Rockefeller said of Mr. Ford's decision on a Vice President. Mr. Ford has already said he

wants to continue the Ford Rockefeller team.

Mr. Rockefeller, surrounded by reporters after his luncheon talk, declined to say whether Mr. Buckley should be nominated, on the ground that it was "a local political situation."

Even former Gov. Malcolm Wilson, who has been close to Mr. Buckley and the Conservative party, declined to endorse Senator Buckley, yet, although he described him as "an excellent Senator."

"Told to" Stay Loose'

As part of the obvious pressure on Mr. Buckley to keep his distance from anti-Rockefeller conservatives, Mr. Rosenbaum urged G.O.P. county lead-

ers and state committee members at a closed meeting before the luncheon to "stay loose" on the Senate race.

Representative Peter Peyser, a Westchester Republican, has threatened to oppose Mr. Buckley in the Republican primary.

However, Mr. Buckley also holds some high cards in the political poker game with state Republicans. He is assured of the Conservative party nomination and could well win a three-way election contest against a Republican and Democratic candidate. At the least he could probably insure the defeat of the Republican and thus decrease the Republican strength in the Senate.