

A States-Item **FIRST**

M'Keithen Forces Plan \$1 Million Campaign for VP

By BILL LYNCH
(States-Item Bureau)

BATON ROUGE — Major backers of Gov. John J. McKeithen have begun laying plans to launch a million-dollar campaign to promote his image nationally in a bid for the vice presidency, the States-Item has learned.

Preliminary discussions on the national campaign were initiated as talk about a vice-presidential effort reached fever pitch in Louisiana with the appearance of Vice-President Hubert Humphrey here last night.

Humphrey was the featured speaker at the Louisiana AFL-CIO convention, where every effort was made to get him to declare his candidacy for the presidency.

HE WAS AN overnight guest at the governor's mansion, where he and McKeithen put their heads together for serious political discussions.

Both the Humphrey and Sen. Robert F. Kennedy camps have been in touch with McKeithen as a potential running mate and the Louisiana governor clearly leans toward the vice president.

The national promotion campaign discussed Wednesday night at a meeting in Baton Rouge, attended by McKeithen, follows another meeting about two weeks ago by heads of various state departments who discussed plans to go to Chicago and work for a McKeithen nomination.

THE STATE department officials were summoned together in a secret caucus by Revenue Collector Ashton Mouton to see what could be done by them in McKeithen's

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behalf. Mouton was McKeithen's running mate in 1964.

The Wednesday night meeting in Baton Rouge included the governor and Gus Weill, his former executive secretary whom he summoned back to the capital to participate in talks with Humphrey.

Reportedly the campaign would be based on a theme of acquainting the national public with the accomplishments of McKeithen in Louisiana, principally in race relations and industrial development. It would also play up his ability as a vote getter, emphasizing the 82 per cent margin of victory in his second term effort.

THE PROMOTION would not be a direct pitch for the vice presidency since McKeithen and his supporters both feel that the final decision will be up to the man who gets the presidential nomination.

The effort will be directed at influencing those persons who might have weight in the financial and political communities.

The state department officials at their meeting have tentatively obtained the use of jet airplanes owned by some important financial backers of Gov. McKeithen, who were mentioned as prospective backers of the national campaign.

Such names as John Mecom of New Orleans and Clint Murchison of Dallas were discussed Wednesday night. Also considered for help were J. Marshall Brown, Louisiana Democratic National committeeman, and W. M. "Pete" Menefee, state conservation commissioner.

The Wednesday night group discussed the prospects of having a small group guarantee a million dollars initially to promote the national campaign efforts.

SOME OF THE discussions about McKeithen's prospects have been held without the governor participating, although it was agreed that nothing would be done against the governor's wishes. McKeithen has been reluctant, even among his confidantes, to say outright that he wants to run for vice president.

Weill returned to Louisiana from New York Wednesday night to confer with McKeithen about the vice presidential prospects which have been getting considerable buildup in Louisiana and scattered mentions nationally. He plans to return to New York immediately, but is expected back in Louisiana in May to handle a national campaign if it gets off the ground.

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Will Run, HHH Hints In B.R. Talk

By BILL LYNCH
(States-Item Bureau)

BATON ROUGE—Vice President Hubert H. Humphrey went to the brink of announcing his candidacy for president, tantalizing a receptive labor audience here last night with comments that had all the earmarks of a hard run for the November laurels.

Humphrey addressed the closing session of the Louisiana AFL-CIO convention and was the overnight guest of Gov. John J. McKeithen at the executive mansion.

Gov. McKeithen is being boomed in some political

HHH LEAVES FOR FLA.
BATON ROUGE (AP)—Vice-President Hubert Humphrey left Louisiana today for Florida for "a little bit of sunshine and a little bit of boating," before plunging into the presidential race. As the vice-president departed the governor's mansion where he spent the night, he told newsmen, "We'll be making an announcement very shortly" about his entrance into the presidential race.

circles as a potential running mate for the vice president, if Humphrey gets the nomination.

"SAY IT, HUBERT," someone shouted from the audience.

"We'll do it," Humphrey snapped back, bringing a round of applause.

The vice president received a standing ovation when AFL-CIO President Victor Bussie told the partisan crowd, "There are many thousands in this state who are hoping you will be a candidate."

Before launching into his speech, in which he championed the achievements of the

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administration, Humphrey had high praise for McKeithen as governor.

HUMPHREY DECLARED, "I am proud of the record of this administration and I am going to take that record to every corner of the land."

The vice president said he planned to stand by the programs and accomplishments of the Johnson-Humphrey administration.

"And in these critical months ahead," he declared, "I do not intend to disavow either President Johnson or the Johnson-Humphrey administration."

"I intend to stand up for the promises we have kept."

HUMPHREY ENUMERATED his personal activity in government, emphasizing repeatedly what role he has played and what he "will do" in the future.

"I will do everything to sustain and carry forward the work we have begun in this country," he said. "And I ask your help — and the help of all Americans — in doing this."

Humphrey called President Johnson's latest peace move and decision not to run again an "act of selfless statesmanship."

HE SAID THAT Johnson has offered peace with honor in Vietnam that would save thousands of American and Vietnamese lives.

"I know what it means to search for peace," Humphrey said. "I was the sponsor, in the U. S. Senate, of Food for Peace, of the Peace Corps, of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency."

"I led the fight for the nuclear test ban treaty," he continued. "I stood through many long, hard days, as majority whip of the U. S. Senate, alongside President John Kennedy, as we sought the test ban treaty, as we looked ultimate danger in the face in the Cuban missile crisis."

HE SAID "I have stood beside President Johnson, day after day, as he faced decisions involving the international security of this nation."

Humphrey listed achieve-

ments of the administration in such fields as Medicare, job training, minimum wage, aid to education.

"Four administrations have struggled to get federal help to these youngsters," he said. "One administration did it: your administration — the Johnson-Humphrey administration."

"WE HAVE KEPT our promises," he said. "I intend to take our message to the country—an affirmative, positive, hopeful message."

Humphrey also cited legislation in crime control, which is becoming one of the major issues in the 1968 political campaign.

"Major crime control legislation passed and more (is) pending in Congress," he said, "... firearms control — safe streets and crime control — juvenile delinquency prevention. Those who deny that record distort the truth."

TAKING NOTE of the assassination of civil rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., the vice president declared that dissatisfaction is no excuse for violence or demagoguery by the irresponsible few.

"It is time in America for a permanent moratorium on the inflammatory demagoguery which pits men against each other — for a moratorium on the vocabulary of violence," he said. "It is time for law and order in American life."

At Ryan Airport in Baton Rouge, Humphrey was greeted by two signs saying, "McCarthy for President," borne by three LSU students.

THE VICE-PRESIDENT skipped a scheduled press conference on the parking ramp and strode to the fence retaining the crowd that had turned out to greet him.

Right behind him was Gov. McKeithen, who introduced him to the many of the audience—a large number of whom were state employes.

He found Tony Morrison, son of the late Chep Morrison, at the fence and McKeithen introduced them. "Glad to see you, glad to see you," Humphrey said warmly.

When he was asked when he would announce, the vice-president said, "We'll get around to talking to you. We don't want to disappoint you."

She is survived also by two other sisters, Mrs. Dorothy Baham, of Independence, and Mrs. Ruth Istre, of Hammond, and two brothers, William H. Rogers, Grand Prairie, Tex., and Richard Rogers, Hammond.

Funeral services for Miss Rogers will be held tomorrow at 10 a.m. at the McKneely Funeral Home Chapel at Ponchatoula. Burial will be in Baptist Cemetery near Hammond.