

Scranton on Rebuff by Nixon: Pleased That He

By JOHN KIFNER

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CHICAGO, Dec. 14—William W. Scranton reacted today to President Nixon's rebuff of the conclusions of his Commission on Campus Unrest.

"I deeply appreciate the fact that President Nixon has read and responded to our commission's report," the commission chairman said. "I believe this is at least unusual and possibly unique in the annal of major Presidential commissions over the past several years."

On Saturday, 11 weeks after the commission issued its report, Mr. Nixon released a letter to Mr. Scranton. In it Mr. Nixon rejected the commission's principal finding that he must "exercise his reconciling moral leadership." The President also placed the responsibility for campus disorders "squarely" on the academic community and stanchly defended Vice President Agnew, the target of some of the report's criticism of "divisive and insulting rhetoric."

At a news conference today, Mr. Scranton repeatedly said that the commission's findings and the President's letter were in agreement on "substance." He said he had been invited to the White House on Thursday to discuss the matter further.

Finds Encouraging Actions

"I have read his letter and studied it," the former Pennsylvania Governor said. "The President's comments are in complementary agreement with the report as to the condemnation of violence, our recommendations to the colleges and universities, our concern for the needs of black students and black colleges, that the responsibility for maintaining order on the campus is not Government's alone, and our opposition to politicizing universities."

He said that the Administration had "redirected" its efforts by what he described as

a "peace initiative" in Vietnam; by Mr. Nixon's trips to several college campuses; by Secretary of Defense Melvin R. Laird's instruction that the National Guard be re-equipped and better trained and by what he said was Health, Education and Welfare Secretary Elliot L. Richardson's "espousing this report."

Mr. Scranton attributed much of the current calm on campus to "the experience many students had in going to the brink last spring — they don't want that repeated." But he added that he was "turbid" that a "number of stu-

dents" seemed to be "in a despairing mood at the moment."

The Commission on Campus Unrest was appointed by Mr. Nixon last spring after several weeks of campus upheaval following the sending of American troops into Cambodia.

Commission Members Comment

Joseph Rhodes Jr., a member of the Scranton commission, has criticized Mr. Nixon's letter as "another maneuver."

"There is something deeply wrong with the way the President is comprehending his role," Mr. Rhodes said yesterday.



United Press International

William W. Scranton at news session yesterday in Chicago

day. "His list of real problems and real solutions is really out of phase with most people in this country."

Mr. Rhodes, a 23-year-old graduate student at Harvard University said, "The letter really doesn't say much about the substance of our report. We urged the President to deal with the fundamental issues in a way that will be a reconciling force."

Mr. Rhodes contended that Mr. Nixon's campaigning in the 1970 elections was "diametrically the opposite of what we recommended in the report."

"The campaign was his basic statement on the report," Mr. Rhodes added.

Another commission member, Erwin D. Cannam, editor of the Christian Science Monitor, said he thought Mr. Nixon's reply indicated that the President regarded the report with "much care and seriousness."

Gen. Benjamin O. Davis Jr., retired, also a commission member, said Mr. Nixon's response made it "very obvious to me the report has been given careful consideration and study."

Revius Ortique, a commission member, said that Mr. Nixon should convene a Governor's conference to promote national unity.

"I feel strongly that the President could call the 50 Governors in for a high level conference and set the stage for local leadership on the whole business of bringing our country together," Mr. Ortique said. He continued:

"Not for any political party, I mean a spiritual togetherness so we can look at ourselves as Americans and a people with a mission, a mission to make a

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reality of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence.

"I view the President of the United States as being that unique institution, not a person, mind you, that can call for unity," Mr. Ortique said. He stressed that his remarks were not intended as a commentary on the President's reply to the report.