

GOP May Quit San Diego

Examiner News Services

WASHINGTON — With problems in San Diego, Republicans were reported taking a close look today at the possibility of moving their 1972 national convention to Miami Beach, where the Democrats will meet and where Richard Nixon was nominated in 1968.

With the convention only four months away, difficulties were reported in San Diego in preparing the Sports Arena for the event and in finding enough hotel rooms to accommodate the thousands who will attend.

There also were reports the San Diego civic committee had not yet raised the full \$600,000 it pledged.

Miami Beach officials meanwhile said the \$250,000 it pledged to both parties last summer in bidding for the two conventions still stood. Both city and state officials were working to get the GOP back to Miami Beach.

Governor at Work

Florida's Democratic governor, Reubin Askew, already was in Washington and working hard to get the Republicans to go back to Miami Beach where they nominated Nixon in 1968.

Askew attended a dinner for newspaper editors last night, along with Nixon's campaign manager, John Mitchell, and the two were said to have talked about the situation. In a speech, Askew said Florida and Miami Beach would welcome the GOP in August. The Democrats will be there in July.

Knight Newspapers quoted Mitchell as saying "I'm not sure we can solve" the problems at San Diego, where the obstacles were said to include lack of hotel rooms, modification of the convention hall and the need for more adequate broadcast facilities.

"The costs in San Diego are escalating fantastically above what they would be in Miami Beach," Mitchell was quoted as saying. He put them at \$1.5 million.

Owner of Hall

But Peter Graham, owner of the arena, told the San Diego Union: "There's no way, in my mind, that the convention is going to leave San Diego . . . Tomorrow or the next day we'll work it out."

"There's politics in this thing," Graham added. "I think they are digging at somebody. I don't understand why they are making me the bugaboo."

A source in Miami Beach agreed there was more to the problem than the arena and a reported shortage of hotel reservations in San Diego.

"They knew those things before they selected California," the source said. "What they couldn't know about

then was ITT and the bombing of Haiphong."

He said the controversy over International Telephone and Telegraph Corp.'s pledge to aid the convention if it were held in San Diego has put a stigma on the Southern California town.

And President Nixon's decision to renew the bombing of North Vietnam, the source explained, would result in mass demonstrations that could be contained better in Miami Beach, which is linked to the mainland by a series of causeways and drawbridges.

GOP leaders arranged to meet in Chicago to discuss the problems with San Diego and to discuss possible alternatives.

Problems

The Republicans admitted yesterday they were still having problems in San Diego—a city President Nixon favors and backed for the convention site.

R. L. Herman, vice chairman of the party's arrangements committee, said:

"We are presently proceeding with our plans to open the convention in San Diego Aug. 21. However, it is my obligation to attempt to prepare for any eventuality and to be aware of alternatives."

Nixon Choice

San Diego was a late arrival as a candidate for the convention.

Initially civic officials appeared uninterested until Republicans let it be known that San Diego was where President Nixon wanted the party to meet.

In addition to San Diego's proximity to the President's home at San Clemente, he considers San Diego his "lucky city." He's never lost an election there.

Once Nixon's interest was known, Republican officials of both state and national prominence reportedly helped the city raise the \$600,000 pledge.