

G.O.P. Governors Show Pessimism on '72 Races

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By R. W. APPLE Jr.

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SUN VALLEY, Idaho, Dec. 14 —Most of the 28 Republican Governors and Governors-elect, meeting today at this snow-clad resort in the Sawtooth Mountains—including six incumbents who were denied re-election—are full of political complaints, recriminations and prescriptions for reform.

The standing joke, seemingly repeated every hour on the hour, is that the conference should have been at Death Valley.

The meeting is like most gatherings of Republican professionals these days: The air is filled with sour remarks about the White House political operation, about the results of the 1970 elections and about the party's prospects in 1972.

Two weeks ago, at a little-publicized meeting of Republican campaign managers at Calloway Gardens in Georgia, the tone was even more bitter, according to the accounts of several of the participants.

One prominent party worker said his analysis indicated that President Nixon could carry

none of the country's 10 largest states if the 1972 election were held today, with the possible exception of Florida. Nobody challenged him.

Despite the crisp air and the blanket of fresh snow on the peaks surrounding Sun Valley, the political mood was gloomy.

Gov. Tom McCall of Oregon, who said before coming here that President Nixon should dump Mr. Agnew in 1972, added after his arrival that the Republican's 1970 campaign had had a "nasty" tone. Mr. McCall, who was re-elected this year, also said that the President could not afford to be surrounded by "gray, grim individuals."

Individually and in their private conversations, other moderate and liberal Republicans picked up similar themes. Gov. Francis W. Sargent, who was re-elected this fall in Massachusetts, said "The storm clouds are gathering for Mr. Nixon in 1972." Gov. David Cargo, who did not seek re-

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election in New Mexico, said the Republicans had "lost the election because the strategy was completely negative."

Gov. Dan Evans of Washington said the Administration had tried to "mislead the nation" by its emphasis on law and order issue.

Gov. William G. Milliken, who was re-elected in Michigan, said the White House had to stop polarizing and start unifying if it wanted to win at the polls. Mr. Milliken has been calling his liberal and moderate Republican colleagues on the telephone the last two weeks urging them to help put the party on a more progressive course.

More conservative Republicans, such as Gov. Ronald Reagan, who won re-election in California, and Gov. Claude R. Kirk, who was defeated in Florida, said that Mr. Nixon had done well. So did the host Governor, Don Samuelson of Idaho, who was defeated for re-election and who hopes to land a post in the Interior Department next year.

Several conservatives, however, remarked privately that they thought Mr. Nixon would have trouble winning re-election. Gov. Edgar D. Whitcomb of Indiana told a colleague that the President was in trouble in his state, which gave Mr. Nixon his biggest percentage in 1968.

For all of their grumbling, however, the Governors appeared to have no stomach for an open fight with the President, such as the one that broke out between Democratic Governors and President Johnson at a 1966 conference in White Sulphur Springs, W. Va.

Vice President Agnew, who is unpopular with many of the Governors, some of whom went so far as to ask him to stay out of their states this fall, is due here tomorrow. His trip was scheduled at the last minute, apparently in an attempt to demonstrate White House concern for the feelings of the Governors.

Some Governors will doubtless complain to him at a breakfast meeting Wednesday. But few people here expect the gripes to change anything, and it appears unlikely that much support for a public remonstrance with the President will develop.

There are three main reasons why the evident bitterness is unlikely to be focused in anything official.

First, the Republicans don't like to fight among themselves when the public is watching.

Second, no spokesman is in sight, except possibly Governor McCall, who is considered a maverick by his colleagues. Governor Rockefeller of New York left here today, so he will not be available for the Agnew meeting.

Finally, several of the lame-duck Governors, including the outgoing chairman of the or-



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Representative Rogers C. B. Morton of Maryland, outgoing Republican National Chairman, making last-minute check of speech he delivered at Governors' meeting in Sun Valley.

ganization, Raymond P. Shafer of Pennsylvania, hope for jobs in the Nixon Administration and therefore want to avoid squabbles.

J. Brad Hays, who managed the unsuccessful Senatorial campaign of Representative Laurence J. Burton of Utah, said at Calloway Gardens that the elections had demonstrated that Mr. Nixon had no real ability to help other candidates. Another campaign manager, alluding to Mr. Nixon's margin in 1968, said the 1970 elections had demonstrated that Mr. Nixon "is now, always was and always will be a 43 per cent President."

An aide to Senator-elect James L. Buckley of New York said that Vice President Agnew's more extreme denunciations of Senator Charles E. Goodell of New York—most of them delivered in other parts of the country—had threatened to disrupt Mr. Buckley's careful third-party strategy.

Mr. Buckley's Conservative Party organization finally told the White House that if Mr. Agnew did not stop it, Mr. Buckley would have to disavow his support, according to the aide.

Nearly everyone at Calloway Gardens reportedly complained about lack of access to the White House. So did a half-dozen members of the Republican National Committee, who were interviewed last week; to a man, they said that no one in authority had even bothered to ask them whom they favored as chairman of the committee.

"We intend to elect a Re-

publican Governor in this state in 1972," said one of the committeemen. "Nobody in the White House knows or cares about our problems, and Nixon looks in trouble to me out here. Unless they change their tune, we're going to run away from him."

At the Republican Governors Conference, under way here, there was more talk of poor communications after Representative Rogers C. B. Morton of Maryland, the outgoing national chairman, told the as-tounded Governors that Mr. Nixon had chosen former Gov. John B. Connolly Jr. of Texas today as Secretary of the Treasury.

None of the Governors had the slightest idea that the appointment was coming. Mr. Morton's staff did not know. He himself found out only moments before the official announcement.