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AGNEW UPBRAIDS MILLS, M'CLOSKEY

Speaks at Opening of G.O.P.
Governors' Conference

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FRENCH LICK, Ind., Nov. 18 — Vice President Agnew was the center of attention, as he has been at many such conferences, when the Republican Governors assembled today for their midwinter meeting at this 140-year-old Indiana resort.

Mr. Agnew's formal speech was a rather tame discussion of President Nixon's efforts to give the states a larger role in the decision-making process and to help transmit Federal money to them more efficiently. But he could not resist taking ad-lib swipes at two old adversaries.

The Vice President said that Representative Wilbur D. Mills of Arkansas, chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, was guilty of "obfuscation" and "deplorable actions" in blocking the approval of the President's revenue-sharing program.

"I think it's time he got on the stick," Mr. Agnew added to loud applause.

McCloskey Attacked

Turning at another point to Representative Paul N. McCloskey Jr., Republican of California, who is challenging Mr. Nixon for renomination, Mr. Agnew said that the Californian was so low on money that he had been forced to sell his art collection, including "his favorite painting — Benedict Arnold Crossing the Delaware."

The question of whether Mr. Agnew will be on the Republican ticket in 1972 was the topic of corridor conversation. The Vice President himself said at a luncheon, according to Governor Rockefeller of New York, that no member of the Administration was indispensable, including himself.

Gov. Ronald Reagan of California, a leading conservative, and Gov. Louie B. Nunn of Kentucky, the chairman of the Republican Governors, told reporters today that they would be unhappy if Mr. Agnew was dumped.

Mr. Rockefeller said that the Governors' luncheon meeting centered on "a friendly discussion on the problems of the states in getting Federal funds."

Mr. Agnew said at the meeting that the revenue-sharing plan might stand a chance of Congressional approval next year. The consensus of the Governors' reply to that, Mr. Rockefeller reported afterward, was "we want it now—we're dying on the vine."

Better Liaison Sought

Mr. Agnew has been working for the last few months to establish better White House liaison with the statehouses and has apparently succeeded. A Midwestern Democratic Governor says that his office gets "two or three calls a week" from C. D. Ward, one of Mr. Agnew's aides, asking about problems.

Half-jokingly, Mr. Rockefeller said that the Vice President had promised to "give the names of the Governors to the Cabinet officers."

The Governors' continuing concern about their national role was reflected in a letter written by Gov. William G. Milliken of Michigan to Senator Robert Dole of Kansas, the Republican National Chairman. The letter was released here.

Among other things, Governor Milliken asked in his behalf of his colleagues that two key 1972 convention posts — keynoter and deputy chairman, or temporary chairman and resolutions committee chairman—be allocated to the Governors.

Twenty of the 25 state and territorial Governors who are for the meeting, which will continue through tomorrow evening. Tomorrow's business session will be devoted to the economy.