

Muzzling of GOP

Liberals Is Denied

WASHINGTON — (UPI) — Rep. Donald W. Riegle Jr. (R-Mich.) says that liberals with anti-war and pro-civil rights views will not be allowed to testify before the full Republican platform committee next week at Miami Beach.

Riegle told a news conference yesterday that he and Rep. Paul N. McCloskey of California had been shunted off to testify before obscure subcommittees where their views will be hidden from public attention and most of the platform committee members.

Charges

Rep. John J. Rhodes (R-Ariz.), chairman of the GOP platform committee, promptly denied the allegation.

"It's just not true," he said. "It's the most completely irresponsible statement I've heard in a long time."

Rhodes said Sen. Jacob J. Javits (R-N.Y.), a major opponent of the war, would testify. He said he considered Javits a more important spokesman for "the mainstream of liberal thinking in the party" than either Riegle or McCloskey.

Riegle said he questioned Rhodes about the scheduling of speakers and was told: "You're crazy if you think anybody will appear before the platform committee that will say anything that will embarrass the President."

Ashbrook to Testify

The only speakers slated to testify during the main committee hearing, Riegle said, were those expected to praise President Nixon's

policies.

Riegle said "it is hurtful to the long run interests of the Republican Party" to ignore the views of minority group members, the young and others who disagree with Nixon on the war, civil rights and other issues.

Riegle pointed out that the committee was scheduled to hear from conservative Rep. John M. Ashbrook (R-Ohio), who gained about half as many votes as McCloskey in the New Hampshire GOP primary.

"The administration has an almost paranoid concern about the right wing of the party," Riegle said.

Riegle also alleged that the White House is actually writing the entire GOP platform in advance of the party convention that opens Aug. 21.

Rhodes denied the assertion, saying only that the committee had sent the White House a draft of the platform proposals for comment. He said that is the normal procedure.