

G.O.P. Tactics Keep Agnew in Shadow

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By FRANK LYNN

Both New York and national Republican leaders are so de-emphasizing Vice President Agnew that he is a virtual shadow candidate in many areas of the nation, including this state.

The playing down of the controversial Mr. Agnew is evident even to a casual observer. His name is not mentioned in national campaign literature. Billboards and posters proclaim President Nixon, but not his running mate. Even Nixon-Agnew campaign buttons are scarce in this area, and finally, Mr. Agnew himself has also been scarce in New York.

He will make his first appearance of the Presidential campaign here tonight at a Conservative party fund-raising dinner. The Conservatives have endorsed the G.O.P. national ticket.

'Twelve More Years'

However, unlike their Republican allies of the moment, the Conservatives are not only giving Mr. Agnew equal billing with the President, but are booming him for the Presidential nomination in 1976 with the slogan "Twelve More Years" on their Nixon-Agnew campaign buttons.

"We'll make up for it," said Kieran O'Doherty, a founder of the Conservative party referring to the lack of attention devoted to Mr. Agnew. Mr. O'Doherty holds a Nixon administration patronage job, membership on the United States Foreign Claims Settlement Commission.

The Conservatives will have a big gap to fill. A visitor to one of the major Nixon storefronts at Madison Avenue and East 53d Street could not find even a mention of the Vice President, although the walls, windows, desks and anything else that was not moving were covered with Nixon banners and photographs of the President.

A worker who was asked for a Nixon-Agnew button had to

dig deep into a basket of Nixon buttons before he could find a Nixon-Agnew collector's item.

The literature on display, which included three brochures distributed by the national Nixon campaign committee and two flyers dealing with Israel printed by the New York Committee to Re-elect the President, did not include any reference to the President's running mate.

Mr. Agnew is also hard to find in New York, at least under Republican auspices. As of now, he has only two appearances scheduled here in addition to the Conservative dinner, but only one will be at a Republican function.

Going to Syracuse

That will be next Tuesday in Syracuse, generally considered the most conservative city in the state. Mr. Agnew will be speaking at a G.O.P. fund-raising dinner and a rally. Two nights later, he will speak here at the annual Alfred E. Smith dinner for the benefit of the New York Foundling Hospital.

R. Burdell Bixby, who directs the Nixon campaign here—and who led Governor Rockefeller's re-election drive in 1970—did not know whether Mr. Agnew would be invited to speak at other G.O.P. functions in the month before the election. Significantly, the Syracuse appearance was arranged by the Onondaga County G.O.P. organization, not the state Nixon committee.

"We want to find out what the President's schedule is before making any requests for the Vice President," Mr. Bixby said. He said the same thing three weeks ago.

He denied that there was any connection between Mr. Agnew's low visibility here and Governor Rockefeller's reported yearnings for still another crack at the Republican Presidential nomination.

"I think it's traditional that everything is geared toward the Presidential candidate," said Mr. Bixby echoing a White

House political strategist, Harry S. Dent, a special counsel to the president.

Vic Gold, the vice president's press secretary, said that Mr. Agnew is campaigning "where he can be most effective and where's he needed." Would he be effective in New York? "That would be for someone else to determine," said Mr. Gold.

In contrast to the G.O.P. the Democratic Presidential candidate, Senator George McGovern, is heavily emphasizing his running mate, Sargent Shriver.

Agreeing for a change, both Republican and Democratic politicians said that Mr. Nixon, a strong front-runner in the polls, did not need any help from Mr. Agnew and could actually be hurt by the controversy surrounding the Vice President, while Mr. McGovern needed all the help he can get.

Lack of Funds Cited

Undaunted by such thinking, the Conservative party has just started distributing two million pieces of Nixon-Agnew literature around the state. Mr. O'Doherty said that the literature had been held up because the Conservatives could not get any money from either the New York or national Nixon campaign committees.

The Conservatives were also denied permission to buy a half-hour of television tonight to air the Vice President's speech at the Conservative dinner. Under the new Campaign Practices Act—which imposes a limit on media campaigning—the national Nixon committee is responsible for checking media spending and must agree to any such expenditure.

As a result, the Conservatives could not even use Mr. Agnew's name in a newspaper advertisement for the dinner published earlier this week. Instead, the ad read: "Guess who's coming to our dinner—the man who became a household word. The \$40-a-plate affair will be held at the New York Hilton."