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Watergate Will Clear

Air for GOP, Says Bush

WASHINGTON — (AP) — Republican National Chairman George Bush said yesterday expected indictments of more individuals in the Watergate scandal will clear the air and enable the party itself to emerge undamaged.

“To the degree that there are going to be losers,” he said, “the losers are going to be the individuals who broke the law. I don’t think it’s the party that loses.”

Seeking to counter fears expressed among some GOP officials that Watergate will severely damage the Republican Party in the 1974 and 1976 elections, Bush said he isn’t worried about polls showing many people don’t believe President Nixon wasn’t involved.

“To the degree that there is a credibility problem, it will be taken care of,” Bush said.

He said a meeting of Republican officials here this week indicated little “handwringing pessimism”

over GOP prospects. One county chairman who attended the session confirmed there was little public fear expressed about the negative impact of Watergate.

Another party source indicated, however, that the meeting displayed considerable antagonism toward those of President Nixon’s top advisers, such as resigned White House aides H. R. Haldeman and John Ehrlichman, who played a major role in the operation of the Committee for the Re-election of the President.

A Bit of Doubt

Despite public statements that all is well, this source added, “realistically there is quite a bit of doubt.”

Without naming names, Bush sought to draw distinction between those involved in Watergate and the Republican Party as represented by the national committee whose chairmanship he assumed in January.