

# 17 Republican Governors Voice Support for Nixon

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After a daylong secret meeting at Governor Rockefeller's country estate, 17 Republican Governors issued a Watergate statement yesterday, saying: "We support the President. We believe the President."

The unanimous declaration of the 17 Governors who have been holding their semiannual conference here was read at a late afternoon news conference that produced these other comments:

Governor Rockefeller, asked about his own possible Presidential aspiration in 1976, said: "This is the most you'll get out of me. I've got to get through this year and next year . . . and I'll keep my options open."

The indictment of former Attorney General John N. Mitchell was mentioned only "very, very casually" at the private meeting, Gov. Linwood Holton of Virginia, chairman of the Republican Governors Association, said.

Mr. Rockefeller, refusing to be led into any criticism of President Nixon, said: "What he's done in international affairs is probably the most important initiative that's taken place this century. On domestic questions he's done what we at the state level have had to do—to cut back to live within his income."

As for corruption and "impaired government," Governor Rockefeller said there was "a lack of trust in the establishment" in New York because of corruption "that has nothing to do with Watergate."

The full text of the Watergate statement, read by Governor Holton, follows: "We have confidence in the future of our country. We deplore Watergate. We support the President. We believe the President. We feel he has achieved major accomplishments for our country."