

GOVERNOR URGES NIXON TO RESIGN

Wisconsin Democrat Says
U.S. Programs Are Stalled
Because of Watergate

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—Gov. Patrick J. Lucey of Wisconsin, contending that the nation's economy was faltering and the Federal Government's programs were at a standstill, today called upon President Nixon to resign.

As the Watergate scandal continued to obliterate all other business at the 65th National Governors Conference here, Governor Lucey, a Democrat, said impeachment would be such a divisive procedure that "the cure might be worse than the disease."

Mr. Lucey said he doubted that any formal action on his proposal would be taken by the governors. But the question of the President's capacity to govern was pervading the conference and dominating its opening phases.

"That Watergate should be the No. one topic of discussion at the National Governors Conference, dominating all other deliberations, tells us how far this paralysis has extended," Governor Lucey declared.

Governor Lucey first made his demands during an informal news conference in a corridor of the Sahara Tahoe hotel and casino. But to make certain he had not been misunderstood, he later issued a formal statement, confirming what he had said earlier.

'Severe Problems'

After a caucus of Democratic governors this afternoon, Gov. Dale Dumpers of Arkansas, chairman of the caucus, said it had been decided that no formal resolution on Watergate would be introduced by the Democrats. However, he said, each governor was free to speak for himself. He added:

"The governors have special and severe problems running their own states. We have to do that, regardless of Watergate. I myself do not have enough information to ask for Mr. Nixon's resignation."

Later Governor Bumpers noted that it would take a two-thirds vote to permit the introduction of a Watergate resolution at the conference, and the Democrats did not have enough votes even if they could agree on what to introduce.

The Wisconsin Governor's proposal was quickly scorned by Gov. Tom McCall, the blunt outspoken Republican Governor of Oregon. He characterized it as "a hairtrigger reaction by one of the most politically partizan" of the Governors.

"There's no question the President has been severely damaged by the affair," Governor McCall said. "It's a catastrophe for the nation and it's damaging all elected officials, Republicans or Democrats. But if the President is guilty of anything, it's misfeasance. That's not an impeachable matter."

Careful Insulation

The Republican Governors, outnumbered by the Democrats 31 to 19, held their usual breakfast caucus today in a hotel dining room adjoining but carefully insulated from, the slot machines clanging away on the fresh High Sierra morning.

Gov. Linwood Holton of Virginia, chairman of the Republican Governor Association, insisted after the G.O.P. caucus that there was no discussion of Watergate at the meeting.

"I reported to them what I thought I said yesterday on 'Meet the Press,'" Governor Holton said. "At that time I urged the President to hold a press conference, or a series of them, and answer all the questions, openly, on Watergate. I have been assured today by a White House aide that the President will hold a press conference. But I do not know where or when that will be."

Praise on Foreign Policy

Mr. Holton said he personally did not consider impeachment a relevant question now. He said Mr. Nixon was doing "a very fine job on foreign policy."

"But what we need is for the way is to get right out in front of you press people and answer your questions and I don't care what the mechanics of it might be."

Gov. Milton J. Shapp, Democrat of Pennsylvania, issued a statement denouncing the Nixon Administration, saying that its policies were having "devastating effects on the states."

The Governor said the President's economic policies had brought unemployment and inflation to the states and that Mr. Nixon's revenue sharing plan had resulted only in the dropping of some vital Federal programs.

Gov. Thomas J. Meskill, of Connecticut, a Republican said that his state had no insistent complaints about its relations with the Federal Government since Watergate.

"It's a little harder to find out who to talk to when you call up, and I guess you could blame that on Watergate," he said.

The Governors were surprised this morning by the announcement that Vice President Agnew had changed his mind and would now accept an earlier invitation to attend the conference tomorrow.