

Bush Talks Of GOP Successes

Washington

Republican party National Chairman George Bush said yesterday that the GOP is surviving Watergate and winning special elections because the national Democratic party is "too far left for the American people" and because of public reaction to press preoccupation with the Watergate issue.

Bush said the recent victory of Republican Robert Bauman in a special Maryland congressional election "demonstrated that the voters are fair — they do not take out scandal on a party when the party itself is clean and uninvolved."

"Some few billed it as a test of Watergate, but when Bauman won right here in range of a uni-issue press, this side of it was discounted," Bush said. "Could you imagine if we had lost that race?"

Applause

Delegates to the semi-annual meeting of the Republican National Committee here cheered and applauded Bush's remark, as they did most of his several criticisms about press coverage of the Watergate issue and the Republican party.

In a report to the committee on the state of the party after eight months under his chairmanship, Bush readily conceded that the party's major financial backers had reduced their contributions because of Watergate, but he maintained the GOP is otherwise unaffected.

"The headlines of the past six months have obscured two very important things," Bush said. "First they have obscured the fact that the Democrats are in disarray . . . losing elections they should have been winning and losing important leaders from their party folds because their party nationally is too far left for the American people and facing a

most precipitous decline in numbers of those willing to identify as Democrats.

"Second the headlines have until very recently obscured the fact that we have been winning election. . ."

ACTIVITIES

Bush, a former Texas congressman who was hand-picked by President last January to replace Kansas Senator Bob Dole as GOP chairman, said he had held 43 news conferences in 27 states and made seven national televised appearances since taking the job.

"In almost every one of these appearances almost every question was on Watergate," Bush said.

In asserting that the "Nixon mandate is still valid in the fall of '73," Bush contended that the Republican party is on the popular side of the issues in advocating a strong defense, control of inflation and revenue sharing. But he confessed to some concern about the economy.

"People . . . are upset at food prices and inflation — and we must do better here — but they don't want a highly controlled economy and they know real income is up," he said.

WATERGATE

The theme expressed by Bush that Americans believe in "fair play" and are reacting against press focus on Watergate issues was expressed by many delegates.

"The American people are primarily lovers of their country," said Minnesota committeewoman Iantha Levander, wife of former Governor Harold Levander.

"I don't care how sophisticated they are, they feel that continued television coverage of the Watergate hearings is tearing down our country."

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