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**Nixon Assures Governors  
He Will Allay Public Doubt**

By CHRISTOPHER LYDON

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MEMPHIS, Nov. 20—President Nixon assured the nation's Republican Governors today that he would clear up the public doubts about him with the release of detailed information about Watergate, his personal finances and other charges of scandal in the White House.

The Governors individually said they had heard few fresh facts in their hour-and-three-quarter meeting with Mr. Nixon. Most of them conceded that they had been eager to believe him. None of them said they had asked harsh or pointed questions.

But all of the Governors said they were cheered by the President's confident bearing and extended "candid" answers. They seemed convinced that the President is making a political recovery, that no more "bombs" on scandal are hidden

in the Administration and that Mr. Nixon will finish his term in office—as he vowed again today he would.

"I was surprised how good he looked," said Gov. Tom McCall of Oregon, who billed himself as a skeptic when he arrived at the Governors' conference on Sunday. The President fielded questions "with a great deal of verisimilitude," said Governor McCall. "He was very believable today—more believable than I've ever seen him before," he added.

"All of us are going home

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feeling better," said Gov. Ronald Reagan of California, a one-time rival of Mr. Nixon's but a supporter to date on the Watergate matter. "I'm convinced now that all that's needed is to find a means to get the information be gave us before the American public."

"Everything the public wants and needs to know, he's going to give them," said Gov. Meldrim Thomson Jr. of New Hampshire.

#### Not Sure on Tapes

Yet none of the Governors was sure whether or when or in what for Mr. Nixon intended to release the tapes of White House conversations on the Watergate affair that he has given, under court order, to

Federal Judge John J. Sirica in Washington.

In answer to a question by Governor McCall, President Nixon was reported to have said he never meant to accuse his former Attorney General, Elliot L. Richardson, of lying about the events leading up to the dismissal of the Watergate special prosecutor, Archibald Cox, last Oct. 20. Mr. Richardson resigned rather than follow the President's order to dismiss Mr. Cox.

In the aftermath, Mr. Nixon has been quoted by Congressional visitors as saying that Mr. Richardson had given a false account to the Senate of the Cox dispute and his own role in it.

The President was "not at all vindictive" toward Mr. Richardson and attributed their

disagreement to "a difference of recollection," Mr. McCall reported this afternoon.

#### Still Called Him Wrong

Yet several Governors noted that Mr. Nixon still maintained that Mr. Richardson's recollection was wrong—specifically on the origin of the instructions to Mr. Cox to drop the search for White House evidence on non-Watergate matters. The White House maintains that those instructions were Mr. Richardson's idea in the first place.

Mr. Nixon flew to Memphis early this afternoon from Key Biscayne, Fla. for the fourth installment in six days of the traveling "counteroffensive" against his Watergate critics. He flew to Washington immediately after the visit with the governor at the Rivermont Holiday Inn overlooking the Mississippi River.

Under ground rules that the President's staff helped set, it was left to the several Governors to recount their give-and-take in ostly separate interviews afterward, as the governors and reporters started to fly home from the three-day conference.

After the meeting, Governor Thomson said he got the clear impression—which none of the other Governors mentioned—that Mr. Nixon intended to leave his personal estates in Florida and California to the public after his death.

"He asked us," Mr. Thomson said, "How many of you Governors min the past year have been examined by the Internal Revenue?" Not a single hand went up. He said, 'I have,' and

that it's a — he didn't use the word excruciating, I think he said harrowing — experience, and it's happened to him for the last three years."

Governor Thomson, who had argued here for a suspension of environmental standards on fuel for the duration of the energy crisis, asserted that Mr. Nixon supported the same position this afternoon.

"He stressed the need to get this ecology bit out of our head if we're going to get back on the track on energy," Mr. Thomson said.

Gov. Winfield Dunn of Tennessee said that early in the meeting Mr. Nixon had looked around the room at the 17 Republican Governors and Governors-elect — three were absent—and said, "I'm sorry if I've added to your burdens."

When one Governor asked whether "other bombs" were yet to explode, Mr. Dunn recalled Mr. Nixon saying "if there are, he was not aware of them."

#### Not 'Out On a Limb'

Mr. Thomson remembered the president's saying that Governors, who passed a resolution yesterday commending Mr. Nixon's "outstanding accomplishments in international and domestic affairs," were not going to be "out on a limb." The New Hampshire Governor explained, "He said that there was nothing on his record that would cause the Governors embarrassment."

In reiterating his determination not to resign, President Nixon was reported to have said that Harry Truman had done some of his best work

after his popularity dropped to around 25 per cent in the opinion polls.

"They've asked me to walk away," Governor Dunn quoted Mr. Nixon as saying, "when my popularity drops below 40 per cent. What a tragedy it would be to let that be the indicator that it's time to give up the game."

#### Call It a Beginning

As pleased as the Governors were with Mr. Nixon's performance today, they regarded it as a beginning, not the end of the process of restoring his credibility. Several state executives, including Governors Reagan and Daniel J. Evans of Washington, urged Mr. Nixon in the meeting to do an extended television broadcast with respected network and newspaper correspondents. Mr. Nixon responded that that might be a good idea.

But the mood of the Governors and their conference was radiantly cheerful, and the hostility that the White House had earlier feared in this meeting never developed.

According to reliable reports, Gov. Linwood Holton, a lame duck in Virginia and the outgoing chairman of the Republican Governors Conference, was assured of an ambassadorial post to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in Brussels.

The closest thing to a confrontation with the White House was Governor McCall's repeated insistence that the new fuel-saving highway speed limit be moved up from Mr. Nixon's proposed 50 miles an hour to 55 miles.



Associated Press

President Nixon with Thomas J. Meskill, left, of Connecticut and Warren Dunn of Tennessee at the Republican Governors Association meeting yesterday in Memphis. Mr. Dunn is the new chairman of the association.

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