

Nixon, Reagan skip governors meeting

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ALBUQUERQUE — Two Californians, President Nixon and Governor Reagan, have sent regrets to the Western Governors Conference opening here today.

The White House, which has talked about shoring up its relations with the states, said Nixon would be unable to stop in Albuquerque, after all, following his stay in San Clemente.

In Sacramento, an aide said Reagan has "other commitments" which will keep him away from the four-day meeting.

Reagan, a likely contender for the 1976 Republican presidential nomination, has made five out-of-state political tours this year. On these, the 63-year-old conservative has found more enthusiasm for his fiscal and welfare programs than he had been able to generate among his peers' at previous governors' sessions.

"He just isn't able to make it to this conference," Reagan's aide said.

The West's governors, besides partaking of host state hospitality, will deal with a number of regional problems, such as land use

planning, water and energy development, education and transportation.

Efforts already are under way to suppress partisan politics.

Conference Chairman Bruce King of New Mexico said he hopes the governors will find ways "to carry a little more weight with the National Administration."

Gov. King, a Democrat, declined to blame Watergate for the present gap between the White House and state capitols.

No such reluctance was shown, however, by Republican Dan Evans of Washington, former National Governors Conference chairman.

"Watergate continues to paralyze the federal government," Evans said.

"It seems clear that an impeachment trial would continue that paralysis for perhaps another year."

Democrat Calvin Rampton of Utah, who succeeded Evans as head of the National Governors Conference, is seeking a better working arrangement with Congress.

Rampton and other governors will fire questions at a panel of five U.S. Senators.