

Tristate G.O.P. Officials Fear Losses in Election

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By FRANK LYNN

Republican party leaders and public officials in New York, Connecticut and New Jersey reacted with dismay yesterday to President Nixon's admission of his role in the Watergate cover-up and expressed fear that Republican candidates would suffer if Mr. Nixon was still in office in November.

"It will be a very heavy load on the party," said Senator Jacob K. Javits of New York, the senior Republican Senator in the tristate area. He added that a Nixon resignation would bring "a sigh of relief," but stopped short of calling for the President to resign.

The Senator's comments were echoed by Brian Gaffney, the Republican state chairman in Connecticut, who said a Senate trial of the President at election time would be "damaging to Republican efforts."

Mr. Gaffney said he was not sure if a resignation would help the party. "Either way, it couldn't be worse than it is now," Mr. Gaffney said.

Democrats Bear Down

In contrast to the somber Republican mood, Democrats found it difficult to resist crowing.

Joseph F. Crangle, the New York Democratic state chairman, said that Watergate would be an issue, whether or not Mr. Nixon was in office. He said local Republican candidates could be criticized for their "deafening silence" on the President until the last few weeks.

By contrast, he said, many Democratic party and Democratic public officials opposed President Lyndon B. Johnson's handling of the war in Vietnam.

One major Democratic candidate, Howard J. Samuels, a contender for the gubernatorial nomination, is already making an issue of Governor Wilson's refusal to pass judgment on Mr. Nixon.

"It is no longer acceptable for Malcolm Wilson to stand silent on this convulsive national crisis," Mr. Samuels said yesterday.

A Wilson spokesman said the Republican Governor would not comment on the latest revelations in the Watergate scandal. The spokesman said that Mr.

Wilson, as a lawyer, believed that he did not have enough information or the constitutional responsibility to make a judgment.

Senator James L. Buckley of New York, who had stunned fellow Republicans by calling for Mr. Nixon's resignation last March, declined to comment on the President's latest admissions.

"He continues to feel that resignation is the appropriate course, but refuses to comment on any recent revelations because he still may have to be judge and jury," a Buckley spokesman said.

Rockefeller Silent

Also silent was former Gov. Nelson A. Rockefeller, who, many politicians believe, fears his last bid for President would be crushed if Vice President Ford assumed the Presidency. As the incumbent, Mr. Ford could presumably have the G.O.P. Presidential nomination in 1976 for the asking.

Mr. Rockefeller was reported by aides to be vacationing in Maine.

Other Republicans were not so reticent to disclose their deep sorrow and pessimism over the latest turn in the Watergate scandal.

Twelve of New York's 17 Republican Representatives called for the President's resignation or impeachment. None of the New Yorkers defended the President.

Among those calling for impeachment were Representative Henry Smith 3d of North Tonawanda, who voted against impeachment in the House Judiciary Committee, and Representative Howard Robison of Owego, the retiring "dean" of the state's Republicans in Congress.

Representative Angelo D. Roncallo, who represents the Third Congressional District, which straddles the Nassau-Suffolk line on Long Island, took note of the dilemma that many Republican candidates face of trying to satisfy hardcore Nixon supporters and anti-Nixon voters.

Mr. Roncallo said that he would vote to impeach the President, even though "I'm going to get hurt among the hardcore Republican voters."