

Politicians in Metropolitan Area See An End to Ordeal of G.O.P. and Nation

By FRANK LYNN

Republican and Democratic politicians in New York, New Jersey and Connecticut reacted to President Nixon's impending resignation with wide agreement that it would remove a political albatross from Republican candidates and end the ordeal.

The attitude was summed up by Governor Byrne of New Jersey in a statement anticipating the resignation. The Democratic Governor said it would "end this nation's continued anguish over the Watergate scandals and allow Congress to turn its attention to matters such as inflation and high unemployment."

Governor Wilson of New York, a Republican who has repeatedly declined to pass judgment on the Watergate scandal and on Mr. Nixon, for the first time criticized the President. He called Mr. Nixon "deceitful" and said that with him out of office, the Federal Government might be able to deal with "the dreadful fires of inflation."

Gain to G.O.P. Seen

Gov. Thomas J. Meskill of Connecticut, another Republican, was unavailable to reporters. In one of the final acts of the dying Nixon Administration, Mr. Meskill, a strong Nixon supporter, was nominated for a judgeship in the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit, in New York City. The nomination was made with the approval, ironically, of Senator Lowell P. Weicker of Connecticut, the most outspoken Republican critic of Mr. Nixon on the Senate, special committee on Watergate.

There was general agreement in the tristate area that Republican candidates would benefit from an "extended honeymoon" for a new administration.

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Even Democrats who had anticipated a sweep of November contests, comparable to the Nixon landslide in the 1972 Presidential election, predicted a more balanced election outcome in November. There are races for Governor, for the United States Senate and House or Representatives and for seats in the Legislature in New York and in Connecticut, and House races in New Jersey.

"Any negative effect Watergate might have on Republicans in the election would be removed with Nixon's resignation," said Vincent Laudone, the newly elected Republican State Chairman in Connecticut.

Earlier Dilemma Recalled

"Malcolm Wilson would be weaker with Richard Nixon in the White House," said a top strategist for Howard J. Samuels, a candidate for the Democratic gubernatorial nomination in New York.

Until the President's legal and political defenses began crumbling with his admission earlier this week that he had tried to short-circuit the Watergate investigation, Republican candidates had been faced with the dilemma of supporting the President or remaining silent and possibly antagonizing inde-

pendent voters, or opposing Mr. Nixon and incurring the wrath of die-hard Republicans.

Even Republican leaders in rural areas of New Jersey — proudly billed as "Nixon Country" until this week — conceded that the dangers of a Republican party split had receded.

"Some people would have said the President was forced out on a bad rap and blamed Case [Senator Clifford P. Case, New Jersey Republican] and the liberals," one rural Republican leader said. "But that's all over with and the party can come together now."

A Burden Seen Lifting

Coincidentally New York State Republican county leaders were meeting with Governor Wilson and the Republican state ticket at a closed-door meeting at the Hyatt House motel in Albany. Several of the leaders described the mood of the meeting as "somber" but also agreed that the turn of events "lifts a heavy burden from Republicans and gives the voters a chance to focus on the state elections."

Part of the meeting was devoted to a briefing of the county chairman regarding the state's new campaign financing law, which limits campaign spending and requires detailed reports of contributions and expenditures. The measure and a campaign-financing bill enacted in New Jersey last year are a direct outgrowth of the Watergate scandal.

Some Impose Own Limits

Candidates in the three states are virtually competing with each other with detailed financing reports. At least two major candidates, Ramsey Clark, a contender for the Democratic United States Senate nomination in New York, and Representative Robert H. Steele, the Republican gubernatorial candidate in Connecticut, have imposed \$100 limits on their campaign contributions as another direct outgrowth of Watergate.

Ironically, Mr. Clark, who

was United States Attorney General in the Johnson Administration, was a major target of Mr. Nixon's "law and order" campaign in the 1968 Presidential election.

Mr. Clark, who was campaigning in Utica, said the Nixon resignation was "eminently desirable." He added that Mr. Nixon should not be granted immunity, calling such proposals "shockingly contemptuous of the integrity of the law."

His statement was one of several signals that immunity could be shaping up as a partisan issue in the tristate area. Mr. Samuels and Representative Bella S. Abzug, Manhattan Democrat, also opposed any grant of immunity.

Javits Cool to Immunity

"We must not have one set of laws for Richard Nixon and Spiro Agnew and another set for the people," Mrs. Abzug said. Earlier, Senator Jacob K. Javits, New York Republican, said it was "highly unlikely" that he would vote for an immunity resolution in the Senate.

Another Republican, George L. Clark Jr., the Brooklyn Republican chairman and a strong Nixon supporter until this week disagreed.

"I'd like to see him get immunity," he said. "We've done enough to him."

Most politicians, even Democrats, were silent on the immunity issue, waiting to see if and how it would develop.

However, at least two major Democrats were not reluctant to suggest a course of action to the new Administration.

Governor Byrne urged that the new President appoint a Democratic Vice President, and Representative Hugh L. Carey of Brooklyn suggested the formation of a coalition Government that would include prominent Democrats and independents as well as Republicans. Both cited the need for national unity and for a reassurance of the integrity of the Federal Government.