

SFChronicle GOP View Of the Pardon Issue

By George Murphy
Chronicle Correspondent

Anaheim

Republican displeasure with President Ford's pardon of former President Nixon will fade as the days go by, the state's GOP leader said here yesterday.

State Central Committee chairman Gordon Luce of Diego admitted there has been "mixed reaction" to Mr. Ford's action of last Sunday.

But, Luce said at the opening of the Republican state convention here, "I don't think it (the pardon) is going to affect election results in California."

Luce said he felt Mr. Ford should have made "a fuller explanation of why he granted the pardon to Mr. Nixon."

Mr. Ford, Mr. Luce said, "was probably very concerned about Mr. Nixon's health and also about the problems of getting an impartial jury and the trauma to the nation of a drawn-out trial."

Luce added, "I think the President will soon have the support of all Republicans, when they come to realize he had the courage to make a difficult decision.

"That decision is not a popular one, yet, but I think as more explanations are made, the people will understand it better."

The pardon, Luce said, will not have a major effect on the California gubernatorial race because by election day "it won't be a major issue."

"The economy will be the strongest issue and will continue to be through November."

About 800 of the party faithful gathered here for what the Republicans term the VIP (Volunteers in Politics) convention, aimed at steaming up precinct workers and campaign donors between now and November 5.

Controller Houston Flournoy, the Republican gubernatorial nominee, was the principal speaker last night at a banquet for GOP statewide candidates.

Flournoy challenged his opponent, Secretary of State Edmund G. Brown Jr., to give a public accounting on what Flournoy called "the sloppy, inefficient manner in which he has run his office."

"It is time for (Brown) to explain to the public why he apparently cannot administer a relatively small office with generally routine ministerial duties," Flournoy said.

"There has been a series of foulups and mishaps by the secretary of state. It's time everybody in this state is made aware of the sloppy, inefficient manner in which he has run his office."

Flournoy said Brown had failed in his secretary of state function in several areas, including the publication of the Statement of Vote of the June primary two months late; instituting "frivolous lawsuits while spending tax dollars looking into problems not under his

jurisdiction;" and "promoting" a voters pamphlet for the June election that was "oversize, causing an approximate \$200,00 increase in printing costs and another \$600,000 cost to the counties because it cost that much more to mail."

Flournoy said state Senator George Deukmejian (Rep-Long Beach) has asked the auditor general to conduct an investigation of these and several other charges concerning Brown's operation of the secretary of state's office.

Today the delegates will hear from U.S. Senator William Brock of Tennessee, chairman of the Senate Republican Campaign Committee, and Congressman Charles Wiggins of Fullerton, Mr. Nixon's strongest supporter during the House Judiciary Committee impeachment proceedings.

Wiggins, after Mr. Nixon's disclosure of the latest White House tapes last month, reluctantly announced that he would vote for the former President's impeachment.