

Panel Kills GOP Reforms

The Republican Party's Committee tentatively struck down yesterday several proposed changes backed by the reform wing and aimed at broadening party participation.

In one action, the committee voted 25 to 24 to delete a provision that would have granted party auxiliary and minority groups membership on the Republican National Committee.

The proposal, drafted by a special committee mandated by the 1972 national convention, would have granted full voting membership in the national committee to the heads of the National Federation of Republican Women, the Young Republican National Federation, the College Republican National Committee, the National Republican Heritage Groups Council and the National Black Republican Council. During the debate, Henry E. Rohlsen of the Virgin Islands, the only black member of the rules committee, told the group, "You are going to kill the grass roots."

An alternative, which

would have placed representatives of the auxiliary groups on the national committee but denied them a vote, also was defeated at the meeting in Arlington. The full RNC will begin two days of meetings there today.

In another blow at the reform wing, the committee rejected proposals which would have created bylaws

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for the operation of the national committee, and also established standing committees of the RNC. Sponsors of these sections said they were aimed at giving members of the national committee more to do and a more active role in party affairs.

Committee Chairman Kent B. McGough of Ohio said the tentative votes were taken primarily to get a sense of the group and that

all the actions were subject to further consideration.

Reagan Campaign

Ronald Reagan's campaign manager said yesterday that Reagan can remain a viable presidential candidate simply by "staying close" to President Ford in the early primary races.

John P. Sears told a breakfast meeting with reporters he does not think it necessary for Reagan to win the March 9 Florida primary or the March 16 Illinois primary, his next two key tests against the President, to stay in the race.

Sears conceded that eventually Reagan must demonstrate that he can defeat Mr. Ford in some primaries to have a chance for the Republican presidential nomination.

Sears' assessment of the importance of the Florida and Illinois GOP primaries runs counter to the prevailing political view in the wake of Mr. Ford's victory in Tuesday's New Hampshire primary. That victory, although narrow, is seen by many political figures as

making it essential that Reagan win in Florida or Illinois to stay in the race.

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Nixon Trip

President Ford concedes for the first time that former President Nixon's widely publicized trip to China probably damaged him in the New Hampshire primary.

Mr. Ford made that assessment in an interview with a reporter for station WTVJ in Miami. On Wednesday, he had said he thought the Nixon trip had a "minimal" impact on the New Hampshire primary.

"I think the weight of the evidence we have so far—we don't have all the evidence yet—is that it probably was harmful," the President said in the interview.

Abortion Rights

The National Abortion Rights Action League is an organization that supports women's right to have abortions. It was identified incorrectly in Thursday's editions of The Washington Post.