That Big Rally Went Off Without A Hitch--GOP

By LEONARD POGER

Most voters never get a real chance to get a personal look at a presidential candidate during a national campaign.

But an estimated 12,000 persons proved to be the exception last week when Republican nominee Richard Nixon brought his campaign to Roma Hall in Livonia.

Suburban voters have read and heard quite a bit about Nixon's smooth-running campaign, the heavy expenses incurred for his quest to gain White House occupancy, and his refusal to get specific about the nation's problems -- and especially answers -- during the current campaign.

To give Observerland residents a peek into what went on before, during and after Nixon's visit to Livonia -- the first by any presidential candidate -- local political figures were asked about the various aspects of the rally.

IN CONTRAST TO campaign problems incurred by Democratic nominee Hubert Humphrey and third-party hopeful George C. Wallace, the Livonia rally was completely a pro-Nixon affair.

In fact, there was so much cheerleading going on without any hecklers opposed to Nixon, the Vietnam War, police brutality or anything else, the rally took on more of an air of a high school pep rally before a big football game with crosstown rivals.

The balloons were plentiful, placards everywhere, the Nixon girls pretty and wholesome looking.

This is what was seen on the surface.

What were the problems behind the scenes?

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DESPITE THE myriad details to be handled, Mrs. Delores Kory, 19th Congressional District chairman for the GOP, said that the whole thing went smoothly, thanks to the volunteer labor by Republican workers.

About the only dark spot was the refusal of the area school officials to allow high school bands to play at the rally.

But there was a professional Dixieland band on hand, and no one complained about a lack of music.

She did point out that Nixon and his entourage arrived at Roma Hall about 30 minutes behind schedule because of an unscheduled stop in Detroit's 13th Congressional District to observe a volunteer job placement bureau set up by a Negro woman in the aftermath of the 1967 riots.

MRS. KORY was delighted with the results of the rally, which pulled in more persons than Nixon's rallies later that day in suburban Warren and Southfield.

The District wanted a larger crowd for effect on the national television news programs later in the evening, she said.

There were 100,000 invitations sent out to registered voters in the area, hoping for a large crowd, which was obtained in spite of the unusual morning hour.

Robert Enzo, vice president and general manager of Roma Hall, said that the housecleaning detail of the presidential rally resulted in no problems, and the large hall was readied in time for parties later that night and the following day.

There were no objects in the hall broken or damaged, he said, and "everything went smoothly."

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SINCE THE JUNE 5 assassination of Sen. Robert Kennedy during his campaign to gain the Democratic nomination for the presidency, all candidates have been afforded Secret Service protection.

The agents were present on the platform during Nixon's speech but Republican partisans of all ages were able to get close and shake his hand following his 20-minute talk.

There was also no problem on getting press credentials.

Only a social security number was requested of each local reporter and no effort was made to check a driver's license picture to verify the reporter's identity.

In the crush of photographers in front of the platform, there were several young faces with instamatic cameras, straining for a close-up of their hero.

The cost of the whole thing?

No one in the district knows because the national Nixon committee and the GOP State Central Committee fooled the bill.

But as Henry Sladek, Wayne County Republican Chairman, said, "I don't know (what the cost was), but if I did I wouldn't tell."

WRAP UP

The Tigers clinched the 1968 American League pennant on Sept. 17, twelve days before the end of the season. It was their first championship in 23 years.

Friedrichs Pledge: 'Close Contacts'

Dr. Donald E. Friedrichs, Democratic candidate for the new Wayne County Board of Supervisors, pledged to maintain close contact with the eight men who now serve the 26th district on the old board.

In a statement issued from his campaign headquarters, Friedrichs said all the supervisors he will replace if elected "have made significant contributions that have not been adequately recognized by the public."

Friedrichs is seeking one of 19 posts on the newly organized county board. The reorganization cut the 135-member board to 26 members. The 26th District covers Plymouth, Plymouth Township, Canton Township, Northville, Northville Township (each of which has one supervisor on the board now) and Livonia (which currently has three).

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"I RECOGNIZE that it will be difficult for me to do the job of these eight men, but I will make an effort to consult with them, and other local leaders to meet the needs of this district," Friedrichs said.

Friedrichs said the county supervisor's job has been "unrecognized and unrewarded. County government is always last to be recognized. As I have met with county officials to discuss the issues of the campaign, I have found widespread respect for all eight."

Friedrichs cited the work Livonia's three representatives have done in getting County Road Commission cooperation on road improvement projects.

And, as well, the old Plymouth's supervisor, Arch Vallier, gave the new sheriff, Roman S. Gribbs, when he took over.

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FRIEDRICHS, director of secondary education for Livonia public schools and former principal of Bentley High School, has said he would form a citizens advisory group so the present supervisors could keep in close contact with the county.

"Many of these men have built up long-standing working relationships with leaders of county government. I want to make use of their knowledge and connections -- not lose them after the election," Friedrichs said.

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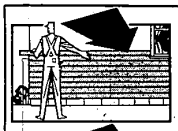

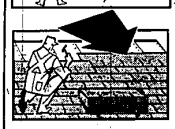

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American Arbitration Association
Member, Unemployment Benefit Appeal Board of Wayne County

STATE OFFICIAL
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● Served as Vice-Chairman, Youth Division — Catholic Charities
● Served as Board Member and Secretary, Metropolitan Society for Blind
● Former Secretary-Treasurer Local 4000 Communications Workers of America — AFL-CIO
● Former Member, Community Services Committee, Wayne County AFL-CIO
● Three years overseas Veteran World War II

EDUCATION
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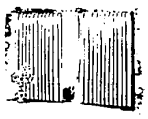

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