



By Wally McNamee, Staff Photographer

OPPONENTS—Zoltan Ferenczy, standing, debates with George Romney, right, in Detroit.

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Romney Foe Roars

By David S. Broder

Washington Post Staff Writer

1966
Campaign '66

DETROIT, Sept. 28—Gov.

George Romney of Michigan debated his election opponent for the first time last night and found the Democrats' sacrificial lamb transformed at least temporarily into a lion.

To the cheers of a highly partisan labor union audience, Democrat Zolton Ferency, the man who accepted the "impossible" assignment of running against Romney, alternately taunted, teased and attacked the 1968 Republican presidential prospect.

Romney, a prohibitive favorite to win his third term over the little-known Democratic State Chairman, kept cool throughout the two-hour session and once or twice even won grudging applause from some members of the AFL-CIO Committee on Political Education. The 1000 union leaders pounded the tables and stamped their feet as they urged Ferency to "give him hell Zolton!"

Romney Lets Them Boo

Once, when Federation President August Scholle stepped forward to quiet the booing of the crowd at Cobo Hall, Romney said, "That's all right, Gus, let them express themselves. I know where I am."

Ferency, a bespectacled lawyer who seems to remember Romney's old speeches better than Romney himself, described the Governor as an "anti-hero . . . long on vetoes, short on performance."

The vetoes he criticized came on 16 measures, principally appropriations bills, passed by the Democratic Legislature.

Ferency, who agreed to run when no well-known democrat could be persuaded to make

the race, drew a big laugh from the unionists with an allusion to Romney's ill-disguised presidential hopes.

"We know what's in your heart, Mr. Romney," he said, "and we think it's a laudable ambition. But your two opponents, Barry Goldwater and Richard Nixon, have a great advantage over you. They don't hold public office. They're free to preach the Republican gospel all over the land. And I think we ought to give you the same advantage."

Silence on Presidency

Romney made no reference to his possible presidential bid. He said Ferency's criticisms of his record were "distortions and half-truths." Romney bragged that his share of union members' votes climbed from 32 per cent in this first race in 1962 to 48 per cent in 1964 and "surveys indicate it will be even higher this year."

"The majority of union members know a good thing when they see it," he said. "You union leaders should declare your independence of any political party and encourage your members to make a free choice."

Romney's ability to retain the Governorship, which had been in Democratic hands for 14 years before his first victory, is a bone in the throat of Scholle and the other AFL-CIO union leaders who play a decisive role in the Michigan Democratic Party.

On the other hand, Teamsters President James R. Hoffa has endorsed Romney for reelection.

Ferency and questioners from the floor repeatedly challenged Romney to defend the voting record of Sen.

Griffin, the Republican, appointed to a Senate seat this year.

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Former six-term
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Robert P. Griffin, the Republican he appointed to a Senate vacancy this year.

"He's your baby, you appointed him, and you'll sink or swim with him," Ferency said. "I'll go with Mennen Williams." Former six-term Governor G. Mennen Williams is the Democratic nominee against Griffin.