



STATE SEALS ADORN THE REPUBLICANS' \$80,000 CONVENTION ROSTRUM

All 50 states, in alphabetical order, are represented in elaborate construction

—AP Photo

A Feeling of Monuments

MIAMI BEACH — (AP) — For \$80,000 in Republican money, the designer of "The Dating Game" set for TV has given the GOP convention podium the look of a Greek column that rises up, up, to the rafters.

It almost shouts divinity.

From front to back and floor to ceiling, the Miami Beach convention hall stands transformed from a Democratic Party family room — where the kids can play without hurting the furniture — to a Republican temple, a place intended to impress with its majesty and decorum.

Monuments

"I was trying to get the feeling you get in Washington — a feeling

of monuments," said designer George Smith.

He succeeded so well that a wag suggested that a point will come when the chairman implores: "Will the delegates please fill the aisles."

From the front, the podium looks like a slice of Greek column with fluted edges. It rises in two tiers to the rostrum and then to the top of the hall with three 27-foot screens that face front and sides like giant sentries.

Oversight

The screens are important for three major film presentations but, alas, the front row delegations from Vermont, Colorado and Florida can't see them. To correct the oversight, four television sets will rise hydraulically from the

first tier every time a film or slide is shown.

"I was really bothered by the constant traffic behind the speakers," said Smith, a Los Angeles television art director who has also done the "Newly Game" and "This Is Your Life."

So he moved the platform forward by 16 feet, blocked off access from side to side and arranged to make every Republican speaker of uniform height. That way, the microphones won't intrude, either.

Standard

It meant installing equipment to raise or lower the floor in front of the microphones like a car on a service station lift. President Nixon sets the height standard, the other speakers will be measured up

and down from there.

Around the hall, where Democrats hung giant pictures of their heroic figures, the Republicans have hung American flags — 250 of them, measuring 8 by 12 feet each.

The VIP boxes at the platform's sides — where Edmund Muskie and Hubert Humphrey and Mrs. George Wallace and Mrs. Martin Luther King sat during the Democratic convention — are gone.

Instead, the Republicans have sectioned off a red-carpeted box along one side for Mrs. Nixon and her party. The floor there has been raised six inches for the benefit of photographers. And along its front are the fluted-column edges again.