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Ford in Battle Cry To the GOP

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Vice President Gerald R. Ford urged Republican last night to take up the challenge of the Democrats and unite in time for the November elections.

Addressing the annual dinner of the Middlesex Club, the nation's oldest Republican club, Ford warned that if Democratic predictions of sweeping victories in congressional elections come true this fall, Democrats would be able to run roughshod over the President.

Ford said he plans to campaign for Republican unity and a GOP victory from now until November.

Alluding to a 1971 speech before the Middlesex Club by former Vice President Spiro T. Agnew, in which Agnew attacked the media, Ford said, "Tonight I am declaring war against no one except the psychological complex of defeat and despair that is afflicting the party."

Ford also held out the olive branch to the media.

"I think it is important that we have good relations with the press," he said. "I happen to believe that the news media can and has been helpful in trying to preserve some of the great liberties that we have in this country."

Associated Press