



At a breakfast for Democratic Party leaders, Speaker Carl Albert says "It would be disastrous for the President to resign under political pressure." Looking on are, from

left, Gov. Wendell Ford of Kentucky; National Committee Chairman Robert S. Strauss; House Majority Leader Thomas P. O'Neill and Senate Majority Leader Mike Mansfield.

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Democrats: No Resignation

By Mary Russell

Washington Post Staff Writer

Republicans who are demanding that President Nixon resign are motivated by fear for their own political lives, Democratic leaders said yesterday. The Democrats maintained and solidified their own "above the battle" stance by opposing any Nixon resignation themselves.

The Democratic strategy was clearly this: do nothing that would make it appear Democrats are trying to force the President out of office; let that be done by Republicans feeling the pressure at the polls.

Meanwhile, it was reported that the White House was trying to capitalize on the Democrats' ploy by seeking signatures of Republican senators on a statement also opposing presidential resignation.

Though senators would not confirm it, White House lobbyist Tom C. Korologos was reported asking key Republican senators Norris Cotton (N.H.) and Wallace Bennett (Utah) to draft a statement declaring that the constitutional process of impeachment is under way and working. The statement need not include any expression of support for the President, Korologos was reported as saying.

Korologos denied the reports.

Democratic National Committee Chairman Robert S. Strauss, following a breakfast meeting with Democratic Gov. Wendell Ford of Kentucky and congressional leaders, said Republican demands for resignation amounted to "a terrible hue and cry by Republicans running for office trying to put some distance between themselves and the President."

The most serious mistake the Democrats could make "in terms of party politics in terms of the national good" would be to "put a partisan cloud on the question of impeachment," Strauss said.

Gov. Ford, who is running against Republican Sen. Marlow Cook for the Senate, said Cook's call for resignation of the President and his "harsh statements about the President" alienated some of Cook's "hard-core Republican support."

Even House Majority Leader Thomas P. (Tip) O'Neill (D-Mass.), who had earlier called for the President's resignation, said he had no changed his mind. "Some time ago, because his credibility was so low, I thought it was in the best interest of the American people that he resign," O'Neill said. "I now think

Americans want all the facts to come out, not only for now, but for posterity and history."

House Speaker Carl Albert said, "It would be disastrous for the President to resign under political pressure. If he is not guilty and those facts come out he would be exonerated. But if he resigns and later it is shown he was not guilty it would result in irreparable harm to the country."

Senate Majority Leader Mike Mansfield (Mont.) and Senate Majority Whip Robert Byrd (W.Va.), who also attended the breakfast, had aired their opposition to presidential resignation on the Senate floor Monday.

Senate Minority Leader Hugh Scott (R-Pa.) yesterday concurred with the Democratic views and said Democratic leaders were "right to allow the system to function." Members of Congress should "keep cool" on the question of impeachment, Scott said; "I think our nation is strong enough to withstand the functioning of its own Constitution."

Strauss praised Democrats at all levels for showing "KREARKABLE R" in discussing impeachment. Albert praised the House Judiciary Committee for go-

ing at the impeachment inquiry "with the idea of getting the facts, not getting the President."

The unified party position appears intended to start with the question of resignation and move down the line to other issues.

It began earlier this year when House and Senate leaders began meeting to discuss congressional action. Then Chairman Strauss began to take part. Yesterday Ford, chairman of the Democratic Governors' Conference, was added to the list, and Albert said the leaders would meet in the future with Mayor Henry Maier of Milwaukee, chairman of the new Democratic Mayors' Conference.

Albert said the purpose of the meeting was "to develop common ground among Democrats at all levels of government. Our ultimate objective is the formulation of a coordinated Democratic program for the people that is consistent of purpose at the state and national level and capable of winning public support."

Strauss depicted the Democrats as trying "to get Watergate behind us" and "continue the positive accomplishments" of the Democratic Congress.

Watergate "seems to obscure the many good things this Congress has done for the people," Albert said.