

GOP smashup indicated as

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Knight News Service

WASHINGTON — With about three weeks to go until the Nov. 5 elections, Republican barometers are still falling almost everywhere.

State-by-state checks show that more than ever the Democrats appear headed for major gains.

Some forecasters think the coming Democratic storm could rise to typhoon force, smashing GOP strength in the House to one of the lowest levels in this century.

Even if such a landslide does not materialize, it seems likely election night totals will have a distinctly Democratic tilt.

From coast to coast, GOP leaders mourn that whatever Republican gains might have accrued from Nixon's resignation were largely wiped out by the intense public indignation over President Ford's pardon of him.

As they have tried desperately to come off the floor again for the campaign, the GOP faithful complain bitterly that they are being battered by a string of new and unpopular presidential actions.

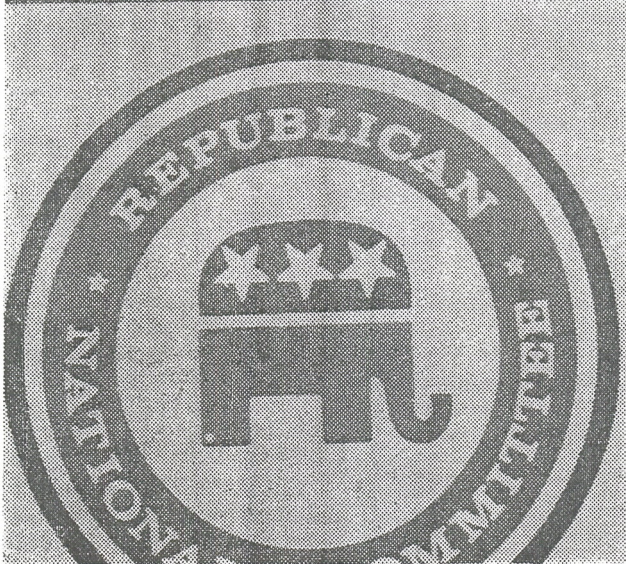
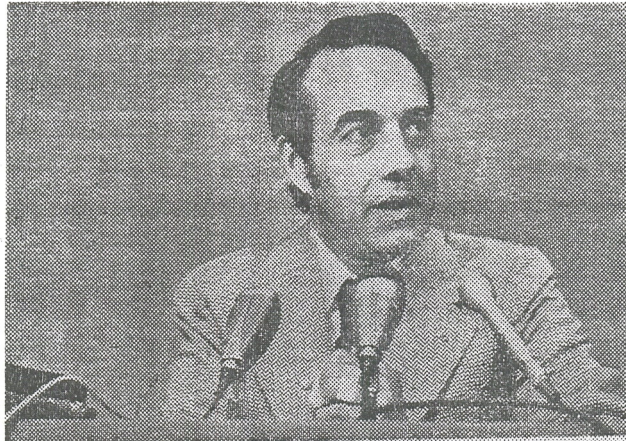
The amnesty program for deserters, cancellation of the grain sale to Russia, Ford's call for a new surtax on inflation-pressed middle-income families are cited as crippling blows.

As Kentucky's Republican Sen. Marlow Cook, who faces a relentless challenge from the Democratic Gov. Wendell Ford, complained in frustration: "It looks like I'm going to be running against two Fords this fall."

Asked if the President could help his cause, threatened Republican Sen. Robert Dole of Kansas snapped that after "the pardon of Richard Nixon, and amnesty . . . I really don't need too much more help of that kind before November."

But the most ominous cloud on the horizon is the American voter's growing fear for his own economic livelihood.

From coast to coast, the polls show that Americans



KANSAS SENATOR ROBERT DOLE
"I don't need help of that kind"

are obsessed with pocket-book concerns.

If they vent these economic complaints as they have in the past — by voting against candidates of the party that holds the White House — the GOP losses could be devastating.

There are some bright spots for the GOP: Maine, Alaska, possibly Oklahoma, just maybe Ohio.

But these are mostly low-rent districts on the political Monopoly board, while GOP Gold Coast properties seem about to topple to the Democrats.

Through impressive gains over the past four years, the Democrats already hold 32 of the nation's 50 governorships.

It seems likely that when the smoke has cleared this fall, that total will have climbed to 36, or even higher.

But the number is not as important as the size of the states involved.

Alaska and possibly Oklahoma, the Democrats seem assured of taking over in seven new states, including the political powerhouses of California, New York and Massachusetts, plus Colorado, Arizona, Oregon and Connecticut.

If this should happen, and if Ohio Democratic Gov. John Gillian is able to stand off a stiff challenge from former Republican Gov. James Rhodes, Democrats would hold the statehouses in nine of the 10 most populous states.

Of the 23 other statehouses up for grabs this year, 17 seem destined to stay in Democratic hands, while the only seats likely to remain safely with the GOP are in New Hampshire, Iowa and Wyoming. There are hard-fought, toss-up battles in Kansas and South Carolina (both now Democratic) and in Tennessee (now Republican).

In the Senate, the Democrats seem assured of enlarging their majority from 58 to at least 60 (out of 100). If a sweep develops enough momentum to topple most of the close races in favor of the Democrats, their Senate strength could balloon to 65.

Of the 20 Democratic Sen-

election barometers fall

ate seats at stake this year, 17 appear safe, and only one — held by Mike Gravel of Alaska — seems destined to be lost to the Republicans.

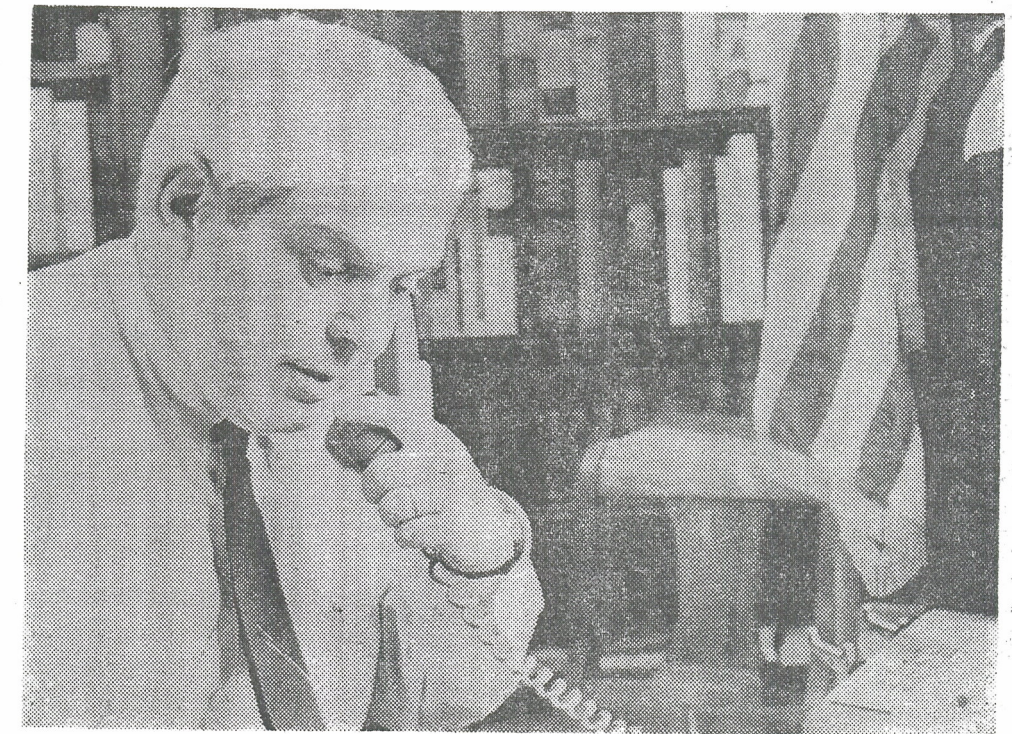
Of the 15 Republican seats up for grabs, on the other hand, four appear to be beyond saving and at least four others are under great pressure.

Unless they get some astonishing breaks, GOP incumbent Senators Robert Dole of Kansas, Peter Dominick of Colorado and Cook of Kentucky appear headed for defeat. The Florida seat now held by retiring Sen. Edward Gurney also seems likely to slide to the Democrats.

In addition, Republican Milton Young of North Dakota and Robert Packwood of Oregon are fighting for survival in races judged extremely close. The Vermont seat being vacated by George Aiken could also fall to the Democrats.

And politicians everywhere have been amazed to hear that GOP Sen. Jacob Javits of New York, who usually wins by smashing margins, is in trouble this year.

Republican hopes of defeating Democratic incumbents Birch Bayh in Indiana and George McGovern in



SEN. MARLOW COOK OF KEN TUCKY FEELS A FRUSTRATION
"I'm going to be running against two Fords this fall"

South Dakota are fading steadily now. The GOP is also finding tougher going than expected in trying to capture the Nevada seat opened by the retirement of Democrat Alan Bible.

If there is a Democratic landslide, the Republicans could also lose the Oklahoma seat of Sen. Henry Bellmon and the New Hamp-

shire seat of retiring Sen. Norris Cotton.

The only Republican seats apparently solid are those of Senators Barry Goldwater of Arizona, Charles Mathias of Maryland, Richard Schweiker of Pennsylvania and the Utah seat of retiring Sen. Wallace Bennett.

Although it is much more difficult to predict the

over-all outcome of 435 races for seats in the house, the only question is how much the present Democratic majority (248 Democrats, 187 Republicans) will grow.

Staff chief John Calkins of the House Republican Campaign Committee concedes a net GOP loss, but insists the Democratic gain will be held to about 22 seats.