

Senate called last hope for Nixon

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — White House aides say President Nixon's chances of winning a House impeachment vote have evaporated and that they now view the Senate as his last hope for survival in office.

But knowledgeable head-counters in both parties say Nixon's prospects there are uncertain.

Acknowledging that Senate head counts on the issue are little more than educated guesswork at this time, they say it is impossible to count a sure 67 votes for conviction, the two-thirds majority needed for Nixon's ouster from office. But they say neither do there appear to be 34 senators definitely supporting the President, the number he needs for acquittal.

House impeachment, which requires only a majority vote, is considered a near certainty. And there is wide agreement among senators of both parties that, even if Nixon avoids ouster from office by the Senate,

SFXaminer Nixon's front crumbling

AUG 4 1974

By Don Bacon

Newhouse News Service

WASHINGTON —

The President's aides have now begun to quarrel among themselves, which is further evidence that the Nixon White House has entered its death throes.

Behind the scenes, there is shock at the rapid erosion of the President's defenses, dissatisfaction over the way the White House

has fought the impeachment battle to date, and growing disagreement over strategy for the next phases.

"Contentious" was the term used by one White House staffer to describe the current mood. "I don't see any signs of defections," he added. "But there is much spirited talk."

To an outside observer, there appears to be a breakdown of staff discipline and internal

communications. Presi-

Many staff members now realize for the first time that Nixon, either through impeachment or resignation, probably will not finish his term in office. That hits some of them — the so-called "True Believers" — especially hard because they have been and remain thoroughly convinced that he is innocent of any impeachable offense.

Most lists being passed around in the Senate indicate that about a dozen Republicans and a smaller number of conservative Democrats may hold the key to the President's fate.

One Nixon backer pored over a list of senators last week and checked off 29

likely to stand by the President, with several other possible votes in a list of about a dozen question marks.

But he observed, "If this thing starts falling apart, you can't count on that 29."

Significantly missing from that list of 29, and placed in the small number of impon-

derables, was Sen. John Stennis, D-Miss., a conservative so highly regarded that his vote is considered essential for Nixon to survive.

Another estimate of Nixon's deepening difficulty came from an experienced Republican source, who said there are very few sure votes for acquittal.

Two of the biggest question marks are the Senate's two top Republican leaders, Sens. Hugh Scott of Pennsylvania and Robert Griffin of Michigan. Many think they may wind up on the prevailing side, whichever it is.

Among Democrats, Stennis and retiring Sen. Alan Bile, D-Nev., are generally rated the hardest to categorize.

Traffic bottled-up

LOS ANGELES — Traffic was tied up for nearly two hours near downtown yesterday after a truck overturned on a freeway transition road, spilling 2,700 glass bottles.