

Nixon Tells Cabinet
He'll Stay and Let
Legal Process Decide;
Support in Congress
Vanishing

DECLINE IN SENATE

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Dole Says President Now Has No More Than 20 Votes NYTimes

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WASHINGTON, Aug. 6—
President Nixon's support in
the Senate crumbled today and
with it, apparently, his chances
of surviving for long in the
Presidency.

The number of his defend-
ers in the Senate, where he
will all but certainly be tried
unless he resigns, dwindled by
the hour. Reflecting the pri-
vately held views of many of
his colleagues, Senator Robert
Dole, a conservative Kansas
Republican, who is his party's
former national chairman, said
that if the President had 40
votes a week ago, he had no
more than 20 today—not even
close to the 34 he would need
to survive a trial.

Another Republican Senator,
unwilling to be quoted by
name, estimated that only 10
members were prepared to
stand by the President, on the
basis of the evidence now
known.

A Cataclysmic Mood

The cataclysmic mood in the
Senate spread swiftly across
political Washington on this
gray day.

Politicians of both parties,
including conservatives as well
as liberals, and a growing num-
ber of officials in and close to
the White House said it ap-
peared almost inevitable that
Mr. Nixon would be driven
from office, through resignation
or conviction and removal by
the Senate.

Asked at a news conference
whether there was anything
Mr. Nixon could do to save him-
self, Representative John J.
Rhodes, Republican of Arizona,
who is the House minority lead-
er, replied wistfully: "I suppose
there might be, but I can't think
what it is."

Dozens Appeal to Him

Before and after the Presi-
dent's midday declaration to
his Cabinet that he had no in-
tention of giving up his office
voluntarily, dozens of members
of his party issued appeals for
him to quit and spare the nation
the travail of a long, bit-
ter trail.

Prominent Republicans and
Democrats in the House of
Representatives ruled out the
possibility of passing a bill
granting Mr. Nixon immunity

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from prosecution if he should
resign, thus raising the pros-
pect that he could be prosecuted
regardless of how he left office.

In the atmosphere of shock,
disappointment and disbelief
generated by the President's
disclosure yesterday that he
had tried to head off the water-
gate investigation only days
after the ill-fated burglary, few
voices were raised in his be-
half in the Senate.

Most Noncommittal

Most Senators, citing the
analogy between their position
and that of jurors, refused to
say how they themselves in-
tended to vote; 53 of 57 who
personally or through spokes-
men responded to inquiries by
the New York Times said that
they must keep their own coun-
sel until a trial ended.

But the signs of collapse were
everywhere. Senator Peter V.
Domenici, a New Mexico Re-
publican who had been counted
a rock-solid pro-Nixon vote,
was reported by an aide to be
leaning toward conviction. Sen-
ator Roman L. Hruska, a
loyalist Republican from
Nebraska, proclaimed himself
concerned and newly undecided.

According to a participant
in the meeting, Senator John
G. Tower, a Texas conserva-
tive, said at a luncheon con-
ference of the Republican Poli-
cy Committee that he could
no longer defend the President.

Mr. Tower did not repeat
that comment when he met
with reporters later. But he
said that the consensus of the
group was that Mr. Nixon must
be made to understand the
gravity of the situation, that
there had been "great erosion
of support" in the Senate.

The diminutive Texan said
Senators attending the meeting
had proposed that either all
Republican Senators or the Re-
publican leadership meet with
the President in the next few
days to tell him of "the hazard
he faces in coming to trial in
the Senate."

Most for Quitting

Asked to gauge the majority
sentiment among his Republi-
can colleagues, Mr. Tower re-
plied that most felt that resig-
nation would be "in the na-
tional interest."

Mr. Tower's statements,
taken together with the de-
cision of Representative John J.
Rhodes, Republican of Arizona,
to support impeachment on at
least one count, convinced most
Capitol Hill nose counters that



Associated Press

Senator Robert Dole

Mr. Nixon had also lost the
backing of Senator Barry Gold-
water, the Arizona Republican
who had been considered the
linchpin of the President's Sen-
ate defense.

Senator Goldwater and his
staff steadfastly refused to
make any comment. But both
Mr. Tower and Mr. Rhodes are
close to him, and Mr. Rhodes
had conferred with him before
announcing his intentions this
afternoon.

Among conservative South-
ern Democrats, on whom the
White House had also counted
as allies, there was a similar
mood of despair.

"How can you defend a man,"
asked one of them, referring to
President Nixon and his dis-
closures yesterday, "when he
has pleaded guilty before the
trial begins?"

A similar comment came
from Representative Charles E.
Wiggins of California, who had
led Mr. Nixon's defense in the
House Judiciary Committee.
About the only defense remain-
ing to the President, he said, is
to admit to the Senate that he
had committed a crime but
argue that his removal from
office would hurt the nation.

2 Southern Senators

Among the Southerners widely
reported to be leaning toward
conviction were Senators James
B. Allen, of Alabama and John
C. Stennis of Mississippi.

A number of Senators and
their staff members mentioned,
almost in awe, the fact that
all 10 of the Republicans who
had so stoutly defended the
President in the Judiciary Com-
mittee had decided to vote
for impeachment.

"If you had the committee
vote tonight," one aide com-
mented, "it would be 38 to
nothing for impeachment. That
is the kind of moment you
are dealing with, and there is
nothing in this world that's
going to stop it, not even King
Canute."

There was no visible sign
that the White House was at-
tempting to rally support. One
Senator's administrative assis-
tant told of talking this morn-
ing with his contact man in
the White House liaison office;
the contact man, he said,
"couldn't understand why Nixon
doesn't quit."

A White House official of the
juniper-middle rank conceded
that the outlook was very
nearly hopeless, but he said the
President was hanging on "be-
cause Presidents aren't quitters
and because, who knows, some-
thing may yet turn up."

'Political Devastation'

"I don't know what they can
do to pull it out," commented a
former White House official
who also knows the Congress.
He said that yesterday's dis-
closures had left "political dev-
astation" in their wake, al-
though he was not quite ready
to say that Mr. Nixon had no
chance at all.

George Bush, the Republican
national chairman, issued a for-
mal statement that was filled
with overtones of surrender.
Nowhere did he express even
the slightest optimism that Mr.
Nixon's Presidency could be sal-
vaged.

"I have steadily maintained
that the system can cope with
whatever shocks it must ab-
sorb," said Mr. Bush, who at-
tended this morning's Cabinet
meeting. "Resignation is some-
thing that the President alone
must decide."

"If it is to be an impeachable
trial, I urge all in an official
role to carry this process out
in the most judicious and exp-
editious manner possible to spare
the nation more trauma. I'm
confident the President will do
what is right—what is best for
the country."

At the same time as most
of his own party was giving
up on Mr. Nixon's chances for
survival, bipartisan agreement
emerged on the undesirability—
some said unconstitutionally—
of Congress's passing any im-
munity bill.

Senator Robert C. Byrd Jr.,
Democrat of West Virginia, the
majority whip, said Mr. Nixon
"should have to pay some price
for his guilt." Former Vice
President Spiro T. Agnew, who
was allowed to go free in re-
turn for his resignation, "should
have gone to jail," Mr. Byrd
said.

Mr. Wiggins said that he did
not "want to see a president,
even a tarnished one, stooping
to plea bargaining." While put-
ting a former President in jail
would be "dismaying," he ad-
ded, it might be required "if we
are truly to have equal justice
under the law."

In the same vein, Mr. Rhodes
said that the laws "should be
applied equally."