

Albert and Presidency

By William McGaffin

Chicago Daily News Service

House Speaker Carl Albert is "not afraid" to be President, his aides say.

"He does not want to be President," they say. "He would rather be Speaker of the House. But he recognizes it as a responsibility of his office that he has become next in line. He is not scared of it. He feels that he is qualified to be President."

The Oklahoma Democrat, 66, who is sometimes called

the "little giant" of the House because he is only 5 feet 4 inches tall, was "uptight" last year during the 60 days after Spiro T. Agnew resigned and before Gerald R. Ford was confirmed as Vice President, according to his aides.

"This gave rise mistakenly to the idea that he was afraid to be President," they said. "He was not afraid but he was uptight because he was involved in both the confirmation and the im-

peachment. He did not want to give the impression that he was trying to steal the presidency."

Albert also felt at that time, the aides said, that it would be terribly divisive for the country if a Democrat were to take over the presidency after the Nixon landslide.

"This year, the Speaker is in a much easier frame of mind because he knows that

See ALBERT, G3, Col. 7



SPEAKER CARL ALBERT
... life changes again

INCOMPLETE