

By Vnitee Press Internationa

Aides to both Ronald Reagan and President Ford claim a majority of the 30-person Mississippi Republican delegation. Everyone else apparently must wait until the GOP convention next month to find out who's right.

Despite intense pressure from _ both Republican camps, the 30-member Mississippi delegation voted Sunday to go to Kansas City uncommitted.

Meanwhile, Reagan promised an "important statement" today; Ford, at the White House,

entertained a Maryland delegation already committed to him, and Jimmy Carter and his vice presidential candidate, Sen. Walter F. Mondale, were deep in strategy talks.

THE FORMER California governor said he would have an "important statement" at 12 noon EDT today, but the aide who announced it had "no inkling at all" what it would be about.

He planned to make the statement in California, and allow his campaign manager, Sen. Paul Laxalt, R-Nev., to answer questions about it in Washington afterwards.

Both Ford and Reagan aides described the Mississippi decision as crucial. Clarke Reed, Mississippi GOP chairman and a Reagan backer, said the state is "very important, maybe crucial" to each side. Ford leader Gil Carmichael said it was "very critical," particularly for Reagan.

Top Ford aide Richard Cheney said, "we're trying to work it out" for the President to visit Mississippi next Friday to seek support

BY UPI's TALLY, the state has 25 for Reagan, 3 for Ford and 2 uncommitted, but Ford backers

said they were gaining strength there and might have the majority needed to swing the entire delegation to the President under a unit rule.

It would have been enough to give Ford more than the 1,130 votes he needs for nomination. Again according to the UPI scoreboard, the President now has 1,121 delegates to Reagan's 1,057. There are 81 uncommitted.

Ford, meanwhile, hosted the Maryland delegation — which is committed to him — at the White House today and invited the Pennsylvania delegation. mostly committed to him, on Thursday .