

Nixon Backers End Fast With Feast

7/26/74
By Erwin Washington
Washington Post Staff Writer

An estimated 300 to 600 members and supporters of the National Prayer and Fast Committee, who had been going without food for three days on the Capitol steps in support of President Nixon, ended their fast yesterday with singing, speeches, cheers and a feast of apples, pears and yogurt.

A prayer committee spokesman said he hoped the prayers and fasting would work on the consciousness of congressmen and senators as they consider impeachment.

"The influence of God will make a difference" in the impeachment vote, said committee president Neil Salonen. "I definitely feel this will change the vote."

More than 100 congressmen addressed the committee over the past three days giving support to the prayers and fasting. The committee heard praise yesterday from its founder, the Rev. Sun Myung Moon, and from Rabbi Baruch Korff, founder of the National Citizens Committee for Fairness to the Presidency.

The group also heard brief supportive speeches from Reps. Earl Ruth (R-N.C.), Earl Landgrebe (R-Ind.) Cardiss Collins (D-Ill) and Phillip Landrum (D-Ga.)

A messenger bearing a statement from President Nixon, who was in the western White House, brought the crowd to its feet.

"The world has always known the shrill voices of anger and frustration, but what has saved mankind even in the

darkest hours of our civilization has always been the voices that are raised in prayer and a spirit of love for one another," the President's statement read.

"Whatever lies ahead, I know we can count on you . . . As you complete this three-day fast on the Capitol steps, I want each of you to know how truly grateful I am for this great sacrifice you have made."

As Salonen brought the fast to an end, committee officials threw fruit into the audience. They also handed out large boxes of pears and apples along with cases of yogurt and barrels of soda.

"We must find a spiritual solution to this problem, it's not just a political problem," Salonen said.