

Many Impeachment Procedures Open

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WASHINGTON (AP) — The House Judiciary Committee labored over articles of impeachment Friday, and needed to approve only one of them by a majority vote to put the issue squarely before the House of Representatives.

Any further articles approved are then sent to the House with the first — and with a separate cover resolution stating simply:

“Resolved, that Richard M. Nixon, President of the United States, is impeached for high crimes and misdemeanors, and that the following articles of impeachment be exhibited to the Senate.”

The House could impeach a president and force a Senate trial without the committee's recommendation, but it would be much harder to gain support. House Speaker Carl Albert has said no matter what the committee does, the House will consider impeachment.

When the committee completes the articles, the staff will be given time to write a report to the full House, which in this case would be a statement of the impeachment case against the President as the committee sees it.

The package is to go to the House Rules Committee on

Aug. 5 to set up rules for debate.

Leaders say the committee will be asked to schedule an extraordinary 60 to 100 hours of discussion and voting.

The House action is tentatively scheduled for the two weeks beginning Aug. 12 and ending Aug. 23. All House action requires only a majority vote for approval.

As in the case of the committee, the House would need to approve only one article of impeachment to send the case to the Senate.

If that happens, the Senate plans to hold a closed meeting immediately to set a timetable.

Senate Democratic Leader Mike Mansfield, D-Mont., says it would be reasonable to allow the President two to three weeks to prepare his case.

A trial would be expected to start in late September and take two or three months. A two-thirds vote on any one of the articles could remove the President from office.

A controversy has developed over what would happen if the trial continued past the end of the year when the current Congress ends. The Senate maintains that the impeachment and trial would not have to begin again.