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House Panel Votes Impeachment Rules

A House Judiciary subcommittee approved rules yesterday permitting President Nixon's lawyer to participate in committee consideration of the impeachment case, but under conditions preventing obstruction.

The procedural rules were adopted 7 to 0 with Democrats "leaning over backward" to permit full participation by presidential counsel James D. St. Clair to prevent a threatened partisan split. The full committee tentatively plans to start considering allegations against the President next week.

As proposed earlier by special counsel John Doar, the rules provide that when the committee sits down to hear the case assembled by Doar's staff, each of the 38 members will be given a statement of facts. This will consist of a series of paragraphs, each stating a fact, with footnotes citing tapes, documents or other backup data to support these facts. The staff will then make a detailed presentation of evidence on the allegations.

When these hearings begin, every committee member will for the first time be allowed to read and listen to secret data previously received from the White House and other federal agencies and from the Watergate grand jury.

St. Clair would be invited to attend the staff presentation of evidence and then would be invited to respond orally or in writing "as shall be determined by the committee." If St. Clair wishes to call witnesses, he would be required to state "precisely" in writing the reason and the expected testimony.

If the committee calls other witnesses, St. Clair and the President would be invited to attend all hearings where the witnesses appear, whether open or closed. St. Clair would be

entitled to question any witness, but "subject to instructions from the chairman . . . respecting the time, scope and duration of the examination."

The rules would also permit St. Clair to make objections relating to the testimony and questioning of witnesses. Rep. George Danielson (D-Calif.) tried to knock out this provision, saying that St. Clair could be "obstructive with frivolous objections."

But other Democrats voted to keep it in, because as Rep. Edward Mezvinsky (D-Iowa) said: "We are leaning over backward to keep peace in the family" of the committee.

TV Specials Set On Nixon Tapes

ABC television has scheduled a half-hour special called "Congress View the Transcripts" today at 8:30 p.m. on Channel 7 (WMAL), anchored by correspondent Howard K. Smith.

NBC and National Public Radio are planning weekend specials in which casts will give "play readings" of the transcripts. Both networks emphasize that the readings will be done in meticulously "nonexpressive" manners.

The 90-minute NBC special, anchored by John Chancellor, will be broadcast Saturday at 11:30 p.m. National Public Radio is scheduling a marathon reading of the transcripts between 8 a.m. and midnight both Saturday and Sunday.

Yesterday CBS broadcast a one-hour special on the transcripts.