

Patman Is Balked Anew on Watergate

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WASHINGTON, Oct. 12—Any prospect of a Congressional investigation before Election Day into the break-in at the Democratic National Committee and the alleged financial irregularities connected with it apparently evaporated today.

Wright Patman, chairman of the House Banking and Currency Committee, failed twice to collect enough committee Democrats to make a quorum.

On Oct. 3, the committee voted 20 to 15 against a motion by Mr. Patman that would have enabled him to issue subpoenas to compel testimony by 40 witnesses and the production of documents.

He sought to determine how \$114,000 in Nixon campaign contributions was funneled from a Mexico City bank, to Houston, to Washington, and ultimately to the Miami bank account of Bernard L. Barker, who was one of seven men arrested in the June 17 break-in at Democratic headquarters in the Watergate complex here.

In that vote 14 of the committee's 15 Republicans joined four Southern and two Northern Democrats to defeat the chairman, a Democrat of Texas. One Democrat and one Republican were absent.

Mr. Patman called the meeting today ostensibly to question four Nixon aides—John N. Mitchell, former chairman of the Committee for the Re-election of the President; Clark MacGregor, his successor; Maurice H. Stans, the President's chief fund-raiser, and John Wesley Dean 3d, counsel to the President, who has already done an in-house investigation

of the Watergate incident for Mr. Nixon.

There was never any likelihood that these four would respond to Mr. Patman's invitation, and they did not—the first three on advice of counsel and the fourth on a plea of executive privilege.

Consequently, the real purpose of the meeting was Mr.

Patman's hope that if he could get a quorum of 19 members from the committee's 22 Democrats, he could also get a majority to pass the resolution defeated last week.

Mr. Patman said he did not plan to call the committee for reconsideration before a week was out, and since the House plans to adjourn tomorrow, or at least recess until after the election, there is almost certain to be no call and no action on an investigation on the House side.

On the Senate side, Senator Edward M. Kennedy, chairman of the Judiciary Subcommittee on Administrative Practices and Procedures, has been under pressure from Senator George McGovern, the Democratic Presidential nominee, and Lawrence F. O'Brien, his campaign chairman, to conduct an inquiry into the Watergate affair.

But the Massachusetts Democrat is reported to be reluctant to head an investigation. In any event, it is doubtful whether he could mount one before the election.

In another development today, Mr. O'Brien asked Phillip S. Hughes, director of the Office of Federal Elections in the General Accounting Office, an investigating arm of Congress, to inquire into the activities of the "November Group, inc."

This group was incorporated in New York State on Feb. 8, 1972, and its purpose, according to Republican officials, is to conduct the President's advertising campaign.

Mr. O'Brien alleged that "the November Group itself has not registered as a political committee, or in any way accounted for the monies transferred to it."