

Assured of Full Inquiry

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Even President Nixon's severest critics on the House Judiciary Committee were persuaded yesterday that Chairman Peter Rodino (D-N.J.) is committed to a prompt and full investigation of impeachment charges against the President.

After a two-hour meeting of committee Democrats to discuss procedures, Rep. Jerome R. Waldie (D-Calif.)—who filed an impeachment resolution Tuesday—said there was "no indication whatsoever to delay or a lessening of resolve" and said he believed Rodino is "completely committed to a full, thorough and prompt investigation." Rep. Robert Drinan (D-Mass.), first House member to file an impeachment resolution last summer, agreed.

House Democratic leaders were united in firm declarations that Mr. Nixon's promise to release his Watergate conversation tapes has not taken the steam out of the investigation, and that, in Rodino's words, it's "full steam ahead."

Speaker Carl Albert told reporters that the investigation, launched by the public outburst against the President's firing of Watergate Special Prosecutor Archibald Cox, "will not stop because of one action," meaning the pledge to release the tapes to Judge John J. Sirica.

The Judiciary Committee has been mandated to make an inquiry, said Albert, "and so an inquiry they are going to make. I hope it is expeditious and I hope it lays this thing to rest one way or another."

Although they promised release of the tapes removed the most immediate charge against the President, his critics said yesterday he has committed other acts which constitute obstruction of justice and "subversion of the Constitution." They include the firing of Cox and allegations of illegal acts by the White House "plumbers" and illegal flow of political money.

Rodino said the caucus of Judiciary Committee Democrats agreed to ask the full

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committee next Tuesday to take several steps to permit prompt action. The chairman said he will ask the committee to give him power to subpoena documents and witnesses, so that he need not convene the full committee every time subpoena power is needed. He will also seek to shorten the committee requirement that he give a two-day notice for a committee meeting.

Rodino said no decision has been made as to whether the committee should subpoena Cox's records to protect them. He has asked, but not yet received, assurance from the Justice Department that the records are safe.

Rodino will run into Republican opposition in the full committee but should have enough Democratic support to win. Rep. Edward Hutchinson (R-Mich.), senior minority member on Judiciary, said Republican committee members met yester-

day and will oppose giving Rodino power to issue subpoenas without going back to the full committee for approval in each case. Republicans are generally opposed to the investigation.

Democrats discussed but made no decision on employing some outside lawyer of high repute to head the staff for the impeachment investigation. Rodino said he is requesting investigative help from the General Accounting Office and has been assured leadership support for any needed expansion of his staff.

Rodino said Democrats feel that both the impeachment investigation and the nomination of House Minority Leader Gerald R. Ford to be Vice President should be considered by the full committee, rather than be sent for initial consideration to subcommittees. Ford's nomination is expected to be acted upon first. No dates have been set for hearings on either matter.



SPEAKER CARL ALBERT
 ... House inquiry goes on

Yesterday Rep. John J. Rhodes (R-Ariz.) locked up the race to succeed Ford as House Republican leader as Rep. Leslie C. Arends (R-Ill.), the veteran party whip, bowed out of the race leaving Rhodes without opposition.