

# Vote Is There To Impeach, Mansfield Says

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Declaring that President Nixon's "dilatatory tactics" have rebounded against him in Congress, Senate Majority Leader Mike Mansfield (D-Mont.) said yesterday that he now believes "the votes are there" in the House to impeach Mr. Nixon.

Mansfield told newsmen that if the House orders the

President to stand trial in the Senate, the legal proceedings should begin within two weeks of the House vote, be televised to the country, and go forward to a conclusion regardless of the political calendar.

"The election will be secondary," the majority leader declared in rejecting a suggestion that the trial might be postponed past the November mid-term voting.

Taking a notably more critical tone toward Mr. Nixon than has been his custom, Mansfield said firmly that "I would not approve of" legislation to grant the President immunity from subsequent criminal prosecution for any acts involved in the impeachment trial.

Such legislation has been proposed by House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Wilbur Mills (D-Ark.) as a step toward encouraging Mr. Nixon to resign voluntarily from office.

Mansfield, remarking tartly that Mills "seems to shift from one position to another of late," said he was opposed to both a presidential resignation and an offer of legislative immunity.

"The matter should take its regular course," he said. "We should not have another Agnew situation," referring to the agreement by which the former Vice President resigned in return for the government waiving all but one charge against him and then accepting a "no contest" plea.

At a breakfast with reporters, Mansfield said "I don't know" what the House will do on the impeachment question, "but I talk to House members and they think the votes are there."

He attributed this shift, in part, to the "dilatatory tactics" he said Mr. Nixon and his lawyers have used in objecting to

the House Judiciary Committee's requests for additional evidence.

Quoting the President's contention that the Judiciary Committee "wants to bring a U-Haul trailer and haul out" all the White House records, Mansfield said, "That might be a good idea. It would speed things up."

In a separate interview, Senate Minority Whip Robert P. Griffin (R-Mich.) said "the likelihood" of the President's impeachment by the House "seems much greater today than it did a month or two ago."

Nonetheless, Mansfield told reporters he had turned aside a request Tuesday from Sens. Edward M. Kennedy (D-Mass.)

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and Philip A. Hart (D-Mich.) for a preliminary study of impeachment trial procedures, because "I don't want to be anticipatory."

Hart said he and Kennedy went to Mansfield because "we have some fear that there are procedural questions in respect to a Senate trial which may not be clearly established under the precedents." Hart said they asked Mansfield whether a special subcommittee of the Senate Rules Committee or some other panel might undertake such a study.

"His reply," Hart said, "not untypically for Mansfield, was to say thank you and put the paper in his pocket."

Mansfield's deputy leader, Sen. Robert C. Byrd (D-W. Va.), has told reporters that the Senate manual provides clear precedents and procedures for a trial of the President and has indicated he is studying them.

Without commenting on the

procedures, Mansfield said that "if it (impeachment) comes to us, we'll face it promptly. We will not dilly-dally."

He said he believed the trial could start "within a week or two" of the House impeachment vote, adding, "The sooner, the better."

Mansfield estimated that testimony might consume two months and said the proceedings should be televised because of their "extraordinary importance."

Asked if he shared the fears of Sen. James L. Buckley (Cons-R-N.Y.) that a televised Senate trial would be "a Roman circus," Mansfield said:

"Quite the contrary. It would be a salutary exposure of democracy in action. It would be a very somber proceeding. Anyone who clowned or acted up would pay a heavy penalty."

The majority leader said he was not certain of the timing of the impeachment vote, except that the "dilatatory tactics" of the White House had made it impossible for the House Judiciary Committee to meet its original April 30 deadline.

But he categorically rejected the notion that the Senate would postpone the trial until after the November election if the House voted impeachment sometime in the summer.

"I would expect the people would want their senators back there doing their job," rather than campaigning, Mansfield said.

In a separate interview, Republican whip Griffin argued that the proceedings would be expedited if the House Judiciary Committee agreed to the request of the President's special counsel James D. St. Clair, be allowed to cross-examine witnesses during its proceedings.

At the Capitol, House Minority Leader John J. Rhodes (R-Ariz.) met with newsmen and offered to bet \$10 that the Judiciary Committee and the White House would work out an agreement for turning over relevant portions of 41 or 42 taped presidential conversations to the committee for its impeachment inquiry.

A major point in the dispute is who should determine what portions are relevant and should be turned over. Committee leaders have rejected proposals that a third party screen the tapes. They contend this is the committee's responsibility.

Rhodes endorsed a proposal by Rep. Robert McClory (R-Ill.) that committee chief counsel John Doar and St. Clair listen to the tapes together and agree on which parts are relevant. In any case