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Rodino Sees No Open Hearings Now

By DAVID E. ROSENBAUM
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WASHINGTON, May 20—The House Judiciary Committee is scheduled to resume its impeachment hearings in closed session tomorrow, and the committee's chairman, Representative Peter W. Rodino Jr., has indicated that it might be some time before the hearings become public and televised.

One official who has discussed the question of open hearings with Mr. Rodino said today that the chairman was "leaning toward holding several more weeks of closed sessions."

Mr. Rodino, a New Jersey Democrat, said there would be no open hearings at least until the committee's staff finished its presentation of evidence on the Watergate burglary and its aftermath. He said that there would certainly be no public hearings this week.

Meanwhile, James D. St. Clair, Mr. Nixon's attorney, told the committee that he would respond tomorrow to the committee's request for 66 tape recordings of President Nixon's conversations that allegedly concerned contributions from dairy cooperatives and the International Telephone and Telegraph Corporation.

Mr. St. Clair had said last

week that he would respond to the request by today.

Mr. St. Clair did not return telephone calls from a reporter today, and the White House press office had no explanation of why the official response to the committee's request had been delayed.

Mr. Rodino met briefly on the floor of the House this afternoon with three of the committee's ranking Republicans — Edward Hutchinson of Michigan, Robert McClory of Illinois and Charles E. Wiggins of California. Mr. Wiggins said afterward that the "general attitude was that public hearings are not immediately called for."

A committee source said that the chairman hoped that the staff could complete its presentation of Watergate evidence this week and then begin several days, or perhaps weeks, in closed session, presenting an "overview" of evidence on other phases of the impeachment inquiry.

Mr. St. Clair has urged the committee to open all its meetings to the public and the television cameras, and his position is supported by many members of the panel.

Representative John Conyers Jr., a Michigan Democrat, said today that it was "ridiculous" to continue meetings in private.

But Mr. Rodino insisted that closed meetings were necessary because some of the evidence had been received in confidence from a Federal grand jury. He was supported by a majority of the committee members.

Mr. Wiggins said that, in addition to the need to keep the grand jury evidence in confidence, the detailed staff presentation of evidence was so tedious that public hearings now would not prove interesting.

Opposes Release

WASHINGTON, May 20 (UPI)—Patrick V. Buchanan, a Presidential assistant, said today that he feels it would be unwise for President Nixon to hand over additional confidential information to the Judiciary Committee because of leaks of some materials already provided.

"When you consider the manner in which some members of the Rodino committee or some members of the staff have used the tapes they do have, leaking the most deleterious portions of these in collaboration with The Washington Post and other hostile publications, I think a strong argument can be made that the President would be unwise to deliver more tapes," he said.