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Impeachment Volumes Deliberately

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—
"On January 20, 1969, Richard Nixon was inaugurated as the 37th President of the United States."

That statement of fact began the first of 4,133 pages of evidence assembled starting in January by a staff of about 100 persons for presentation to the 38 members of the House Judiciary Committee, considering the possible impeachment of the President.

The evidence initially was assembled in black notebooks for the committee members and was assembled in black notebooks for the committee members and was made public today in eight volumes. The first installment consisted of a massive collection of court documents, transcripts of taped conversations and court testimony, newspaper clippings, handwritten notes and other material that seeks to lay out chronologically statements

about the events before and after the Watergate break-in on June 17, 1972.

"Every effort was made of preclude inferences in the presentation of this material," Representative Peter W. Rodino Jr., Democrat of New Jersey and chairman of the committee, said in a foreward. "A deliberate and scrupulous abstention from conclusions, even by implication, was observed," he said.

'Deliberate Abstention'

Each volume had page after page of statements about meetings, conversations and the like, plus footnotes to guide the committee to the supportive documents in the back of the volume.

The material was obtained from the Senate Watergate Committee, the grand jury, taped Presidential conversations and Government agencies. It was pulled together in round-the-clock sessions by the impeachment inquiry staff, operating in strict security on the second floor of a former hotel

behind the House Office Buildings.

The key to cataloging the information was a cared filing and cross-indexing operation organized by John M. Doar, the head of the impeachment inquiry staff, who patterned it after the system he used several years ago in the Justice Department.

"John doesn't go for computers," said one Rodino aide. "It was a superb system," he added.

Floors Too Weak

But even so, gathering the information for presentation each day to the closed sessions of the committee was a relentless race against time and fatigue.

The staff member said each day's operation was approximately as follows:

The information catalogued by the dozen or so researchers on the staff would be gone over by the staff lawyers until midnight the night before the committee was to meet. At

Refrain From Conclusions

midnight the material would be taken to Xerox machines in the Cannon House Office Building across the street from the former hotel, whose floors were not strong enough to hold the machines.

While other staff members worked until about 6 A.M. each day copying the material for the committee session later in the morning, the researchers and the lawyers would begin immediately, without sleep, preparing the material for the following day's session.

"The committee members took a lot of criticism for meeting only three days or so a week, but it was impossible for the staff to produce it any faster," the aide said.

Naps in the Park

Because of the schedule, the best time for any sleep for the staff was in midday, when the committee was meeting. On sunny days a number of staff members napped in the park across the street. "One fellow

always brought his own pillow and slept on a bench," the aide said.

One recent day a midmorning coffee drinker was startled to see some of the staff ordering sausage and sauerkraut in a House cafeteria. To them it was dinner time.

The Rodino aide said that except for Mr. Doar and a few of his staff lawyers who attended the committee meetings, the rest of the committee staff was "a very faceless group." He added: "We have never allowed an interview with anyone, including John, and it has worked, because there never has been a problem with staff leaks."

One night Mr. Rodino visited the offices to thank the staff members for their hard work. They promptly put the chairman to work running a machine until 2 A.M., and the staff now calls the machine "Pete."

The Rodino aide said: "We're an equal opportunity employer—we mistreat everyone."