

Nixon Loses Defenders In Congress

Washington

President Nixon's disclosure yesterday that he withheld tapes damaging to his case from his lawyers and the American people prompted some of his strongest defenders on the House Judiciary Committee to call for his impeachment.

Nine of the 11 Republicans on the committee who voted to acquit Mr. Nixon on obstruction of justice charges said they are reconsidering their actions and some said they would change their votes.

Representative Charles Wiggins (Rep-Calif.), who led the anti-impeachment bloc during the nationally broadcast committee hearings, called on Mr. Nixon to resign and said, if the President doesn't resign, he will vote to impeach him for obstruction of justice.

"With great reluctance and deep personal sorrow, I am prepared to conclude that the magnificent career of public service of Richard Nixon must be terminated involuntarily," Wiggins said.

He said the additional information now available is sufficient to support at least one criminal count of conspiracy to obstruct justice against the President.

Even though he is not convinced such a charge is serious enough to be impeached.

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able, Wiggins said, the situation has gone beyond such matters.

"The greater issue is the welfare of the United States," said Wiggins in a statement. "Even a successful defense would leave the nation terribly divided and the capacity of the President to lead fatally weakened."

"Under all the circumstances, I believe this is not

the time for the President to meet with his attorneys to plan for his defense in the Senate. It is a time for the President, the Vice President, the Chief Justice and the leaders of the House and Senate, to gather in the White House to discuss the orderly transition of power from Richard Nixon to Gerald Ford."

Representative David Dennis (Rep-Ind.) said the three new transcripts provided the "first hard evidence" that Mr. Nixon was personally involved in the Watergate coverup. "If the President does not resign," Dennis said, "I shall, on the basis of this new evidence, vote to impeach on Article I."

Representative Charles W. Sandman (Rep-N.J.), said he is reassessing his position and would make an announcement today. "This is obstruction of justice, and that is an impeachable offense," he said.

Representative Robert McClory, the second-ranking Republican who opposed the obstruction of justice charge on July 27, said he "probably" would "vote now on Article I." He too said Mr. Nixon should resign.

Representatives Joseph J. Maraziti (Rep-N.J.) and Wiley Mayne (Rep-Iowa) said they are ready to vote to impeach. "I will take a stand for impeachment," said Representative Henry Smith (Rep-N.Y.).

Representatives Carlos Moorhead (Rep-Calif.) and Delbert Latta (Rep-Ohio) said they are re-examining their votes.

Representative John Rhodes of Arizona, House Republican leader, who had postponed a news conference at which he planned to give his position on impeachment, said the latest disclosure was "shocking."

"The apparent attempt to use the CIA to cover up the depth of the Watergate conspiracy is shocking," said Rhodes in a statement. "The fact that the President's veracity is put in question by this disclosure is a tragedy."

"It seems to me this disclosure makes a quick House vote on impeachment

a necessity."

"I guess we have found the smoking gun, haven't we?" asked Representative Barber Conable (Rep-N.Y.), one of the most respected GOP members in the House and a consistent Nixon supporter. He referred to stands taken by some Nixon supporters that they would not move against the President until they found him with the equivalent of "standing with the smoking gun in his hand."

Assistant House Democratic leader Thomas P. O'Neill (Dem-Mass.) predicted Mr. Nixon would get no more than 75 votes against impeachment in the House. "Confession is good for the soul," he said, "but it doesn't save the body in this instance."

House Democratic whip John McFall of California said the Nixon statement was "almost the equivalent of throwing himself on the mercy of the Congress."

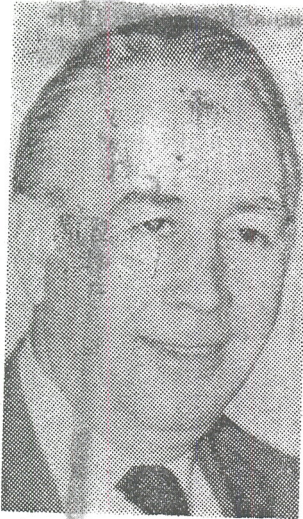
"There will be a Senate trial," said Senator Robert C. Byrd (Dem-W. Va.), the assistant Senate Democratic leader. There was little disagreement from the Republican leadership that met for 45 minutes with the White House delegation in the of-

fice of Senator Hugh Scott (Rep-Pa.).

"It's not very good news," said Senator John Tower (Rep-Tex.), chairman of the Senate Republican Policy Committee. "I don't know whether it will change anything up here."

Senate Republican whip Robert Griffin called a news conference earlier in the day to state: "I think we've arrived at the point where both the national and his own best interests would best be served by resigning. It's not just his enemies who feel that way, but many of his friends — and I consider myself one of them — believe now that this would be the appropriate course."

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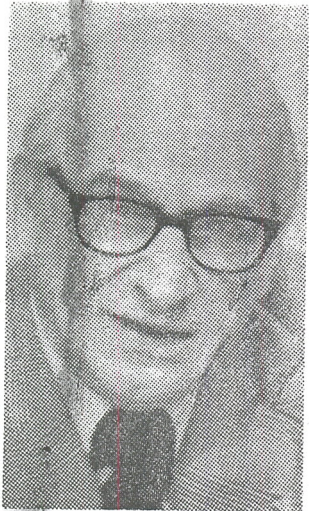
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REP. WILEY MAYNE
A vote to impeach



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REP. CHARLES SANDMAN
He'll decide today



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REP. JOSEPH MARAZITI
A change in position



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REP. JOHN J. RHODES
A 'shocking' disclosure



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REP. CHARLES WIGGINS
He would vote to impeach