

Congressional Inquiry Out

Watergate Probe Barred

WASHINGTON (AP) — A proposed full-scale congressional investigation of the break-in at Democratic headquarters in the Watergate Hotel was rejected today by the House Banking Committee.

The vote was 20 to 15.

Chairman Wright Patman, D-Tex., of the House committee proposed the inquiry, saying "harassment of opposition political parties through espionage and other means" has no place in American politics.

But the investigation proposal was denounced from both the Republican and Democratic sides of his committee. Critics said it would violate the rights of those already indicted in the break-in and bugging. Republicans contended, too, it would be a witch hunt.

"Politics should stay out of justice,"

said Frank J. Brasco, D-N.Y., one of a number of Democrats who joined Republicans in opposing the Watergate probe.

Rep. Garry Brown, R-Mich., asked each committee member to consider whether "the political benefit which we hope to derive" from the probe justifies the risk of jeopardizing the government's case against the Watergate defendants.

Patman told the committee in an opening statement that he considered the charge of politics "nothing more than a smokescreen to hide the real reasons why some people do not want these hearings to proceed.

"The people have a fundamental right to select their leaders—their president—unhindered by criminal subversion of the political process," Pat-

man said. "Totalitarian governments often engage in the harassment of opposition political parties through espionage and other means, but this has no place in our system."

Patman said his probe would not go into the alleged break-in of the Democratic National Committee headquarters in the Watergate Hotel. He said it would attempt to determine whether the GOP campaign contributors got a "quickie bank charter" in Minneapolis and whether Mexican and U.S. banks "were used to conceal . . . massive transfers of campaign funds."

It is already known, Patman said, that at least \$100,000 went through Mexico and at least \$89,000 worth of Mexican checks went through the Finance Committee to Re-elect the President before the money ended up in the bank account of Bernard Barker, one of the men charged in connection with the Watergate break-in.

He said it also is known that a \$25,000 contribution from two applicants for a Minneapolis federal bank

charter, Dwayne Andreas and Kenneth Dahlberg, also went through the campaign finance committee and into Barker's Miami bank account and the bank charter was awarded "under what appeared to be unusual procedures."

Six Democrats joined all 14 committee Republicans present in voting down the investigation.

BUT PATMAN and Rep. Harry S. Reuss, D-Wis., said they will try again to win committee approval on the investigation and said they believe both American public opinion and Republican switches will win it.

Reuss made the formal motion for the committee investigation that the committee voted down.

"I think the public will show it is quite concerned in the next few days," Reuss said.