

INQUIRY IS URGED ON IMPEACHMENT

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Mrs. Abzug Asks House to
Study Legal Grounds

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WASHINGTON, June 12—
Representative Bella S. Abzug,
Democrat of Manhattan, urged
the House tonight to open an
inquiry into whether there were
grounds for impeaching Presi-
dent Nixon over the Watergate
affair.

"The real issue before us, and
before the country, is the lead-
ership of the President," she
said.

Scarcely 30 of the 435 House
members were present as she
and five other liberal Democrats
took turns discussing a ques-
tion that, until now, had been
largely confined to the privacy
of Congressional cloakrooms.

Representative Paul N. Mc-
Closkey Jr., Republican of Cali-
fornia, tried to lead a "tem-
pered" discussion of the possi-
bility of impeachment nearly a
week ago, but was cut short by
the successful maneuvering of
Administration stalwarts.

No one, then or now, has pro-
posed that actual impeachment
proceedings be brought against
Mr. Nixon.

Wide Disagreement

Even among the five liberal
Democrats speaking tonight,
there was wide disagreement
over what steps should be
taken.

Representative Patricia
Schroeder of Colorado proposed
that the House leadership push
through a resolution urging the
President to testify before the
Senate's special Watergate in-
vestigation committee, which is
now conducting hearings.

Mrs. Schroeder said she re-
ceived a petition from 1,600
constituents last week, expres-
sing "no confidence in Presi-
dent Nixon."

While cautioning against
immediate impeachment pro-
ceedings, Mrs. Schroeder said
that the President's only chance
for restoring confidence in his
Administration was to submit
to questioning by the Senate
panel.

Representative Fortney H.
Stark of California also cau-
tioned against immediate im-
peachment proceedings, but sug-
gested that Government invest-
gators be required to give the
House "all information neces-
sary to make a responsible de-
cision" on whether there were
grounds for impeachment.

Administration Criticized

Others participating in the
discussion—Representatives Ro-
nald V. Dellums and Yvonne
B. Burke, both of California,
and Parren J. Mitchell of Mary-
land—were critical of the
President and his White House
aides but made no proposals
for House action.

Mrs. Abzug conceded that
some members of the House
regarded the possible impeach-
ment of a President as "un-
thinkable." But she added that,
while it might be tempting to
delay, the need for a House
inquiry into whether there were
grounds for impeachment was
essential if the house was to
discharge its duties.

She suggested that such an
inquiry could be made either
by the House Judiciary Com-
mittee or through the establish-

ment of a special committee.

While talk about impeach-
ment appears to have become
more widespread in the House
in the last few weeks, there
are corresponding effort to
keep such moves in check.

Even before the liberal
Democrats began their series
of speeches tonight, Repre-
sentative Fred B. Rooney,
Democrat of Pennsylvania, told
the House that any sugges-
tions for possible impeachment
"are premature." He urged his
colleagues to "wait until all
the evidence is in."

Representative Hugh L.
Carey, Democrat of Brooklyn,
said earlier today that the
House should devote its time
to coping with such problems
as the economy, foreign policy,
domestic social programs and
American involvement in
Southeast Asia.

House Speaker Carl Albert
of Oklahoma has also said in
recent weeks that talk about
possible impeachment was
"premature."