

## House Demos

# Impeachment Study Still Set

Washington

House Democratic leaders said yesterday a planned judiciary committee inquiry into whether President Nixon should be impeached will proceed, though his release of Watergate tapes removed much of the heat for immediate action.

"There are other charges that go far beyond the tapes" that could be grounds for impeachment if proved, said majority leader Thomas P. O'Neill (Dem-Mass.).

O'Neill said the President's move "put a damper on the fire of impeachment. But in no way has it completely halted congressional action."

Representative Peter Rodino (Dem-N.J.), judiciary committee chairman, had announced at noon that he would immediately set in motion machinery for the inquiry. Rodino was not available after Mr. Nixon in mid-afternoon agreed to give up the tapes, but an aide said Rodino had already taken this possibility into account and stood on his earlier statement.

### PARTIES

Reaction of House members to Mr. Nixon's action was generally along party lines. Democrats said there were plenty of other grounds on which to impeach him, but Republicans said release of the tapes knocked the props out from under the impeachment move which has been building since Mr. Nixon fired Watergate special prosecutor Archibald Cox while Congress was out of town on a Veterans Day weekend.

Representative John Culver (Dem-Iowa), head of the liberal Democratic Study Group, said he believed the Rubicon of impeachment had been crossed and that the impeachment investigation will continue.

"It took the events of last weekend to trigger the action," said Culver. "But it set in motion certain forces and we aren't going to turn around now."

### FORD

There were these other developments yesterday:

- House Speaker Carl Albert emphasized that he wants the House to move as speedily as possible, consistent with the need for a thorough investigation, on confirmation of House minority leader Gerald R. Ford as vice president. Albert, who would become president if Mr. Nixon were impeached before Ford was confirmed, issued a statement saying that Ford's nomination should not be held hostage to any impeachment proceeding.

- Democrats in both the House and Senate pressed forward with their proposed legislation creating an office of special prosecutor independent of the President to continue Cox' work. Ninety House members co-sponsored such a bill.

- House Republican leaders told the White House that Mr. Nixon must not only release the tapes but appoint another special prosecutor to search out the Watergate truth, or else lose support of some House Republicans in an impeachment fight.

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