

LIBERALS STRONG ON INQUIRY PANEL

Several on Judiciary Unit Already for Impeachment

By RICHARD L. MADDEN
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WASHINGTON, Oct. 23 — The House Judiciary Committee which will handle the resolutions calling for the impeachment of President Nixon and the confirmation of Gerald R. Ford, the Vice President-designate, is heavily laden with liberal Democrats, several of whom have already urged impeachment.

Some House Republicans regard the committee as being so weighted with liberal Democrats that for a time several of them favored creating a select committee to consider the impeachment question.

But today, with the concurrence of the Republican leadership in the House, the Democratic leaders referred all the impeachment proposals to the Judiciary Committee.

New Leaders on Panel

Despite Mr. Nixon's surprise move this afternoon to yield the Watergate tapes for judicial review, the initial reaction was that the committee would go ahead with its assignment to consider procedures for handling the impeachment resolutions. However, it was apparent that the President's move had diminished Congressional demands for immediate action on impeachment proceedings. The questions of possible impeachment of the President and of the confirmation of a new Vice President have been thrust only days apart on a committee

whose leadership went through its first shake-up in years last January.

For 20 years, the committee had been presided over by Representative Emanuel Celler, a Brooklyn Democrat. But with his defeat in the Democratic primary last year, Representative Peter W. Rodino, a New Jersey Democrat who had a difficult fight for re-election himself, moved up to be chairman.

And with the retirement of former Representative William M. McCulloch of Ohio, who was the ranking Republican of the Committee for 12 years, the Republican leadership of the

committee was inherited by Edward Hutchinson, a 59-year-old six-term Representative from Michigan.

Some friends of Mr. Celler and Mr. McCulloch contended that with their departure the Judiciary Committee would no longer have the stature it once had, but members of the committee maintain that the transition in leadership has gone relatively smoothly.

All Members Lawyers

The political leanings of the 38 members of the Judiciary Committee, all of whom are lawyers, range from liberal to

conservative. But among the 21 Democrats more than half are regarded as liberals, which is an unusually large proportion for a House committee.

Among them are Representatives Don Edwards of California; Robert W. Kastenmeier of Wisconsin; John Conyers Jr., of Michigan, a founder of the Black Caucus in the House; Jerome R. Waldie of California; John F. Seiberling of Ohio; Robert F. Drinan of Massachusetts, who first introduced a Nixon impeachment resolution last July; Charles B. Rangel of Harlem, who unseated former Representative Adam Clay-

ton Powell; Barbara Jordan of Texas, the first black woman elected to the House from the South; Elizabeth Holtzman of Brooklyn, who unseated Mr. Celler, and Wayne Owens of Utah.

Mr. Waldie introduced today a resolution calling for the impeachment of the President and among the co-sponsors were Mr. Rangel an Father Drinan, a Jesuit priest and former law school professor.

Mr. Seiberling introduced today a resolution asking for a Judiciary Committee investigation of Mr. Nixon's activities.