

# A Partisan Dispute on Impeachment in House

Washington

The House Judiciary Committee fell into partisan wrangling yesterday at its first meeting to discuss procedures for investigating whether President Nixon should be impeached.

By a straight party line vote of 21 to 17, Democrats voted to give chairman Peter W. Rodino (Dem-N.J.) power to issue — without committee approval — sub-

poenas to obtain witnesses and documents both for the impeachment inquiry and for the committee's consideration of House Minority Leader Gerald R. Ford to be vice president.

Rejected by the same vote were Republican efforts to require approval of subpoenas, by their senior member, Representative Edward Hutchinson (Rep-Mich.),

Back Page C-1, 4

From Page 1

and to give both men power to issue subpoenas on their own. Democrats protested that the minority party should not be given a veto over subpoenas. Republicans complained of "steamroller" tactics by the majority.

## HUNT

Rodino promised to "fully consult" with Hutchinson before issuing subpoenas and pledged "no partisan crusade or witch hunt" in either proceeding.

Representative Thomas Railsback (Rep-Ill.) said Republicans were "trying to signal our concern" to make clear "that the impeachment inquiry 'must be judicious, careful and non-partisan or bi-partisan.'"

With less bickering, the committee agreed to reduce from two days to one day the notice Rodino must give for calling a committee meeting to deal with the impeachment or Ford inquiries.

Rodino said he asked for both rules changes in good part to help speed consideration of Ford's nomination. But he gave no answer to Republican requests that he set a date for hearings on Ford.

## DATE

The chairman later told reporters he expects to be able to set a date by next week after he and Hutchinson have gone over the 1400 pages of raw files that the FBI has accumulated on Ford.

Under Justice Department rules only these two men may see the unevaluated data. The same restriction applies in the Senate Rules Committee, where Ford's confirmation hearings start tomorrow.

Hutchinson said he had been told that the FBI investigation "turned up nothing of substance which would be any obstacle in the way of confirmation of Mr. Ford." He did not name his source.

Washington Post