Impeachment Panel Sets April Target

By Mary Russell Washington Post Staff Writer

House Judiciary chairman Peter Rodino (D-N.J.) has set a target date of April for winding up the committee's presidential impeachment inquiry.

Rodino announced the April target yesterday after meeting with a 15-member ad hoc subcommittee consisting of subcommittee chairmen and ranking minority members. The meeting was held in response to Republican criticism that the committee was deliberately prolonging the impreliminaries peachment and that Republicans were not being consulted on major decisions.

GOP members expressed satisfaction with Rodino's announcement.

The chairman also confirmed reports that he has chosen a special counsel to direct the impeachment inquiry. Rodino refused to reveal the name until a press conference today but said "he comes from a Republican background and is a man of the highest integrity."

Speculation centered around John M. Doar, 52, an Eisenhower appointee to the Justice Department, who stayed through the Kennedy and part of the Johnson administration as assistant attorney general for civil rights. Doar enforced major civil rights legislation of the 60's and only recently resigned as head of the Bedford Stuyvesant Corp., a Brooklyn community organization for blacks started by the late Sen. Robert F. Kennedy.

Another Republican name frequently mentioned is Federal Judge Frederick B. Lacey Jr., 53, of Newark, N.J., who was appointed by President Nixon as U.S. Attorney for New Jersey and then went on to the Federal bench.

Republican committee members, who took to the House floor Tuesday to complain that Rodino was stalling and making important decisions unilaterally, said they were pleased after yesterday's meeting. "It's a definite step forward," said Rep. Robert McClory (R-III.).

Rodino promised to use the 15-man ad hoc subcommittee as an "advisory" group and promised he would meet with them before Congress reconvenes on Jan. 21.

"We'll be kept advised and be able to communicate our views" as to the scope and direction of the inquiry, McClory said.

Late yesterday afternoon the Republican members met to discuss whether they should hire a special counsel of their own. No decision was reached but the idea was given favorable consideration, McClory said.