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# Inquiry Leaders Open Briefcase

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After spending \$532,323 on the impeachment inquiry of President Nixon, House Judiciary Committee Chairman Peter W. Rodino (D-N.J.) yesterday got his first peek inside the celebrated briefcase from the Watergate grand jury.

Rodino and Rep. Edward Hutchinson (R-Mich.), the committee's senior Republican, went to the tightly secured staff headquarters in an old hotel behind the House office buildings and took a preliminary look at the materials which are said to contain evidence of Mr. Nixon's involvement in the Watergate cover-up.

Bound by a committee rule that forbids divulging the contents even to other committee members at this point, Rodino said only that the materials include documents and tapes and were "relevant" to the inquiry into whether the President should be impeached.

Financial records show that as of March 31, the committee will have spent more than half of its \$1 million budget for the impeachment investigation. It probably will have to go back to the House for more money.

Although Rodino had set April 30 as a target date for reporting the committee's recommendation on impeachment to the House, he now concedes it "really doesn't seem likely" that this date can be met. It probably will take an extra month. Staff presentation of the evidence to the committee is several weeks away, and no procedures have been adopted on how the committee will consider the voluminous file the staff is assembling.

The \$532,323 spent to date covers 4½ months, but the inquiry has been fully staffed for only about two months and the 100-member staff presumably will be needed for what appears to be at least another two months. More than 90 per cent of the expense has been salaries. In addition, there will be heavy extra expenses of making hearing transcripts and printing books of testimony for House members when the inquiry reaches the stage of committee consideration.

Besides the grand jury briefcase, Rodino, Hutchinson and top staff members are pouring over 700 documents and 18 taped White House conversations that the President voluntarily gave the committee.

Special counsel John Doar told committee members in a memorandum yesterday that these materials include tapes of 18 conversations including the President, logs of 12 unidentified White House staffers and documents relating to the leak-plugging White House "plumbers" unit, the ITT contribution and antitrust case, the dairy industry campaign contribution and price support increase, and other campaign contributions.

The committee also has a request outstanding for tapes of 41 or 42 other taped presidential conversations. Doar said he was told by the President's lawyer, James D. St. Clair, that this request, made on Feb. 25, is "under consideration by the President."