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**RODINO ACCEPTS
WITNESSES ASKED
BY NIXON LAWYER**

**Panel Chairman, in Apparent
Move to Conciliate, Agrees
to Allow All 6 to Testify**

HOUSE PROPOSAL FAILS

**Bid to Speed Hearings Loses
—Committee Votes, 23-15,
to Keep Sessions Closed**

By **JAMES M. NAUGHTON**
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WASHINGTON, July 1—The chairman of the House Judiciary Committee agreed today, in an apparent gesture of conciliation, to accept all of the witnesses proposed by President Nixon's defense lawyer for impeachment hearings scheduled to resume tomorrow.

But the gesture by Representative Peter W. Rodino Jr., Democrat of New Jersey, failed to stem growing partisan friction in the committee and the full House over the impeachment inquiry.

The House, rejecting pleas from Mr. Rodino and the leaders of both parties, refused to adopt a proposal that would have expedited the hearings by suspending a House rule giving each of the 38 committee members the right to question witnesses.

The plan failed, by a vote of 207 for to 140 against, to gain the two-thirds majority necessary for waiver of the rule. Representative John J. Rhodes of Arizona, the House Republican leader, endorsed the proposal but 120 of his Republican colleagues voted against it.

A Rancorous Debate

Later this afternoon, after rancorous debate, the Judiciary Committee split nearly along partisan lines again in voting, 23-15, to examine the witnesses in closed hearings. All but two of the 17 Republicans on the panel opposed the motion to seal the hearings from public view.

Last week, in deciding the course of the final stages of the inquiry, the committee's Democratic members rejected Republican demands to summon all

six of the witnesses recommended by James D. St. Clair, the President's chief defense counsel.

Instead, the committee majority voted last week to call

Continued on Page 21, Column 1

Continued From Page 1, Col. 1

two witnesses recommended by Mr. St. Clair—John W. Dean 3d, the ousted White House legal counsel, and Frederick C. LaRue, a former official of the President's 1972 re-election campaign.

Four other men whose testimony was suggested by Mr. St. Clair were to have been interviewed by the inquiry staff before a decision would be made whether to summon them.

Four Men Named

They are H. R. Haldeman, the former White House chief of staff; John N. Mitchell, the former Attorney General; Paul O'Brien, a former lawyer for the re-election committee, and William O. Bittman, a lawyer Hunt Jr., one of the convicted Watergate conspirators.

When the proposal to waive the rule governing interrogation of witnesses reached the House floor shortly after noon today, Mr. Rodino announced that it was the chairman's intention, following interviews, to recommend that all six of the White House witnesses be summoned. He gave no further explanation for the change in position.

The committee's second-ranking Republican, Representative Robert McClory of Illinois, told reporters that Mr. Rodino had told him this morning he would make the announcement as a "concession" to the Republicans.

A Rhetorical Question

Another committee member, a Democrat, said privately that he understood Republican leaders would in turn agree to seek the support of the House minority for a plan to limit questioning of witnesses to the committee's lawyers, thus expediting the hearings.

But the plan foundered on the opposition of Republicans, led by Representative David W. Dennis of Indiana. Shouting from the House floor, Mr. Dennis declared that it would be "parliamentary suicide" for members of Congress to yield their right to question witnesses.

"Why should an investigation of this magnitude be conducted entirely by the hired help?" Mr.

Dennis asked rhetorically.

A few Republicans joined him in the debate.

"This is a gag rule," said Representative Trent Lott of Mississippi. "I admit you may want to gag some of us on both sides of the aisle, but is this the way to do it?"

Mr. Rodino and others, including House Speaker Carl Albert of Oklahoma and Representative Edward Hutchinson of Michigan, the Judiciary Committee's senior Republican, countered that the hearings would bog down if the rule were not waived.

"I've never known of a judicial or even a quasi-judicial proceeding," Mr. Hutchinson said, "where witnesses under oath would be questioned by 38 or 40 people."

Under the waiver proposal, the 38 committee members would have been permitted to submit written questions to the panel's two senior lawyers. The questions would have asked if they were relevant and not repetitive.

Although Republicans opposing the plan contended that it was an honored right to ask questions directly, Representative William L. Hungate, Democrat of Missouri, noted that "this ancient and honorable right" became a House rule only on Jan. 22, 1971.

Following the defeat of the proposal, some Democrats and Republicans on the committee said that they would voluntarily waive their right to ask questions. But most members said they would wait until the witnesses appeared before deciding whether to join in the interrogation.

Debate Delay Likely

Although the defeat of the proposed rule waiver meant the committee would probably not meet a target of July 22 for beginning debate on whether to recommend that Mr. Nixon be impeached, neither Republicans nor Democrats read any deeper significance into the procedural setback.

The full House will decide the impeachment issue on the evidence, Representative Don Edwards, a California Democrat, said, adding that the committee's proposed bill of impeachment "is going to be very

persuasive, I'm sure."

Representative Charles E. Wiggins, Republican of California, also was asked whether he thought the defeat of the waiver was a reflection of House sentiment on impeachment.

"Well, I voted for it," he said. "Does that answer your question?"

Mr. Wiggins has been among the most staunch defenders of the President on the Judiciary Committee.

Mr. McClory told reporters he believed the waiver had been defeated because of "suspicion and hostility" among House Republicans who, he said, were unable to share Mr. McClory's view that the hearings had been fair to the President.

'They Suspect the Worst'

"When they don't see what's going on they suspect the worst," Mr. McClory said.

Since the hearings began, on May 9, they have been conducted entirely in private. All but six Democrats on the panel voted then to close the hearings.

Today, 15 of the Republicans did a turnabout and favored opening the rest of the hearings while all six of the Democrats who initially favored open hearings voted to close them.

Two of the Democrats who had spoken out most insistently for open hearings, Representative Jerome R. Waldie of California and John Conyers Jr. of Michigan, made and seconded the motion to take testimony from witnesses in private.

They said that it was "logical," as Mr. Conyers stated, to complete the hearings under the same rules.

Representative Charles W. Sandman Jr., Republican of New Jersey, declared that the committee was engaged in "real hypocrisy in action." He said that sensitive information had been leaked from the closed hearings by the same members now advocating closed hearings.

"I don't know who" leaked evidence, retorted Mr. Conyers, adding that those who now favored open sessions "were the same ones who voted the opposite way themselves."