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Partisan Nerves Fraying

As Nixon Probe Nears End

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The House Judiciary Committee's impeachment inquiry ground toward a conclusion yesterday, with partisan nerves beginning to fray and President Nixon formally refusing to comply with the committee's last four subpoenas.

The committee still must finish taking testimony today from Herbert W. Kalmbach, the President's one-time personal lawyer, but committee members were more interested in drafting articles of impeachment on which they are scheduled to vote late next week.

Republicans were complaining, as they have throughout the six-month probe, that the inquiry staff appeared to be preparing final committee briefings in a way that omitted the President's side of the case. The



HERBERT W. KALMBACH
... last witness

Republicans assigned the No. 2 minority counsel, Sam Garrison, to work up the President's case.

Rep. Charles Wiggins (R-Calif.), staunch supporter of the President, predicted yes-

terday that impeachment would die in committee and that none of the 17 GOP members would vote for it.

But Rep. Tom Railsback (R-Ill.) said he knew of four Republicans who have not made up their minds—himself and Reps. William Cohen (Maine), Hamilton Fish (N.Y.) and Henry P. Smith (N.Y.). A committee vote for impeachment seems assured, with virtually all 21 Democrats for it.

James D. St. Clair, the President's lawyer, formally informed the committee that Mr. Nixon "must respectfully decline" to comply with subpoenas for 49 taped presidential conversations which the committee demanded on June 24.

During the course of the inquiry, the committee subpoenaed 147 tapes and other materials. The President responded by turning over edi-

See **IMPEACH, A6, Col. 6**

IMPEACH, From A1

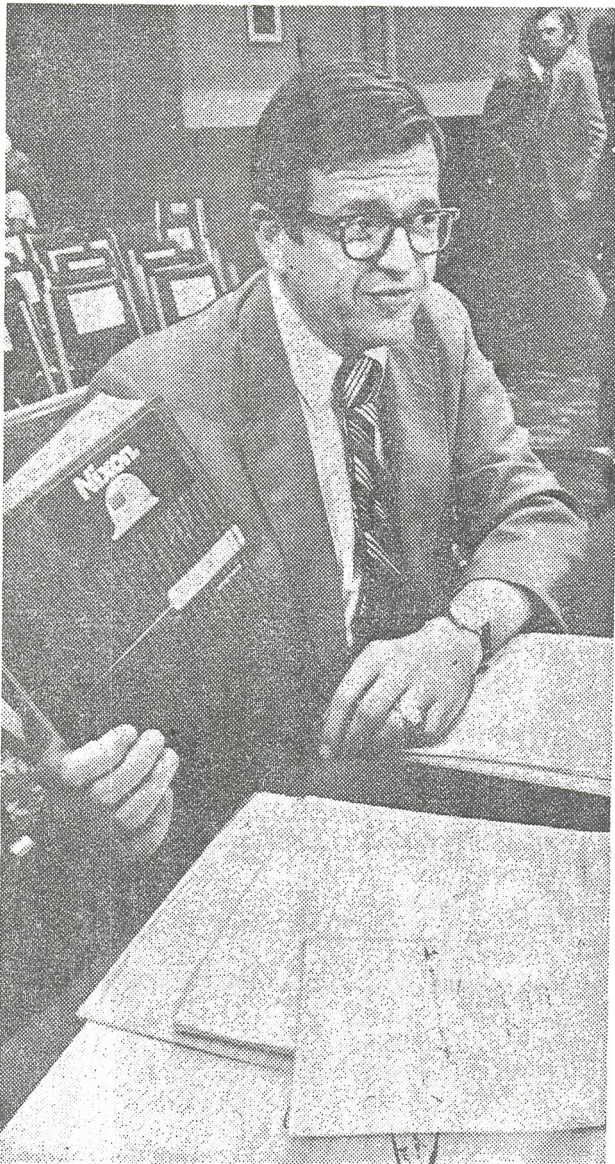
ted transcripts of about 40 Watergate tapes, which the inquiry staff reported contained substantial errors.

Also refused by St. Clair were daily news summaries furnished the President during the early part of 1972 when Richard G. Kleindienst gave untruthful testimony to the Senate Judiciary Committee to the effect that Mr. Nixon had never tried to influence his handling of the International Telephone & Telegraph Corp. antitrust case.

Purpose of the request was to determine whether the President had been told of Kleindienst's testimony in a news summary and perhaps had even made marginal notes, as he sometimes did.

St. Clair replied that the President would not turn over the news summaries, but told the committee there were no presidential notations on the President's "copy of the above material which relate to Mr. Kleindienst's testimony that there was no White House pressure . . ."

Committee members spent much of yesterday questioning Charles W. Colson, former White House insider, who pleaded guilty to smearing Daniel Ellsberg for releasing the Pentagon Papers. Members said Colson did not provide information linking the President directly with the milk, ITT, Ellsberg break-in and other



By Frank Johnston—The Washington Post

Charles W. Colson prepares to testify at hearing.

matters in which Colson was involved.

Under questioning by St. Clair, Colson denied that he had ever discussed executive clemency for Watergate conspirator E. Howard Hunt, Jr., with Hunt, the president or anyone else.

John W. Dean III, former White House counsel, testified at Senate Watergate hearings that Colson had discussed clemency for Hunt with the President. Colson denied it at the time.

Colson did say yesterday,

according to members, that he had told Hunt, whom he recruited into the White House, that he would "do what he could" for Hunt. Colson said he wrote to Judge John J. Sirica asking that Hunt's long service (CIA) be taken into account in sentencing.

Members generally described Colson as a willing witness who had difficulty giving direct simple answers. Rep. Don Edwards (D-Calif.) called him "amiable, but not a witness

interested in providing great deal of information."

With the conclusion of Kalmbach's testimony and brief summing up for the President by St. Clair, the committee will have ended the closed fact-finding phase of their inquiry, which began 10 weeks ago today.

In closed sessions Thursday and Friday, the staff will put the mass of evidence in focus for the committee, which will then open its doors next week for debate and final votes.