

# Live TV to Cover Inquiry Voted by House and Panel

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House of Representatives and its Judiciary Committee voted today to permit live television and radio coverage of the committee's final impeachment inquiry sessions starting Wednesday.

By a surprisingly wide margin of 346 to 40, the House approved a rules change to permit live broadcast coverage of its committee meetings and the Judiciary Committee followed suit a few hours later by a vote of 31 to 7.

Although some representatives expressed misgivings about whether the presence of TV lights and microphones would affect the committee's deliberations on the possible impeachment of President Nixon, other lawmakers argued that the public should have full access to the proceedings.

Still unresolved is whether live broadcast coverage will be permitted when the impeachment debate begins on the House floor.

Live coverage of action on the House floor would require approval of a separate resolution, and it was expected that the House leadership would watch the course of the committee's televised meetings before seeking such a rules change.

### Widespread Backing

Today's resolution drew wide spread support after the committee's chairman, Representative Peter W. Rodino Jr., Democrat of New Jersey, assured the House that there would be "equal and fair treatment of all members" of the committee and that each member would have uninterrupted time to debate the evidence the panel has heard.

The committee plans to begin 10 hours of general debate on the evidence starting Wednesday with the 21 Democrats and 17 Republicans on the committee limited to 15 minutes each.

Mr. Rodino told the House that his intention was to follow that with another 20 hours of debate on the possible articles of impeachment, which would give each member another 30 minutes each.

Up to now the committee had held closed sessions to hear evidence in its inquiry, but that action has been sharply criticized by some Republicans and by the White House.

With much of its evidence now made public, the proposal that the panel's final deliberations be opened to live broadcast coverage had the backing of Mr. Rodino and Representative Robert McClory of Illinois, the committee's second-ranking Republican.

Representative Wayne Owens, Democrat of Utah who was the committee member who sponsored today's resolution, said the live coverage "will afford an unparalleled education to the American people" in which they can "examine" the deliberations of the committee through what he termed the "very critical eye" of television.

Voting for the resolution on the House floor were 196 Democrats and 150 Republicans, while 17 Democrats and 23 Republicans voted against it.

In the committee, 17 Democrats and 14 Republicans voted for coverage while three Democrats and four Republicans voted against.

The committee rejected, 29 to 8, an amendment by Representative John F. Seiberling, Democrat of Ohio, that could have restricted the use of the extra lights installed in the ceiling of the committee's room during the live broadcasts.

House rules permit live coverage of House Committee hearings but not meetings, subject to approval of a majority of a committee. Since the committee's final debate will be a meeting instead of a hearing, live coverage would have been prohibited without the change.

### Applies to All Committees

Today's resolution would open up all House committee meetings to live coverage if a committee majority approved. Nevertheless, one of the measure's leading opponents, Representative Dave Martin, Republican of Nebraska, said it was "very strange and suspect" that the resolution was being rushed through now to permit the televising of the impeachment proceedings.

Mr. Martin also complained that since the Democrats outnumbered the Republicans 21 to 17 on the committee, the Democrats would have more time on television to argue their case.