

38 on Panel Face The Sternest Test

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The 38 members of the House Judiciary Committee bring to the impeachment deliberations an assortment of political backgrounds, ambitions, loyalties and viewpoints.

Inescapably, these factors will influence how the various members perceive the evidence they have received and whether they vote to recommend the impeachment of President Nixon.

Over the years, they have been, for the most part, anonymous back-benchers, their names and faces scarcely recognized outside their home districts, and their legislative attention devoted primarily to finding solutions to local problems.

Now, thrust onto center stage by the impeachment proceedings, these men and women — 21 Democrats and 17 Republicans — are faced with the sternest test of their political careers.

Will they appear to be judicious or imprudent, even, handed or partisan, articulate or stumbling? Will they come across on television as statesmen or rogues, as leaders or followers?

Could Break Careers

They cannot help but be aware that the answers to these questions could, for the younger members, make or break their careers and, for the older ones, determine how their careers are measured by history.

Reporters and politicians who have been following the committee's work for months are convinced that most members of the panel have already made up their minds about how they are going to vote on impeachment.

Generally, the members can be divided into five groups: Those considered certain to vote for impeachment, those leaning toward impeachment, those still undecided, those leaning against impeachment and those considered certain to vote against impeachment.

The lines between the categories are hazy and shifting, but they give some clue as to how the individual members stand as the public hearings begin.

It would take a minimum of 20 votes—a majority of the committee—for a recommendation of impeachment.

Representative Lawrence J. Hogan, a Maryland Republican, announced today that he would vote for impeachment, and all but three Democratic members also fit into the first category. Thus, there appear to be at least 19 solid votes against the President.

3 Exceptions Are Southerners

The three Democratic exceptions are all Southerners — Representatives James R. Mann of South Carolina, Walter Flowers of Alabama and Ray Thornton of Arkansas.

These three plus two Republicans—Representatives William S. Cohen of Maine and Hamilton Fish Jr. of upstate New York—are thought to be leaning toward a vote for impeachment.

Three other Republicans have given no indication of how they might vote and are believed to be still undecided. They are Representatives M. Caldwell Butler of Virginia, To Railsback of Illinois and Henry P. Smith 3d of upstate New York.

Of the remaining 11 Republicans, seven are considered sure votes against impeachment and the other four are thought to be leaning against an impeachment vote.

The four are Representatives Robert McClory of Illinois, David W. Dennis of Indiana, Wiley Mayne of Iowa and Harold V. Froelich of Wisconsin.

Mr. Hogan, a conservative, is running for Governor of Maryland, and his critics charged that campaign necessities led to his decision to go against the President. Three other conservatives who have not locked themselves into a vote against impeachment — Mr. Dennis, Mr. Mayne and Mr. Froelich — are involved in tough races for re-election.

Even More Influence

While political considerations will be weighed by all the committee members, presumably they will exert even more influence on the votes these men eventually cast.

In addition to Mr. Hogan, there are four lame ducks on the committee, Harold D. Donohue, a Massachusetts Democrat, and Mr. Smith have announced their retirement at the end of this session of Congress. Jerome R. Waldie lost his bid for the Democratic nomination for Governor of California. Wayne Owens has won the Democratic nomination for the Senate from Utah.

Mr. Smith has said he hopes for a diplomatic appointment, possibly at the United Nations, after he leaves Congress, and some of his Republican colleagues believe that this ambition might influence his vote on impeachment.

The leader of the President's Republican defenders on the panel is Representative Charles E. Wiggins, a California lawyer who is one of the most accomplished debaters in Congress.

One of the Democrats who has not firmly committed himself to vote for impeachment—Mr. Thornton—is a protégé

of Representative Wilbur D. Mills, also an Arkansas Democrat. Mr. Thornton's vote could give a clue to Mr. Mills's stance on impeachment.

Some House members believe that Mr. Mills, who is chairman of the Ways and Means Committee, commands so much authority in the House that his still unannounced position could be one key to whether the full House votes for impeachment.

Some of the Democratic members have been vocal critics of the President since the impeachment proceedings began. Among them are Representatives John Conyers Jr. of Michigan, George E. Dainielson of California and Robert F. Drinan of Massachusetts.

Others like Representatives Barbara C. Jordan of Texas, Paul S. Sarbanes of Maryland and John F. Seiberling of Ohio have kept their own counsel, and their voices could therefore carry more weight in the debate on drafting possible impeachment articles.

As a group, the Judiciary Committee is a fair microcosm of the entire House. Voting studies show that its Democrats are slightly more liberal than House Democrats as a whole, its Republicans slightly more conservative than their Republican colleagues.

The committee has developed a reputation for being nonpar-

tisan, but that is primarily because of the nature of the normal issues under its jurisdiction. Civil rights, constitutional amendments, immigration and gun control are issues that give rise to ideological rather than partisan differences.

From 21 States

Geographically, the members represent 21 states from Maine to California. If it appears that Southerners are under-represented, that is because two Texas Democrats, Miss Jordan and Jack Brooks, are liberals.

All 38 members are lawyers, a legal degree being a prerequisite for membership on the committee. But, for the most part, their legal experience has been in drafting wills and not articles of impeachment, and the few who have experience in criminal matters have prosecuted or defended petty thieves and not Presidents of the United States.

There are three blacks and two women on the panel. Six of the members are under 40, half are under 50 and five are over 60.

Perhaps the greatest demographic distinction between the committee and the rest of the House lies in the number of newcomers to Washington who serve on the committee.

There are 11 freshmen, and six others were first elected in 1970. Thus, nearly half of

the committee members have served less than four years in the House.

Representative Peter W. Rodino Jr., a New Jersey Democrat, has been in the House since 1949, but this is his first term as the committee's chairman. It is also the first term in which Representative Edward Hutchinson of Michigan

has been the panel's ranking Republican.

Should the committee bring articles of impeachment to the House floor, the lack of seniority of so many committee members could add to the influence of Mr. Brooks.

A witty Texan with an acerbic tongue, who has often expressed his contempt for Presi-

Congressional investigations have often propelled obscure legislators into the glare of national publicity and set them on the road to prominence and political power.

Richard M. Nixon first made national news as a young Representative from Southern California investigating alleged Communist influence in government.

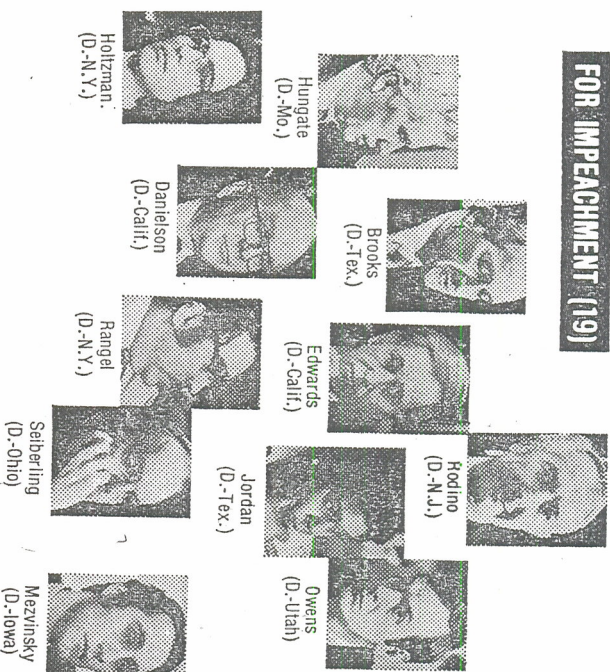
Harry S. Truman, Estes Kefauver and Joseph R. McCarthy first gained fame or notoriety from Congressional investigations.

"People are going to look back at my career and not think of the work I did on juvenile delinquency on penal reform or even the highways I got for my district," Mr. Railsback remarked last spring. "They're going to remember how Tom Railsback voted on impeachment."

dent Nixon, Mr. Brooks is in his 11th term in the House and is in line to become chairman of the Government Operations Committee next year. His views could sway some other senior Southern Democrats who are likely to hold important votes on the House floor.

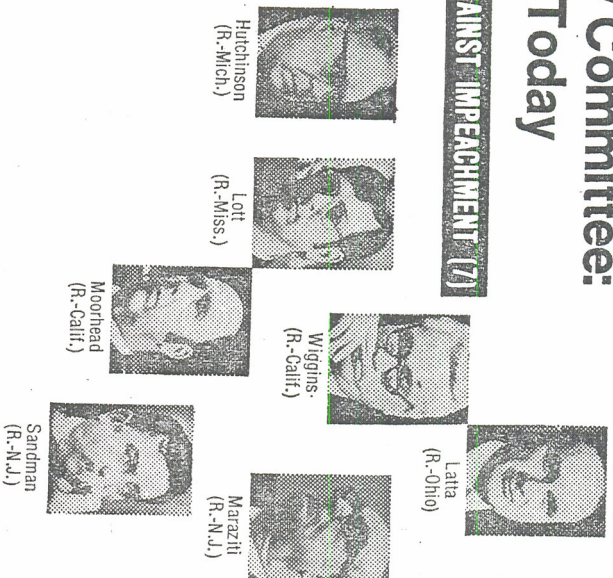
The Judiciary Committee members are well aware that

FOR IMPEACHMENT (19)

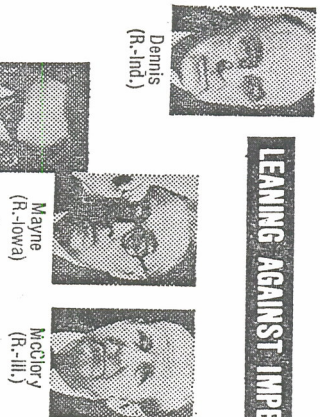


**38 on the House Judiciary Committee:
Where They Stand Today**

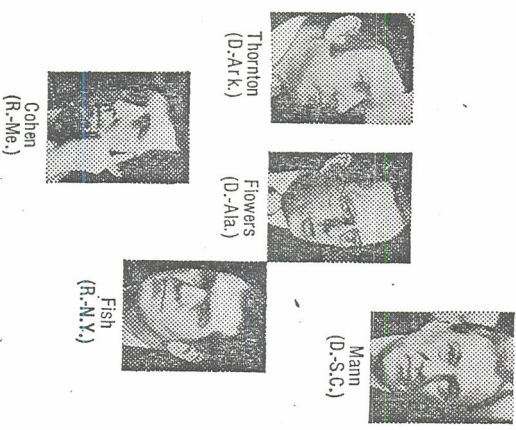
AGAINST IMPEACHMENT (7)



LEANING AGAINST IMPEACHMENT (4)



LEANING FOR IMPEACHMENT (5)



UNDECIDED (3)

