

NYTimes JUL 25 1974
NIXON'S SUPPORT
IN HOUSE WANES

Hogan and Court Positions
Influential as Members
Near Their Decision

By MARJORIE HUNTER

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, July 24 —

President Nixon's support on the impeachment issue appeared today to have markedly deteriorated in the House in the wake of two dramatic developments.

The first perceptible stir came yesterday when Representative Lawrence J. Hogan, a Republican conservative from Maryland who is a member of the Judiciary Committee, announced that he would vote for the impeachment of the President.

The second development was the Supreme Court's 8-0 decision today ordering the President to surrender records of 64 White House conversations sought by the special Watergate prosecutor.

For the first time, some of the House members considered as "undecideds" spoke openly today of possibly casting their votes for impeachment.

"If I were called on to cast a vote today," said Representative Walter Jones, a conservative North Carolina Democrat, "I think I'd vote to impeach."

Conceding that his largely rural district is divided on the issue, Mr. Jones said his own view was that the only way to

Continued on Page 23, Column 3

Continued From Page 1, Col. 5

end the trauma of Watergate was to impeach and let the Senate decide if the President was guilty.

Mr. Jones is one of seven or eight Southern Democrats who cruised down the Potomac on the Presidential yacht, the Sequoia, several nights also. President Nixon was not present, but some of his aides hosted the cruise.

There were strong indications today, too, that a sizable number of House Republicans previously considered noncommittal were edging toward impeachment.

Some said privately, before Mr. Nixon's pledge of compliance, that they hoped Mr. Nixon would defy the Supreme Court ruling. "That would make it a lot easier for us to vote to impeach him," one said. His statement was echoed by several others.

Cautionary Letter

Obviously concerned that the Hogan announcement coupled with the Supreme Court decision might prompt some other Republicans to come out openly for impeachment, the party's two top House leaders—John J. Rhodes of Arizona and Leslie C. Arends of Illinois—sent this cautionary letter late today to all House Republicans:

"We have consistently advised all Republican members to keep their own counsel concerning their intentions in the matter of impeachment until all the evidence is in and arguments concluded. We still think this is good advice."

Heeding his own advice, Mr. Rhodes, the House minority leader, said in a private interview today that he was not certain how he would vote.

"I don't feel that I know everything yet," he said.

Mr. Rhodes said that he spent much of last weekend reading the Judiciary Committee evidence while on the beach at Ocean City, Md.

Some of what he read, he

said, bothered him. However, his "visceral reaction" at this point is that the House will not impeach, he said.

However, he added that House sentiment on the issue "ebbs and flows, it's very volatile, up and down. When someone asks me the outlook on impeachment, I usually say it depends on what day they're talking about. Last week, it looked good for the President. This week, the President's case has slipped."

The House majority leader, Thomas P. O'Neil of Massachusetts, said today that "only a miracle is going to save the President. He's had it."

Possible 'Tidal Wave'

Mr. O'Neil predicted that Mr. Nixon would be impeached by a "minimum of 60 votes" and he did not rule out the possibility that "a tidal wave" might increase the margin to 100 votes or more.

Many of those publicly "undecideds" who are now believed to be leaning toward impeachment have been avid readers of the published evidence, and have been deeply concerned about what they read.

Representative Albert M. Quie, Republican of Minnesota, spent most of last weekend reading seven volumes of evidence. Representative L. Richardson Preyer, a North Carolina Democrat who once served as a Federal judge, said he had read perhaps 80 per cent of the evidence and "at this point, it is a pretty compelling case for impeachment."

While neither Democrats nor Republicans have made official head counts on how members will vote on impeachment, there was virtually unanimous agreement by leaders of both parties today that Mr. Nixon would have faced almost certain impeachment if he had defied the Supreme Court ruling.

But one Republican, Representative Earl Landgrebe of Indiana, told a news conference this afternoon that he would not vote for impeachment even

if Mr. Nixon were to defy the Court.

"I believe in the man and I'm thankful for what he's done for America," the ultra-conservative Republican said. "I say, praise Nixon and praise America."

Asked if he had read the transcripts of evidence, Mr. Landgrebe replied, "I have not. I glanced at part of them, but they're not particularly relative to the impeachment process."

Possible Call for Resignation

WASHINGTON, July 24 (AP) — Senator McClure of Idaho said today that he and other Republican conservatives would demand President Nixon's resignation if Mr. Nixon abandoned his 1972 campaign pledges in exchange for liberal support.

Mr. McClure told a news conference that Mr. Nixon's decision to sign a controversial legal services bill, in the face of liberal pressure, "must bring his ability to govern effectively, and to lead at all, into sharp question."

Asked if he was calling for Mr. Nixon's resignation, the Idaho Senator replied: "I'm specifically not at this time. But that question has to be in the minds of many people."