

House Committee

More Demands By Republicans For Impeachment

Washington

President Nixon's hopes of avoiding a House Judiciary Committee impeachment vote collapsed yesterday with the end of preliminary debate that saw a wave of threatened defections by undecided Republicans and Southern Democrats.

Shortly before the committee adjourned after a long 13-hour day of televised speeches, Representative Peter W. Rodino (Dem-N.J.) the chairman, announced for the first time he would favor the President's impeachment.

"I've searched within my heart and my conscience, and I've searched out the facts, and when I test the facts I find the President of the United States must be found wanting," Rodino said.

"So tomorrow, I shall urge along with others the adoption of articles of impeachment. I shall do so with a heavy heart."

The 38-member panel adjourned until 8 a.m. PDT today to take up the articles of impeachment and begin the process of considering amendments and voting which Rodino hopes to complete by early next week.

During the day, Republican M. Caldwell Butler of Virginia, once a warm Nixon political supporter and a swing vote on the 38-member committee, demanded impeachment with the cry: "Watergate is our shame."

"For years, we Republicans have campaigned against corruption," he said. "But Watergate is our shame; we cannot indulge ourselves in the luxury of patronizing or excusing corrupt conduct."

Before it was all over, four Republicans and three Southern Democrats — all regarded as undecided — indicated they were prepared to desert the President, or already had decided to oppose him. The last of them,

From Page 1

Ray Norton, an Arkansas Democrat, said:

"I have reached the firm conviction that President Richard Nixon has violated his oath of office by abuse of power and obstruction of justice, and that those offenses constitute high crimes and misdemeanors requiring trial on these charges before the Senate of the United States."

Besides Butler and Thornton, other key "swing members who — considered to be undecided — shifted away from Mr. Nixon during the day were William S. Cohen (Rep-Maine), Hamilton Fish Jr. (Rep.-N.Y.), Walter Flowers (Dem-Ala.), James Mann (Dem-S.C.) and Harold Froehlich (Rep-Wis.).

While Butler was previously known to have been

leaning toward impeachment, Froehlich was a surprise, and his switch put the number of potential GOP defectors at seven.

Froehlich indicated he would favor Mr. Nixon's impeachment for obstruction of justice in the Watergate cover-up if the formal charges were reworded to his satisfaction. Froehlich, who once had questioned whether the evidence supported impeachment on any grounds, disclosed his shift Thursday by saying he was "deeply pained and troubled by some of the things I see."

Butler, speaking rapidly, his eyebrows arched behind 2 horn-rimmed glasses, declared:

"There are frightening implications for the future of our country if we do not impeach the President of the United States."

An informal UPI survey indicated that, barring unforeseen developments, the committee favored recommending Mr. Nixon's impeachment by the House by a vote of 28 to 10, including seven of the panel's 17 Republicans plus the 21 Democrats.

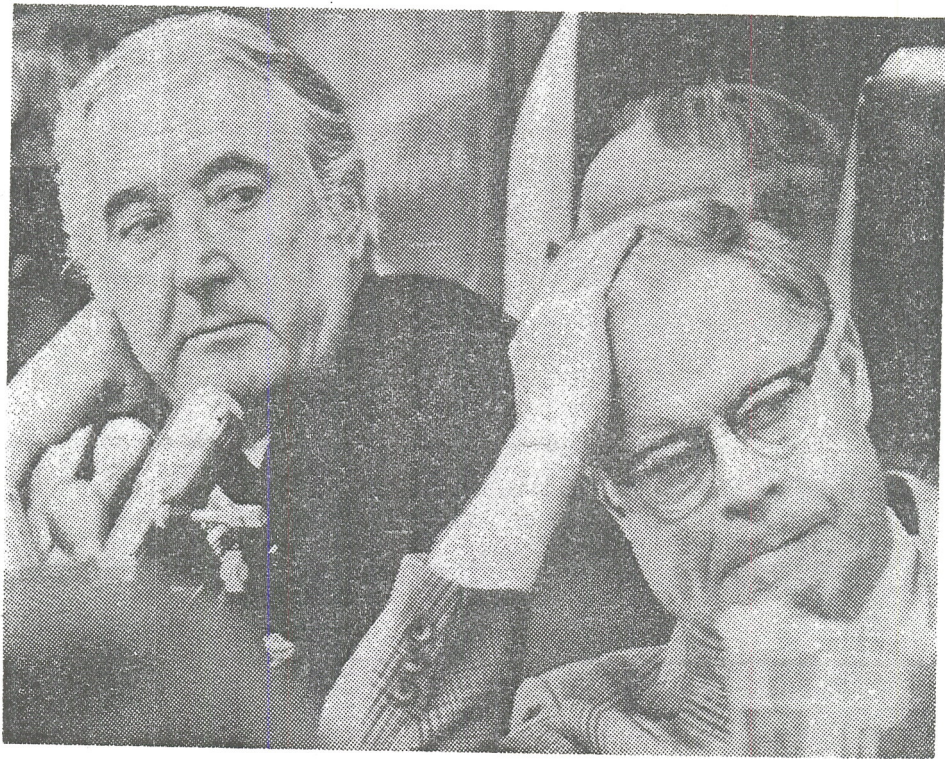
The President's GOP supporters argued the evidence was inadequate. They pleaded in vain that the committee halt proceedings long enough to see whether it could obtain additional evidence from the tapes of 64 Watergate discussions subpoenaed by Special Prosecutor Leon Jaworski which the Supreme Court ordered Mr. Nixon to surrender.

But committee Democrats predicted on saying they already had enough evidence to support the two articles of impeachment charging Mr. Nixon with abuse of his powers and obstruction of justice. A vote to recommend impeachment of the first U.S. President in more than



UPI Telephoto

REPUBLICAN HAROLD FROEHLICH
He indicated he favored impeachment



UPI Telephoto

REPRESENTATIVES PETER RODINO AND EDWARD HUTCHINSON
Top members of Judiciary committee listened intently to debate



AP Wirephotos

REP. JEROME WALDIE

REP. CHARLES WIGGINS

Californians differ on impeachment question



AP Wirephoto

GOP Representatives Hogan (left) and Butler attacked the President

100 years was considered a virtual certainty, perhaps before next week.

Toward the end of the 13-hour session, interrupted by a quorum call, two breaks for meals and a bomb scare, Representative Barbara Jordan (Dem.-Tex.) said the committee had waited long enough for Mr. Nixon to comply with its own subpoenas for 147 tapes.

She added: "If the impeachment provision in the Constitution of the United States will not reach the offenses charged here, then perhaps that 18th century Constitution should be abandoned to a 20th century paper shredder."

Representative Delbert L. Latta (Rep.-Ohio), a strong Nixon supporter who attacked John W. Dean's testimony as the President's chief accuser, said, "The evidence is not here, it's that simple."

Charles E. Wiggins (Rep.-Calif.), the president's strongest defender on the panel, said "you could put all the admissible evidence in half of one book" compared with the more than 40 volumes compiled by staff investigators.

Wiggins, giving a detailed rebuttal of accusations dealing with misuse of the CIA and the Internal Revenue Service, challenged Democrats with "preconceived notions" about Mr. Nixon's guilt to withdraw from the proceedings. None did.

On the other side, Repre-

sentative Jerome Waldie (Dem.-Calif. demanding impeachment, charged that the "mountain of evidence" against Mr. Nixon included the "inescapable" conclusion that the President had personally ordered the erasure that resulted in an 18-1/2 minute gap on a crucial Watergate tape.

A fist-pounding Representative Lawrence Hogan (Rep.-Md.) who announced his decision against Mr Nixon before the debate began, said "I cannot in good conscience turn away from evidence of evil that is so clear and compelling."

Representative Wiley Mayne (Rep.-Iowa) said he "deplored the sorry example set by the president" and agreed with Representative David Dennis (Rep.-Ind.) a fellow supporter of the president, that the Watergate coverup charge was "the only real possibility that remains for a vote of impeachment."

Representative Edward Hutchinson (Rep.-Mich.) ranking minority member, said his support had not wavered after listening to those who advocated impeachment.

"I remain unconvinced by their argument," Hutchinson said. "I believe their case is weak, and I am unconvinced as well by their view of the impeachment process."

Hutchinson said impeachment requires a criminal of-

fense and one that has "a serious impact on the government."

Representative John Conyers (Dem.-Mich.), who followed Wiggins, called Mr. Nixon a "real casualty of the Vietnam war" and said there was a "very grave possibility of subverting the impeachment provisions of the Constitution for all time if we are not to impeach him."

... "If we fail to impeach, we have condoned and left unpunished . . . a presidential course of conduct designed to interfere with and obstruct the very process that he has sworn to uphold."

In a bitingly sarcastic speech, Representative Charles B. Rangel (Dem.-N.Y.) recited slowly and with feeling the list of the close Nixon aides and associates who have been indicted, have been convicted, have been fined, have been jailed.

Rangel said Mr. Nixon "participated in the most bizarre criminal conspiracy in the history of the United States," and demanded his impeachment.

Representative Elizabeth Holtzman (Dem.-N.Y.) said the only way the American people can be guaranteed their constitutional liberties is by removing President Nixon from office. She said she supported all of the proposed articles of impeachment.

United Press