

## 25 MILLION HEAR NIXON TV SPEECH

Audience Rated as Wide as  
for Impeachment Debate

By LES BROWN

President Nixon, in his 35-minute address on inflation Thursday night, probably reached as many television viewers as did the House Judiciary Committee's debate on the articles of impeachment, although the telecast of the second night's session ran almost three hours in prime time.

This was because the President was carried on all three did not have to compete at all with entertainment programming in many areas of the country, while the committee's debate was carried only by CBS-TV (under the networks' prearranged rotation plan) and had to vie with entertainment programs on other networks and independent stations.

Because the President's speech was "force-fed" in the language of the trade, to audiences, it was able to reach approximately 25 million viewers nationally, or around the same number that watched all or part of the committee proceedings on CBS from 8:15 to 10:58 P.M.

### Opportunity for Impact

This prompted a network executive to comment that White House aides have no grounds for complaining, as they did Thursday, that the President was being given only as much voice before a national audience as each of the 38 members of the Judiciary Committee.

"Even though he was not speaking on the same subject matter as the members of the Rodino committee, the President had the opportunity to make at least the same impact on the audience," the executive said.

Ratings for the second evening of the debate were significantly lower in New York than for the first night. According to the overnight Nielsen ratings, the Thursday audience was almost half that of Wednesday.

Moreover, the national ratings for Wednesday's opening session, which became available yesterday, contradicted the audience projections of research experts, based on the earlier data for New York and Los Angeles alone.

### 9 Per Cent Rise in Viewing

The New York ratings Wednesday had indicated such interest in the committee debate that television use rose 30 per cent above its normal summertime levels. Based on previous patterns, the national increase in viewing for the debate was expected to be around 25 per cent. But the instantaneous Nielsen ratings for the entire country measured the rise as only 9 per cent.

"The ratings seem to show that there was far more New York interest than national interest in the debate on the first night," said Seymour Amlen, vice president of audience research for ABC.

The projection of 50 million viewers who watched all or part of Wednesday's telecast of the committee debate has been revised to around 40 million, Mr. Amlen said.

And if the decline in New York viewing on Thursday was indicative of a decline throughout the country, the cumulative television audience for the Thursday session would be "no more than 25 million," around the same number that watched President Nixon at 7:30 that night, he pointed out.