



## 'The Fix Has Been In for Nine Months'

— William Rusher

CONCEIVABLY, in some far corner of this fair land, there is some citizen to whom the forthcoming report of the House Judiciary Committee, calling on the House itself to impeach President Nixon, will come as a shock.

Yet the truth is that the fix has been in at the House Judiciary Committee for at least nine months. Early in November of last year, I was told by a top Washington correspondent that the Democratic leaders of the House of Representatives had decided to impeach Nixon.

And while there was then, and remains today, some question whether these gentry can deliver the entire House, there never has been the slightest doubt that they could and would deliver the Judiciary Committee.

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SO THE whole saga of the committee's agonizing search for the truth has been a shoddy charade, orchestrated by a bunch of sleazy pols, nine-tenths of whom are in the pocket of the AFL-CIO, which paid for their election.

That is not to say, however, that there aren't some points of interest in the performance of the committee.

For all practical purposes, the attempt to depict the impeachment movement as nonpartisan or bipartisan has had to be

abandoned. True to his word, chairman Peter Rodino will bring in all 21 Democrats for impeachment.

But the Republicans on the committee, with only a handful of exceptions, will oppose the recommendations. Much will, of course, be made of those exceptions. But the defections will not suffice to obscure the central fact: Impeachment has been all along, and is now clearly revealed to be, a maneuver by the Democratic leadership of the Congress.

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OBSERVE that the Judiciary Committee, though up to its knees in tape recordings of Mr. Nixon's most intimate conversations, has had to abandon all hope of pinning any specific violations of law on the President, and has been forced, instead, to couch its "Bill of Impeachment" in vague, portentous-sounding generalities about violations of constitutional duty.

It may be true — I happen to believe it is true — that a President might properly be impeached and removed for wrongful acts not amounting to technical violations of law. But don't kid yourself that politicians seeking to engineer an impeachment wouldn't prefer to demonstrate the President's disobedience of specific laws if they could. They haven't, because they can't.