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2 G.O.P. Conservatives Appeal for Impeachment

By MARJORIE HUNTER
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WASHINGTON, July 30 — Two staunch Republican conservatives — one a former Administration official and the other a member of the House — called today for President Nixon's impeachment.

The demands came from Representative John M. Ashbrook of Ohio, an ultra-conservative who sought the Republican Presidential nomination in 1972, and Howard Phillips, a 33-year-old Massachusetts native who was delegated by Mr. Nixon last year to dismantle the Federal anti-poverty agency, the Office of Economic Opportunity.

Their public views reflect what appears to be growing disenchantment among Republican conservatives in the House over President Nixon. While not yet publicly committed to impeachment, many of them concede privately that they are deeply concerned over the evidence accumulated by the House Judiciary Committee.

For some time, it had been believed that House Republican conservatives, along with a sizable number of Southern Democrats, would constitute the backbone of President Nixon's drive to avoid impeachment. Now, it appears there has been erosion of pro-Nixon support in both groups.

'Abundance of Evidence'

In a statement today, Mr. Ashbrook said that on the basis of evidence now available, "I will vote for impeachment." He said that while further evidence might become available, he felt that there was "already an abundance of evidence to support impeachment."

He cited, in particular, "the President's improper use of the Internal Revenue Service, his improper use of the Federal Bureau of Investigation in the [Watergate] cover-up," and creation of the so-called "plumbers unit" to plug security leaks. These, he said, "constitute the gravest violations of Presidential power."

Mr. Ashbrook noted that he had received hundreds of letters from his constituents saying they would never vote again for him if he supported impeachment.

"To them I say I must live by my own self-enforced standards," he said. "If there were any doubt, it would be gladly construed to the benefit of President Nixon. Support for

our laws in our constitutional system, as well as my own personal commitment to my oath of office, far outweighs any other consideration."

Group Is Formed

Earlier in the afternoon, Mr. Phillips announced the formation of a group to be called Conservatives for Removal of the President. He charged that Mr. Nixon had betrayed his hard-core conservative supporters, lied to his followers and was no longer running the Government.

Declaring that he had been a Nixon backer since his early teens, the former O.E.O. director accused the President of speaking out for conservative causes while actually espousing liberal programs. He said his group would seek to build support among conservatives throughout the country in hopes that they, in turn would persuade members of Congress to vote for impeachment.

Gerald L. Warren, the deputy White House press secretary, said that Mr. Phillips's stand was not unexpected but added, "We believe it would be a mistake to believe he represents the view of conservative Congressmen or other conservatives around the country."

But on Capitol Hill, the lobbies and cloakrooms were buzzing throughout much of the day with reports that a number of Republican conservatives were either privately committed to impeachment or at least leaning that way.

Still Undecided

Representative William J. Scherle of Iowa, an ultraconservative, said that he was still undecided on how to vote. However, he added: "I have every reason in the world to look upon that [White House] outfit with revulsion." He has been highly critical for several years of Mr. Nixon's former top aides, particularly H. R. Haldeman and John D. Ehrlichman.

While describing himself as "undecided," Mr. Scherle is known to have told some colleagues that he is prepared to vote for impeachment unless evidence clearing the President becomes public.

Another Republican conservative, Representative Robert E. Bauman of Maryland, said that he was "deeply disturbed by what happened, how it happened and the White House re-



Associated Press
Howard Phillips

sponse to what happened." However, declaring himself undecided, Mr. Bauman said that he was carefully weighing available evidence as to whether there was proof to support impeachment.

Two other Republican conservatives in the House, Wilmer Mizell and Earl B. Ruth, both of North Carolina, also described themselves as uncommitted.

In a statement, Mr. Mizell said: "When I make my decision, it will not be a political decision, it will not be a partisan decision and it will not be a politically expedient decision. It will be based on the facts at the time."

Predicts Vote

Another House conservative, Same Steiger, Republican of Arizona, also described himself as undecided but predicted that the House would impeach Mr. Nixon.

"I would like to find a reason to vote against impeachment," he said. "Yet, it's a no-win situation. No matter how you vote, you antagonize constituents, so you might as well vote your convictions."

Representative John Rousseto, an ultraconservative California Republican, has not ruled out a possible vote for impeachment.

During a birthday eve celebration for Vice President Ford aboard Air Force Two a few days ago, Mr. Rousseto proposed a toast.

"Next time, to Air Force One," he said.

It was all in fun, of course, and Mr. Rousseto said this week that he was leaning against impeachment. However, he added, "I want to read all the evidence and hear all the arguments before I make up my mind."