

The Last Word On Impeachment

Washington

The final report of the House Judiciary Committee establishing the grounds for impeachment of former President Nixon was published yesterday.

The 528-page official document details the "clear and convincing evidence" on which the committee concluded that Mr. Nixon had obstructed justice in the Watergate coverup, had abused his presidential powers for his personal and political benefit, and had defied congressional demands for information.

The document also contains personal statements of views by all Judiciary Committee members except the chairman, Peter W. Rodino Jr. (Dem-N.J.).

The Republicans who vot-

ed against impeachment, but who supported Mr. Nixon's removal from office after he produced new evidence, said in a signed statement that Mr. Nixon had not been "hounded from office" by his critics.

Rather, the Republicans stated, the former President had "imprisoned the truth about his role in the Watergate coverup so long and so tightly within the solitude of his Oval Office that it could not be unleashed without destroying his presidency."

Had the House decided to proceed with an impeachment vote, the report would have provided the basis for the floor debate.

Since congressional leaders decide to terminate the impeachment proceedings after Mr. Nixon's resigna-

tion two weeks ago, the report has limited current value.

Nonetheless, the report is certain to have major historical significance.

It provides an official record of the evidence on which Mr. Nixon, had he not resigned his office, and had he been impeached by the House, would have been tried by the Senate.

It describes the standards of conduct on which Mr. Nixon was judged and which future presidents will be expected to follow.

And it sets precedents for impeachment proceedings by Congress in the future.

The House voted, 412 to 3, Tuesday to accept the report and to commend the committee for its work.

New York Times