

House Panel Votes To Oust Carrillo

By SAM KINCH JR.

Austin Bureau of The News
AUSTIN—For only the second time in Texas history, a House committee Wednesday voted to impeach a state district judge—would-be Duval County political boss O. P. Carrillo—for abusing his official position.

The only similar proceeding against a district judge, 44 years ago, produced an impeachment resolution by the House but acquittal by the Senate.

Carrillo was cited as "unfit" for his job because

of "gross violations" of the State Constitution, laws and code of judicial conduct.

The Carrillo impeachment resolution, approved unanimously by a special House committee, will be brought up for a House vote at a special session beginning Aug. 4. If the resolution is adopted, Carrillo will be suspended from office automatically pending trial by the Senate, probably in mid-September.

But even if the Senate convicts him, Carrillo will fight his removal in court

and will not give up his seat on the bench, Carrillo lawyer Arthur Mitchell told reporters. "He is going to stay in office and fight for the right to stay in office," Mitchell added.

Carrillo was judged by the committee to be probably guilty of a laundry list of offenses justifying his removal from the district court that includes politically troubled Duval County. But the committee action alone doesn't affect Carrillo's judicial status immediately.

Carrillo has refused three invitations to appear before the House committee. But Mitchell has been present for much of the time as an attorney for others involved in the probe and has offered some defensive documents in Carrillos behalf.

The 2-month investigation of Carrillo's behavior, both as judge and as political power-bloc leader, culminated in a final day of testimony that proved to be a dud. Carrillo's brother and two close associates, all of whom face criminal charges, took the 5th amendment right to avoid self-incrimination 62 times rather than answer questions about their dealings with the judge.

Carrillo is a former strongman in the tightly held political fiefdom ruled by the late "Duke of Duval" George Parr. Carrillos father, D. C. Chapa, had been a Parr operative for years before that.

But, following the lead of his brother ex-Rep. Oscar



Associated Press Wirephoto.

Ramiro Carrillo, Duval County commissioner, right, sits with his Austin attorney, Arthur Mitchell, at the impeachment committee

hearing for Carrillo's brother, O. P. Carrillo. Ramiro read the 5th Amendment to all questions asked except for his name and address.

Carrillo, the judge began splitting away from Parr and his heir-apparent, Duval County Judge Archer Parr, last year. The split was completed last spring when, with the two Parrs

convicted in federal court, the Carrillo family began open warfare for control of the Duval County governmental entities—from the courthouse to the water district and the schools.

George Parr committed suicide at the height of the battle.

Judge Carrillo's greatest personal coup came last week when he presided over the removal trial of Archer Parr from the county judge post.

In fact, Carrillo's refusal to step aside in the Parr case was one reason cited for Carrillo's removal by the House committee. That was one of 22 counts in the House committee resolution, which amounts to a proposed indictment for the House to consider.

Technically, the next step is for Carrillo to answer the impeachment charges. But his defense will be saved, for the most part, until the House meets to act on the resolution.

Carrillo's impeachment was based on activities ranging from using his judgeship to improperly influence a grand jury to stealing groceries from the county, from paying his ranch hands with public funds to kicking his enemies out of public offices, from using public equipment on his private property to filing a false financial statement with the secretary of state.

Judge Carrillo already is under federal indictment for income tax violations.