

ABA Chief's View On Agnew Case

Los Angeles

The president of the American Bar Association said here yesterday that he thinks Vice President Spiro Agnew can be indicted during his term of office by the federal grand jury that is investigating him in Baltimore.

But Chesterfield Smith said the vice president probably could not be brought to trial as long as he stayed in office.

He said Agnew could be indicted now and then tried later — after he is impeached, resigns from office or retires.

"My personal opinion is that the vice president can be indicted. But I do not believe, as a personal opinion, that he can be tried while in office. But he wouldn't escape permanently," Smith said.

Smith also said he did not think Agnew's lawyers would prevail in their attempts to

halt the grand jury investigation and force the case in to the House of Representatives.

The grand jury in Baltimore has begun hearing evidence against Agnew on possible violations of bribery, conspiracy, tax and extortion laws.

Smith said he felt the attempt to transfer the case to Congress was just one of "multiple options" being tried by the vice president's lawyers.

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