

Judge Takes Himself ^{post} Off Case ¹⁻²²⁻⁷⁶

U.S. District Court Chief Judge William B. Jones yesterday removed himself from further action in the criminal case brought by the Watergate Special Prosecution Force against millionaire oilman Armand Hammer.

Jones said he was basing his removal from the case on the "protracted" length of time being taken by Hammer's attempts to plead guilty. He referred the case to U.S. District Court Judge George L. Hart Jr.

Hart has set a hearing for 10 a.m. Friday, at which Hammer is expected to reiterate his guilty plea to three misdemeanor charges of violating election campaign financing laws in 1972.

Hammer first pleaded guilty before Jones on Oct. 1, but Jones later withdrew that plea after the 77-year-old Hammer wavered in his version of the alleged crime.