



AP Wirephoto

SENATOR BAKER (LEFT), DEPUTY COUNSEL RUFUS EDMISTEN AND SENATOR ERVIN
Story-telling and laughter broke a long, serious discussion of the Senate Watergate committee

Senators Swap Down-Home Stories

Laugh-In at Hearings

Washington

Senator Sam J. Ervin Jr. (Dem-N.C.) and Senator Howard H. Baker Jr. (Rep - Tenn.) swapped down-home stories about lawyers yesterday at the televised Watergate hearings.

After a long and serious legal discussion about admissibility of hearsay testimony, Ervin, the Senate Watergate committee chairman, said he was reminded of a story about a constituent who had visited the Watauga county courthouse in Boone, N.C.

Later the man was asked what had happened, and he said, "Some of the lawyers were objecting and some of

the lawyers were excepting, and the costs were piling up."

"If it's story-telling time, then the chairman will have to bear the consequences of the example he's just set," said Baker, the committee vice chairman, who offered his own tale.

He said a lawyer of his acquaintance in Scott county, Tenn., had been asked to defend a man who said he'd just shot someone.

After agreeing to defend the man, the lawyer asked, "Did you kill him?"

"No, I just wounded him," the prospective defendant said.

"Well, just remember, he'll be an awfully hard wit-

ness against you," the lawyer observed.

As the committee returned to its business, Senator Daniel K. Inouye (Dem-Hawaii) took his turn questioning the witness, ousted White House counsel John W. Dean III.

"I regret I have no Hawaiian stories to tell," he said.

Ervin later turned another serious moment to humor after Inouye raised questions about an article in the Charlotte Observer of last May 17, saying the then presidential chief of staff, H. R. Haldeman, had asked top North Carolina Republicans to "dig up something" to discredit Ervin. Dead said he knew nothing about it.

Ervin first read newspaper quotations from Charles J. Jonas Jr., who had been Mr. Nixon's North Carolina campaign manager in 1968 and 1972, saying it would be an "impossible task" to discredit Ervin, who Jonas said "has a record of impeccable honesty and integrity."

Then the 76-year-old Ervin drew laughter by saying:

"When I was asked about this I said it didn't disturb me at all because . . . I deeply regretted to say that all the indiscretions I had committed were barred by the statute of limitations and the passage of time, and that I had lost my capacity to commit further indiscretions." *Associated Press*