

Watergate Influence Seen in Court Cases

BOSTON, Sept. 21 (UPI) — Chesterfield H. Smith, president of the American Bar Association, said today it will be "extremely difficult, if not impossible" for anyone charged with crimes that were testified to at the Watergate hearings to get a fair trial.

Smith, a trial lawyer from Lakeland, Fla., said he believes "it's going to be extremely difficult, if not impossible," to impanel a fair and impartial jury if such people as John N. Mitchell, John W. Dean, III, John D. Ehrlichman and others "are ever tried for crimes that were testified to" at the Watergate committee hearings.

At a news conference upon his arrival at Logan International Airport here, Smith said that he believes President Nixon, according to his own statement, "will honor any definitive judgment" of the Supreme Court regarding tape recordings.

However, he said, "I think if he does not honor it, that the Congress will start impeachment proceedings."

Asked about the possible future status of Vice President Agnew, Smith said it was his view "that the Vice President, as well as other officers, cannot be indicted and tried without first being impeached as long as he remains in office."