

ABA Chief Talks Here About Cox

By William Thomas

The dismissal of Archibald Cox as special Watergate prosecutor was "a flaunting of the law by the President of the United States," the president of the American Bar Association declared here yesterday.

Chesterfield Smith, a Florida attorney, said that while he believed that "executive privilege is important to this nation" most people now believe the President "raised it to obstruct justice and frustrate the courts."

Smith's criticisms of certain actions of the President were made before a pre-convention clinic of the annual meeting of the National Council for the Social Studies.

The remarks were greeted with applause from the audience.

Smith again urged appointment of a special prosecutor by Congress.

"Nobody should ever appoint someone to investigate himself," Smith remarked. "If the current prosecutor, Leon Jaworski, exonerates the President, 'what will people say? They'll say, 'Well, the President got himself a good boy, didn't he?'"

Smith also repeated his urging that the House of Representatives begin impeachment proceedings so that the evidence against the president can be properly examined.

"I think," he said, "it is the only way to restore leadership . . . If he can't establish it he should not lead. We don't want three more years of what we've had in the last six months.

"I am not suggesting that the House of Representatives impeach. I am suggesting that the House of Representatives should decide."

Smith told the gathering that "Many actions will be necessary before the confidence of the American people can be restored, but no long-term effort is more important in my judgement than civic education."