

Burger Says Court Will Rule On Watergate Cases Promptly

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WASHINGTON, June 12—Chief Justice Warren E. Burger said today it was a "myth" that the Supreme Court took a four-month holiday in the summer and would thus not be available to decide Watergate cases promptly as they may arise in the coming months.

In a sharply worded letter to Senator Mike Mansfield, the Chief Justice maintained that he and his colleagues "do not cease work on business of the Supreme Court simply because we do not hold regular sessions during the summer."

"You can be assured," Chief Justice Burger told the Montana Democrat, "that now, as in the past, the Justices of the Supreme Court always remain available" to resolve legal disputes that arise between the Court's adjournment, now scheduled for mid-July, and the opening of the new term in October.

Two weeks ago Senator Mansfield, the Democratic floor leader, asked the Court to forgo its "four-month recess . . . so that there will be no unconscionable delays in consideration of Watergate or related matters which might be placed before it."

In his response, Chief Justice

Burger did not mention Watergate or impeachment. He alluded only somewhat cryptically to "the case set for July 8 this year," which is the dispute between President Nixon and Leon Jaworski, the special Watergate prosecutor, over a White House refusal to surrender tape recordings for use in the cover-up trial.

And he declared:

"The 'myth' that Justices have a 'four-month holiday' — or even two — is the equivalent of measuring the work of members of Congress by the hours spent on the floor of either house or the number of days of sessions, both 'tips of the iceberg' of your work."

Briton Held as Smuggler

Elizah Getter, a 22-year-old native of London, was arraigned yesterday before Magistrate Max Schiffman in Federal Court Brooklyn, on charges of smuggling diamonds into this country. According to Assistant United States Attorney Paul Lazarus, the defendant arrived here Monday and was found to be carrying three cut diamonds valued at \$67,500. He was released in \$10,000 bail for a hearing June 21.