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**Justices' Ruling on Tapes
May Follow Vote by Panel**

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WASHINGTON, July 19—The Supreme Court may be unable or unwilling to hand down a decision in the Nixon tapes case until after the House Judiciary committee has voted late next week whether to recommend the impeachment of President Nixon.

Whichever way the Justices decide, their ruling is expected to have a substantial impact on the impeachment proceedings, either upholding the President's unlimited concept of his authority or requiring him to surrender evidence that might further incriminate him and his former colleagues.

The case was argued on July 8, and Court officials said today that a decision could not

be expected until next Tuesday at the earliest. One source predicted that the decision might not be handed down next week, which would postpone it until after the Judiciary Committee voting is over.

"I can't exclude that possibility, although I'm not signaling it," Barrett McGurn, the Court information officer, said.

Congressional leaders believe that a Supreme Court ruling against the President could influence several undecided Republican members of the committee to vote for impeachment. In turn, the number of Republicans who support impeachment at the committee level is expected to have considerable influence on the size of the Republican vote in the House.

Conversely, if the Justices support President Nixon's refusal to surrender 64 more White House tapes to Federal District Judge John J. Sirica

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and order Mr. Nixon's name stricken from the Watergate cover-up indictment, the decision could stiffen committee resistance to impeachment, possibly even decisively.

As is traditional at the high court, there was no official explanation as to why the ruling was being held up.

'Nothing Ready'

Asked why no decision had been reached, Mr. McGurn replied, "The case continues to remain before the Justices, and there is nothing ready for announcement."

A number of Washington lawyers familiar with the case, while acknowledging its explosive political character, maintain that the legal issues involved are relatively simple and open to speedy resolution.

When a similar tapes case was headed for the high court last year, Chief Justice Warren E. Burger told aides that the problems it posed should not take long to resolve.

One story circulated this week in authoritative legal circles was that a majority opinion draft had been completed and endorsed at least

Chief Burger to persuade one or more of his colleagues to join him in a minority opinion supporting the President. Associate Justice Harry A. Blackmun, under this version, has already agreed to do so.

Questioned as to the accuracy of this report, Mr. McGurn said, "I know nothing whatsoever to support such a statement."

Some Court observers believe that there will be great pressure on the Justices to deliver a unanimous decision, if a clear majority favors ruling against the President, to discourage Mr. Nixon from attempting to defy the Court's order, as White House aides have suggested he might do.

No Confirmation

Thus, if Chief Justice Burger proved unable to muster anything stronger than a two-Justice minority among the eight men who heard the case, he might choose to join the majority, perhaps with an opinion concurring on somewhat different legal grounds.

It is not uncommon for the Justices to shift their position on a case while it is still pending before the Court, even upon occasion converting a minority into a majority thereby. Such

might possibly remain unresolved when the full House was deciding whether to vote a bill of impeachment.

Some political analysts believe that President Nixon has been deliberately encouraging the public to think that he would defy the Supreme Court to promote a sympathetic reaction when he agrees to obey. Others believe there is a possibility that he will risk something less than full compliance with the Court's order.

House leaders are convinced that defiance of the Supreme Court by the President would virtually assure adoption of a bill of impeachment, if only on that count alone. Even if the committee had completed its action on the charges, it could always reconvene and add a new count to be considered on the floor.

Legal authorities also believe that the committee could amend its bill of impeachment by adding one or more counts based on evidence that became available after the House floor vote, and that such an amended bill would be properly before the senate at any Presidential trial there.

Bar to New Evidence

Such a situation could arise if the Supreme Court orders