

ABA Chief's View of

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Lawyer good-guys outnumber lawyer bad-guys in the totality of the Watergate scandals, the president of the American Bar Association said here yesterday.

As a result, continued Chesterfield H. Smith, the legal profession's public-im-

age probably has improved, despite the numerous lawyers involved in the negative side of Watergate.

"Following the initial shock of Watergate, this has been a very good year for the legal profession," Smith told 264 trial judges attending a summer session of the National College of the State Judiciary.

"Lawyers and judges are

becoming heroes for the good they're doing to clear this up."

Smith said U.S. District Judge John Sirica, whose early decisions gave the Watergate investigation legal momentum, is "now better known than Hank Aaron."

For that matter, he added, the President's defense counsel, James St. Clair, is "better known than Billie

Lawyers and Watergate

Jean King."

Smith said "the thing to remember about Watergaters" is that while they held law degrees, for the most part they were not practicing law during their involvement in the affair.

"A law degree is not a mystical thing," he said. "We talk a lot about ethics in law schools, but it doesn't always take."

He noted that state bar associations have disbarred many "Watergaters."

But he said it would be "presumptuous" for the bar to consider disbarring President Nixon at this point. The correct approach is to await the outcome of congressional inquiries into possible impeachment, he said.

If these proceedings re-

veal the President to have been guilty of a crime, then "he should be disbarred."

Smith said he was pleased with the Justice Department's use of plea bargaining in the case of former Vice President Spiro Agnew.

"I don't know what price prosecutors paid, but I would've paid more, whatever the price, to get the vice president out of office."