

# N. Y. Bar Assn. Urges Outside Probe

WASHINGTON — (UPI)

— Prominent attorneys have urged President Nixon to take the Watergate investi-

gation out of the hands of the Justice Department by appointing an independent lawyer who would be "without fear or favor."

In a letter delivered to the White House yesterday, the prestigious 10,000-member New York City Bar Association said governmental control over the Watergate probe "has resulted in justifiable doubt concerning pos-

sible conflict-of-interest, as well as problems relating to professional ethics."

Orrville H. Schell Jr., president of the nation's oldest bar organization, said in the letter:

"We feel sure that it must have occurred to you that lawyers and laymen alike would have greater confidence if all proceedings were under the independent and direct control of an eminent lawyer, who has no connection with the Department of Justice or any of the persons under investigation."

## Supporters

The request by the New York lawyers group was backed by Chesterfield Smith, who will take over as president of the American Bar Association in August, and former ABA President Leon Jaworski.

The letter was released shortly before a Justice Department spokesman confirmed that transcripts of all Watergate grand jury testimony are being provided to

Assistant Attorney General Henry E. Petersen, who was named by the President nine days ago to coordinate the government investigation of the volatile case after Attorney General Richard G. Kleindienst disqualified himself.

Schell told Nixon in his letter that "the integrity of the entire process of justice is at stake."

"We therefore urge you," Schell said, "to appoint such

special counsel from amongst the numerous leaders of the bar, who would accept such an assignment and discharge their obligation without fear or favor."

## 'Major Crisis'

Smith said at his home in Lakeland, Fla., that the Watergate scandal has developed into a "major crisis which has risen above people or personalities."

Speaking for himself, Smith said:

"I think for the public to be satisfied there needs to be tough, decisive action by somebody that is recognized to be absolutely impartial . . . brought in from the outside."

In Houston, Jaworski, who served on the President's crime commission in the mid-1960s, said "It well might be that someone serving in that capacity (independent) would be an appropriate solution."