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Sen. Weicker Assails
'Gutter Goals' in Politics

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Sen. Lowell Weicker Jr. (R-Conn.) took time out from the Senate hearings yesterday to urge people "to do a little choosing, not as to the guilt, innocence or credibility of the participants in the drama known as Watergate — but as to what is important in America."

"We're asked to accept garbage politics and gutter goals as a realistic standard . . . The rationale, everybody did and does it," Weicker said at a National Press Club luncheon.

Weicker charged, "Those who directed the improprieties and illegalities apparently did so in the knowledge that even if caught, no accounting would be called for by the American people."

"Why? Because incursion on the Constitution would be explained in the name of security," the 42-year-old Republican said.

"What do we want, a presidency or a democracy?" Weicker asked. He answered himself by saying, "My oath of office was to the constitution of the United States, not to the President."

Weicker continued, "Even now, people are mesmerized by the presidency concept. They say that where Richard Nixon ends up determines whether the Watergate hearings succeeded or failed. They say whether the

President is impeached or not is the issue.

"Well, if the concern is a caring for democracy, then Richard Nixon is no more, no less important than Bernard Barker or John Mitchell," Weicker said.

Answering questions from the capacity audience, Weicker said he is pressing for the Senate Watergate Committee to continue its hearings past the planned Aug. 3 break "and forget the summer recess . . . The only responsible way is to finish this thing."

Weicker said he has support on the seven-member Senate Watergate Committee for continuing the hearings beyond Aug. 3, but didn't say how much. Sen. Sam Ervin (D-N.C.), the committee chairman, and others have said they favor the recess.

"I wish the President would understand his own country to the extent that we are not a vindictive people, that everybody is not out to get everybody else," Weicker said.

He said that he is showing his loyalty as a Republican by pressing for answers on Watergate, adding, "The time has come to swing in there and swing hard."

Weicker said "unequivocally" that he has no presidential ambitions. "I don't think anyone should benefit from Watergate," he said.