

# Proposal for Curbing Presidential Power

Santa Barbara

The creation of an independent office of a "counselor general" to check abuses of presidential power has been recommended by some of the nation's top scholars.

Twenty participants in a week-long constitutional conference, many of them former government advisers, discussed numerous proposals to control the growing power of the presidency.

Virtually all participants were critical of the Nixon administration and its role in the Watergate scandal. The conference was called at the request of the Senate Watergate Committee.

They agreed on at least one measure — the creation of an independent office

which would have the primary job of curbing abuses of presidential power.

The only vote against the proposal was cast by Frank K. Kelly, vice president of the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions, where the conference was held. He maintained the plan would put power in the hands of another "elite."

Professor Paul Mishkin of the University of California at Berkeley proposed the creation by constitutional amendment of the office of an independent "counselor general." He said the presence of an officer to receive complaints about the president would reassure the public and civil servants "who want to resist but feel they have nowhere to go."

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