

First Step

Move to Disbar Nixon in State

Los Angeles

The decision to present to a California Bar committee evidence that could lead to the disbarment of President Nixon as a California lawyer has been reached, State Bar President Seth M. Hufstedler revealed yesterday.

Hufstedler said the presentation will go forward independent of impeachment proceedings.

He estimated it will take three or four months to determine whether Mr. Nixon will be formally notified to show cause why he should not be disciplined.

"It is conceivable the President might urge that he is exempt," Hufstedler said. "However, our counsel has reviewed the matter and has given the opinion he is not immune from disciplinary proceedings."

Hufstedler said an extensive amount of material has been collected by the State Bar during the 11 months that Mr. Nixon and six other California lawyers have been under investigation for Watergate-related activities.

The material has come

from various hearings, including a large amount from the House Judiciary Committee's impeachment inquiry, and from special prosecutor Leon Jaworski's office, Hufstedler said.

Hufstedler said the evidence must be organized and researched before presentation to a local bar committee for a preliminary hearing.

The committee then will determine — with respect to each issue on which evidence has been gathered — to go forward with a formal order, ask for further investigation or drop it, Hufstedler said.

Mr. Nixon would have an opportunity to present a defense.

Exactly what issues will be placed before the committee is being kept confidential.

A recommendation for disbarment or suspension from law practice would go before the State Bar disciplinary board and eventually to the State Supreme Court for final action. It becomes public only when it reaches the court.

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