

Professor Bickel of Yale Dies

New Haven

Yale University law professor Alexander Bickel, one of the nation's outstanding constitutional law experts, died yesterday.

He was 49.

A Yale spokesman said Bickel, who successfully defended the New York Times in the Pentagon Papers case, had been confined to his home with cancer.

In Washington, Chief Justice Warren Burger circulated a memo to the other members of the Supreme Court describing Bickel's death as "a great loss to the law and the country."

Bickel's legal views often had national impact. The Nixon administration was guided by his thesis that racially balanced schools may be desirable but are not feasible.

A native of Romania whose family immigrated to New York City, Bickel was consulted on key issues during the Watergate scandals. One of his most controversial opinions was that former President Nixon had a legal right to fire special Watergate prosecutor Archibald Cox.

Bickel said Mr. Nixon had the constitutional right to



ALEXANDER BICKEL
Constitutional expert

fire Cox, a Harvard University law professor, because as a prosecutor he was an instrument of the White House.

A member of the Yale faculty since 1956, Bickel disagreed with President Ford's decision to grant Mr. Nixon a full pardon for any crimes committed during his administration, but he said at the time, "Nixon's resignation is essential to restoring stability in the nation and a properly functioning government."

Bickel was one of the legal experts involved in the aftermath of the assassination of President Kennedy. He said the Warren Commission did a good job in its investigation of the tragedy but it left some loose ends.

A.P. & U.P.