

# Ex-Justice Urges Videotape Trials

By Maitland Zane

Retired U.S. Supreme Court Justice Tom Clark said yesterday he wishes former President Nixon's testimony had been videotaped for use at the Watergate coverup trial.

"I would feel better about it," Clark told newsmen after a luncheon speech to a Legal Communications Workshop in which he suggested that videotaping trials "could improve the administration of justice."

Clark said he was not criticizing U.S. District Judge John Sirica's decision not to send lawyers to San Clemente to take a taped deposition from Mr. Nixon.

"I'm not saying there will be a reversal, but I would have preferred full disclosure," he said.

Clark and his son, Ramsey, both served as U.S. Attorney General, the father for President Truman, the son for President Johnson.

Tom Clark, now 75 and embarked on a second career as a federal trial and appellate judge, is spry, white-haired and folksy, with a grandfatherly way and a Texas wit.

He urged that the "fine" San Francisco Bar Association equip itself with videotape equipment and, to get lawyers' reactions, allow them to tape depositions free of charge.

He also urged that whole trials be recorded on videotape, perhaps in the modern new courtroom at the University of the Pacific's McGeorge School of Law in Sacramento, where mock trials are held every Friday and Saturday.

Videotaping whole trials is presently legal in only one state, Ohio, but Clark thinks other states should permit it.

The trouble is, he said, that while "lawyers are 100 per cent in favor of progress, they're 1000 per cent against change."

He thinks videotaping would save time of judges and juries, that it would improve lawyers' presentations of their cases and that "it would probably even help the adversary process."

More than 80 lawyers, psychologists and educators attended the conference, which will end today at the PSA San Franciscan Hotel.