

A Hard-Working Legal Adviser

John Michael Doar

By the close of the normal business day yesterday, or what would have been the close to most people, John M. Doar, the new legal adviser to the House committee inquiring into the possible impeachment of President Nixon, was forging ahead in a rigorous, self-imposed

Man
in the
News

schedule of interviewing potential members for his staff. In an apparently characteristic move for him, he attacked the task fresh out of the Capitol Hill news conference at which his appointment had been announced and worked right into the night.

Mr. Doar, a lean, curly haired Midwesterner who has served as an Assistant Attorney General under three Administrations, was selected for the post by Representative Peter W. Rodino Jr., a New Jersey Democrat, from among more than 100 candidates recommended by a broad sampling of the legal profession. Mr. Rodino, chairman of the House Judiciary Committee, which will conduct the inquiry, said that he had been impressed by the fact that Mr. Doar's name had cropped up repeatedly in the recommendations offered to him.

Asked at the news conference how he felt about the appointment, the new counsel, who described himself as a long-time Republican now registered as an independent, replied, "I did not volunteer for it, nor did I seek the position."

Phone Call From Laird

Despite his identification with the Republican party—a connection that is expected to bring stronger credibility to his role as legal adviser to the House panel — Mr. Doar has been more closely linked with two Democratic Administrations.

Nevertheless, the first telephone call to the committee chairman praising Mr. Doar's selection came from the White House, from Melvin Laird, the President's outgoing domestic affairs adviser.

Mr. Doar joined the Justice Department in 1960 in the last year of the Eisenhower Administration and



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John M. Doar, left, and Peter W. Rodino Jr., chairman of the House Judiciary Committee, during yesterday's announcement that Mr. Doar would be the committee's special counsel for the impeachment investigation.

became known for his attempts to smooth racial conflicts. He was retained by the Kennedy Administration and served well into the Johnson Administration, rising to the position of Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights.

As president of the New York City Board of Education in late 1968 and 1969, he presided over one of the most tumultuous periods of the city school system. He took a firm position in favor of decentralized control of school districts in the face of a bitter, months-long battle that disrupted school operations.

An associate of Mr. Doar's in that period, who said that he agreed with him on most issues, described Mr. Doar's

attention to details and fact-finding as relentless.

"Once he's made up his mind, after satisfying himself on every fact, he's totally sure he's right," he said, but added that he was not sure that quality was completely laudable.

"It's always dangerous to feel sure you're right," he said.

Mr. Doar resigned last week as the director of the Bedford Stuyvesant Development and Services Corporation in Brooklyn, one of the largest such projects in the country. It was considered a sensitive position for a person not black and working in a mostly black community. He held the position for six years.