

Jaworski Bows Out Of 4 Cases

Washington

In four instances in the Watergate investigations, special prosecutor Leon Jaworski has withdrawn from personal involvement in cases because of possible conflicts of interest.

All involve connections to his old Houston law firm, Fulbright, Crooker and Jaworski. When Jaworski took over the Watergate investigations on November 5, he cut all ties to the firm, which is one of the nation's largest.

In three of the cases from which Jaworski disqualified himself because of possible bias, the Houston firm represents those under investigation.

In the fourth, the connection is less direct. The law firm represents a client who is in a lawsuit with a possible Watergate defendant.

When Jaworski took the job, he announced immediately to the staff that he would excuse himself from the case against a subsidiary of Ashland Oil, Inc. and Oren F. Atkins, chairman of the company.

The case had already been prepared when Jaworski came to Washington to succeed Archibald Cox as special prosecutor. On November 13, Atkins pleaded "no contest" to charges of making an illegal contribution to the Nixon campaign in 1972 and was fined \$1000.

The Ashland subsidiary, Ashland Petroleum Gabon, Inc., pleaded guilty to the same charges and was fined \$5000.

Two other cases involving possible defendants and the house law firm have not been made public. They are still under investigation and covered by the secrecy surrounding the investigation, according to James Doyle, spokesman for Jaworski.

The fourth case involves a Houston-based farm group called the Marketing Assistance Plan, which is represented by Fulbright, Crooker and Jaworski.

Marketing Assistance has asked the federal courts to stop the larger Associated Milk Producers, Inc. of San Antonio from taking its members away.

Associated Milk Producers is under investigation by the special prosecutor for a pledge of \$2 million to President Nixon's re-election campaign made in 1970 along with a request to limit imports of competing foreign milk products.

Associated is also being investigated for an alleged pledge of money related to a plea of raising milk support prices.

Doyle said the special prosecutor has excused himself from the dairy industry investigation until such time as the lawsuit between Marketing Assistance and Associated is settled.

In all four cases, the over-all leadership of the investigations has been under Henry S. Ruth Jr., the deputy special prosecutor.

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