

Jaworski Tells of First Hint on Nixon

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WASHINGTON, Oct. 22— Less than two months after he became special Watergate prosecutor, Leon Jaworski reached the conclusion, he says, that Richard M. Nixon was involved in the Watergate cover-up.

That conclusion, Mr. Jaworski indicated in an interview yesterday, colored his thinking during most of his term in office and helped in two of his most crucial decisions: the naming of the former President as an unindicted co-conspirator when the cover-up indictment was returned and the pursuit of the tape recording that ultimately forced Mr. Nixon's resignation.

The conclusion was reached in late December, 1973, only two months after the so-called "Saturday night massacre," in which his predecessor, Archibald Cox, was dismissed by President Nixon because he, too, would not drop his quest for the tapes.

What prompted Mr. Jaworski's suspicion of Mr. Nixon, which he maintains has now been confirmed, was his initial review of those same tapes.

"What first raised my belief that there was culpability on his part was when I listened to the March 1 tape in late December," Mr. Jaworski said.

Haig Told of Suspicion

Mr. Jaworski said he was in regular touch last fall with Gen. Alexander M. Haig Jr., Mr. Nixon's chief of staff. It was General Haig who in late October persuaded Mr. Jaworski to take the position vacated by Mr. Cox, and Mr. Jaworski was sworn in on Nov. 5.

After listening to the tapes obtained through Mr. Cox's subpoena of the previous July Mr. Jaworski said, he reached General Haig and "I told him that the March 21 tape, plus some other information we had from other sources, caused me great concern, and I suspected

his Mr. Nixon's culpability."

Mr. Jaworski said that General Haig already knew of the contents of that March 21, 1973, tape recording—in which Mr. Nixon and two aides discuss ways to keep the Watergate affair from engulfing the White House and that the General had checked out its ramifications. "He said he had been advised by counsel—he didn't say who it was—that it did not constitute culpability," Mr. Jaworski said.

But Mr. Jaworski said there was no doubt in his own mind,

and he advised General Haig at that point "to consult with the best criminal attorney he could find" regarding the meaning of the March 21 tape.

A Period of Cooperation

The dismissal of Mr. Cox caused a massive outcry of protest around the country. In response Mr. Nixon, in a demonstration of cooperation with the special prosecutors, gave up the tapes Mr. Cox had subpoenaed. In addition Mr. Nixon voluntarily gave Mr. Jaworski a number of tapes and documents.