

Second Candidate Turns Down Post of Watergate Prosecutor

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WASHINGTON, May 16 — Warren Christopher, one of the men on the list of Attorney General-designate Elliot L. Richardson for the job of special prosecutor in the Watergate investigation turned down the job today because, he said, he would not have been granted enough independence. He was the second man to do so.

"It didn't seem to me there was any reasonable probability could, even after more discussions, achieve the requisite independence," Mr. Christopher declared. He was interviewed at Dulles International Airport before he flew home to Los Angeles.

Mr. Christopher met with Mr. Richardson today. The two men till on Mr. Richardson's list—David W. Peck, former president of the New York State Appellate division, and William H. Erickson, a justice on the Colorado Supreme Court—were to meet with Mr. Richardson afterward.

A spokesman for Mr. Richardson said that it would be at

least Friday before he could announce his choice.

In four days of testimony before the Senate Judiciary Committee, Mr. Richardson has insisted that he would have to maintain "ultimate responsibility" for the Watergate investigation. Several committee members have challenged that position and have argued that the special prosecutor should have total control over the Watergate investigation and prosecution.

Yesterday, Judge Harold R. Tyler Jr. of the United States District Court for the Southern District of New York, turned down the prosecutor job because he was unwilling to give up his judgeship. He was Mr. Richardson's first choice for the position.

Mr. Christopher, a deputy attorney general in the Johnson Administration, is a highly respected lawyer who has been praised by several Democrats on the Senate Judiciary Committee.

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