

Watergate Prosecutor Vows a Thorough Job

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Washington

Archibald Cox, Harvard University law professor, assured senators yesterday that he would not be intimidated as special prosecutor in the Watergate affair and would follow leads to President Nixon, if necessary.

Cox, a Democrat who served five years as Solicitor General under Presidents Kennedy and Johnson, said he was, in his words, overawed by the guidelines for the job as special prosecutor as revised over the weekend by Attorney General-designate Elliot L. Richardson.

"I'm more overwhelmed by its (the guidelines) scope than by its limitations," Cox told the Senate Judiciary Committee. "I can't see anything in it that would prevent me from doing the job."

Senator Robert C. Byrd (Dem-W.Va.), asked Cox if there were anything in the guidelines that would restrict his investigation of the Watergate affair and other alleged illicit political activities of last year's presidential campaign.

Before he could answer, Byrd said: "Would you be inhibited from going beyond the IOC (wiretap) statute and follow any trail?"

"I can promise the committee that," replied Cox.

Byrd: "Even if that trail leads to the Oval Office of the White House itself?"

"Wherever that trail may lead," said Cox.

Afterward, Byrd said he would like to see the Senate confirm Richardson's nomination before it starts its Memorial Day recess late Thursday.

The morning session of Richardson's fifth day be-

fore the committee was spent primarily on explaining the agreement between the attorney general-designate and Cox, whose appointment Richardson announced last Friday.

Cox said he was satisfied with his agreement with

Richardson and did not believe the guidelines needed to be broadened.

"I'm going to have the whip hand," he said.

"And you won't hesitate to use it?" asked Byrd.

"No, sir," came the reply quickly.

Cox said it also was clear to him that he did not have any obligation to advise Richardson on matters of the investigation if he did not want to.

He said, too, that he would not supply information of the investigation to President Nixon and did not believe the chief executive would ask for data.

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