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Robert H. Bork speaking during news session yesterday

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Bork Asserts He'd Press White House for Evidence

By JOHN M. CREWDSON

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WASHINGTON, Oct. 24 — Acting Attorney General Robert H. Bork made clear today his intentions to take any necessary steps, including judicial action, to obtain evidence from the White House if it was needed to prosecute the Watergate case.

"I am not going to walk out of this job, out of this town, as the man who in any way compromised any investigation," the tall, red-bearded Yale law professor declared at his first news conference since taking over the Justice Department four days ago.

Mr. Bork said that, on the

basis of a conversation with President Nixon on Saturday night, shortly before he became Acting Attorney General, he believed that he was free to conduct the Watergate inquiries "the way I think they ought to be done."

He said that the President had told him, "I understand that you are devoted to the principle of law, and I want you to carry out these investigations and prosecutions fully."

That same evening the President discharged Archibald Cox as the Justice Department's

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special Watergate prosecutor after Mr. Cox declared his intention not to abide by Mr. Nixon's order to make no further efforts to obtain White House tape recordings or documents.

Mr. Bork said today, "To tell the truth, it didn't occur to me that I was bound [by the same command] because it wasn't directed to me."

It is "apparent," Mr. Bork went on, "that once I go into this position I have to have the evidence to carry out these prosecutions fully."

Mr. Nixon agreed yesterday to turn over to the Federal District Court here nine tape recordings made in his office over the last year that Mr. Cox had sought to use as evidence before the grand jury investigating the burglary of the Democrats' Watergate offices and the subsequent cover-up.

It was unclear until today whether Mr. Bork, who took charge of the Watergate investigations after Mr. Cox's departure, would be inclined to seek other tapes or documents if it became evident they were needed to establish possible criminal misconduct by White House aides.

"I trust it will not come to the problem of having to litigate [for such materials] because I anticipate cooperation," Mr. Bork said.

Need for Procedures Seen

He said that the White House had agreed to the need for "regularized procedures" for obtaining evidence relating to the President and his staff without recourse to the courts. But he said he had not yet had time to draft the procedures.

"Right now, I seem to be Attorney General, Deputy Attorney General and Solicitor General, and it's not working too well," he said, sounding as weary as he looked. He was Solicitor General, in charge of pleading the Government's cases in the Supreme Court, when he was elevated to his present post.

Mr. Bork said that he was not involved in the discussions last week between former Attorney General Elliot L. Richardson, his predecessor, and Mr. Cox over a possible compromise on the former special prosecutor's efforts to obtain the nine White House tapes.

He was in his office Saturday morning, writing a letter to some schoolchildren on "the importance of Bill of Rights Day," he said, when Mr. Richardson informed him of the situation after Mr. Cox declared his intention to disobey the President.

"As the afternoon wore on, it became clear that Mr. Richardson would be asked to discharge Mr. Cox," Mr. Bork recounted. "He asked Mr. Ruckelshaus if he could do it. He said he could not."

"I was asked if I could," Mr. Bork said, adding that, after a moment's thought, "I decided I was not in the special position that Mr. Richardson and Mr. Ruckelshaus found themselves."

Mr. Richardson resigned and William D. Ruckelshaus was dismissed as Deputy Attorney General over their refusal to discharge Mr. Cox.

Chiropractor for 50 Years

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. (AP) — Clyde Green, 73 years old, a chiropractor with the oldest license in the state still in effect, has marked the 50th anniversary of his career.