

'Tapes Are My Top Priority'

Houston

Newly appointed special Watergate prosecutor Leon Jaworski said yesterday investigation into two missing presidential tapes would receive his office's top priority.

"I plan to go to the tapes matter first," Jaworski said in a news conference following the announcement that he would replace ousted prosecutor Archibald Cox.

"I didn't even know until just now which particular ones were missing," he said. "I tell you frankly that that wasn't discussed yesterday (with acting attorney general Robert H. Bork)."

Jaworski, a 68-year-old Houston trial lawyer with close ties to conservative factions of the Texas Democratic party, said he would begin work in Washington Monday.

"The American people are entitled to have some answers without waiting forever and I intend to get those answers," he said.

Jaworski, a former Ameri-

can Bar Association president and an adviser and confidant to the late president Lyndon B. Johnson, said he had insisted on complete independence before accepting the job.

"There are no restraints on what I'll be permitted to do," he said. "I am not prevented from doing anything that I think needs doing."

Jaworski, who served as a prosecutor during the Nuremberg trials following World War II, said he was first approached about the job as special prosecutor last spring, about three weeks before Cox accepted the post. He said he didn't want it then.

"I did not think at the time the independence was there that is there now," he said. "The discussion (in Washington Wednesday) convinced me that I can proceed without any restraint. And I am convinced I can and I will so remain convinced until something comes along that will cause me to change my mind."

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