

Prosecutor Asks Ervin's Panel To Delay the Watergate Report

WASHINGTON, Jan. 31 (UPI)—The special Watergate prosecutor, Leon Jaworski, has asked the Senate Watergate committee not to issue its final report as scheduled to avoid endangering upcoming trials.

Sources close to the committee said Mr. Jaworski—as his own request—had met with the committee chairman, Senator Sam J. Ervin, Democrat of North Carolina, and the vice chairman, Senator Howard H. Baker Jr., Republican of Tennessee, to “express concern” about the committee’s final report, due to be made public no later than Feb. 28.

One source, who asked not to be identified, said Mr. Jaworski apparently was worried that the report would “name names” and state conclusions about responsibility for wrongdoing that could prejudice future prosecutions.

Meeting Confirmed

Senator Baker and Senator Ervin immediately called an emergency meeting of the seven-man committee for 5 P.M., to discuss Mr. Jaworski’s request, but it was canceled at the last minute when several members were unable to attend. The meeting was rescheduled for next Wednesday.

Senator Baker confirmed that he, Senator Ervin and the two top committee counsels had met with Mr. Jaworski, but he would go no further.

“I will not confirm the contents of the conversation,” Senator Baker said.

Senator Ervin declined to be interviewed, as did three other members of the committee who could be reached.

A spokesman for Mr. Jaworski refused comment.

Major new Watergate indictments are expected by the end of February. Earlier this week, Mr. Jaworski persuaded Florida officials to install their conspiracy investigation of three key figures in the bugging scandal until March 1 to avoid prejudicing his cases.

One committee source said he had been troubled by Mr. Jaworski’s request to postpone issuance of the final report, but said the panel might have to comply.

“If the special prosecutor thinks this could prejudice these cases or anyone’s right to a fair trial, what choice do we have?” he said.

Last summer, the then special prosecutor, Archibald Cox, went to court to try to block the committee from calling major witnesses at its nationally televised hearings, also on the ground that it could hamper the prosecution. His demand was denied.

At the time, Senator Ervin said it was more important for the truth to come out than for persons to be sent to prison.