

Jaworski Has No Plans To Challenge the Pardon

Washington

Leon Jaworski, the special Watergate prosecutor, apparently has no plans to mount a legal challenge to the validity of the unconditional pardon that President Ford yesterday gave Richard M. Nixon, according to John Barker, a spokesman for Jaworski.

The special prosecutor "accepts the decision," Barker said in a telephone interview. "He thinks it's within the President's power to do it. His feeling is that the President is exercising his lawful power, and he accepts it."

Barker added that Jaworski had not been consulted in advance on the matter by either Mr. Ford or White House lawyers, and learned of the President's intention less than an hour before the decision was announced.

The "full, free and absolute" pardon signed by Mr. Ford yesterday applies, without specifying them, to

"all offenses against the United States" which Mr. Nixon "has committed or may have committed" during his nearly five years and seven months in the White House.

In the absence of a challenge, legal authorities said yesterday, Mr. Nixon cannot now be convicted for any violation of federal law in connection with the Watergate coverup, the alleged misuse of government agencies under his control, possible income-tax violations, or any of the areas in which he is believed to have had a potential criminal liability.

Jaworski's office is known to have been compiling meticulously for several months evidence damaging to Mr. Nixon in these areas and others, including the possible expenditure of campaign contributions for his personal use.

None of the Jaworski aides working on these cases would allow themselves to be quoted on the surprise

move by Mr. Ford, but their reactions ranged from anger to disbelief to resignation.

"That's really bad news," said one. "It's totally ridiculous. It seems to me that this was just the wrong way to do it, politically."

"Nobody's surprised at anything any more," another said. But he added, "I don't like to read into Ford anything devious."

The evidence against the former President was generally believed strongest in connection with his role in the coverup of responsibility for the Watergate bugging.

Transcripts of recorded White House conversations, released three days before Mr. Nixon announced his resignation from the presidency on August 8, made it clear that he approved attempts to limit the federal investigation of the June, 1972, bugging for fear it would damage his chances for re-election the following November.

New York Times