

Jaworski Is Resigning; Says Task Is Completed

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Leon Jaworski's resignation surprised and dismayed Capitol Hill investigators of the Watergate scandal yesterday, while producing accolades for the special prosecutor and for the top aide he wants as his successor.

"I was hoping it wasn't so," said Sen. Sam J. Ervin Jr. (D-N.C.) after hearing a radio report on the resignation at his home in Morganton, N.C. "I'm awfully sorry" that Jaworski did not "stay to the end," the chairman of the now-defunct Senate Watergate committee said in a phone interview. He termed Jaworski "a very fine lawyer."

Sen. Daniel K. Inouye (D-Hawaii), who was a member of the committee, also expressed surprise and said, "I think his departure will be a great loss."

But other sources, including some at the White House, said there had been advance indications that Jaworski wanted to return to Texas. One of the sources, Rep. William S. Cohen (R-Maine), a member of the House Judiciary Committee, said that while he had expected the resignation, "I'd hoped he would have stayed on until the trial was over."

A Republican member of the Senate Judiciary Committee, Sen. Charles McC. Mathias (Md.), said, "The republic owes a great debt to Leon Jaworski. He assumed the responsibility of special prosecutor at a time when Archibald Cox was a folk hero and when it was doubted that anyone could fill his place."

"Mr. Jaworski not only filled the office—he discharged its duties with honor and distinction," Mathias continued. "He made hard decisions with the objectivity of the professional lawyer that he is."

Mathias said he will urge President Ford to name a successor with "the same concept of honor and objectivity to complete this job."

Mathias, in a prepared state-

ment released by an aide, did not comment on Jaworski's suggestion that his successor be his deputy, Henry S. Ruth Jr.

Cox said, "I don't think the job is finished." Reached at Cambridge University in Eng-

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land, where he is spending a year as a visiting professor, Cox cited the "very important" Watergate cover-up trial and the "very important" final report which the office of special prosecutor is to write, the Associated Press reported.

Cox termed Ruth—who was also his deputy—"very able" and expressed "great confidence" in him.

Ervin said that Ruth appeared to be "a very good choice." Rep. Cohen said he doubted there would be much opposition to Ruth, adding, "It's too late to bring in a new face." The need now is for "someone from the staff who's familiar with things."

A respected GOP congressman who is close to the President—and who asked not to be identified—said the choice of a successor to Jaworski is not of much concern to Republican candidates, because the Watergate situation has been "defused" and because the candidates are preoccupied with their own campaigns.

House Minority Leader John J. Rhodes (Ariz.) said Jaworski "has done a fine job and deserves the thanks of the entire country."

Rhodes said it was his understanding that Jaworski resigned "because he felt the job was done" and that "the rest could be accomplished by somebody else, probably the Department of Justice. I agree with him." At the White House, however, the indication was that there was no intention to phase out Jaworski's office.

The House Judiciary Committee's senior Republican, Rep. Edward Hutchinson (Mich.), said, "I don't know anything about Ruth." Committee Chairman Peter W. Rodino (D-N.J.) had no comment on any aspect of the resignation.

The most detailed — and troubled — analysis was made in a phone interview by Samuel Dash, who was chief counsel of the Senate Watergate committee.

Terming the resignation "terribly disappointing," Dash said Jaworski had "performed

nobly, and with the highest dedication, in the best interests of the country." And he was unstinting in his praise of Ruth, "one of the most brilliant, able young lawyers in the country" and a man unexcelled "in professionalism and integrity."

But Dash said he is troubled because of the high importance of completing the work of the special prosecutor in a way that wins and holds public confidence.

He said this would have been assured so long as the man at the top was one with the public reputation of Cox or Jaworski, or if Ruth had been the choice from the very start, because the continuity which is essential would have been preserved. The choice of Ruth at the outset would have made him "very happy," Dash said.

In a letter to Attorney General William B. Saxbe, Jaworski said that preparation of the report is "perhaps one of the most important functions yet to be discharged."

In what was construed as a veiled reference to a need for new legislation if the report is to deal fully with the Watergate role of President Nixon, Jaworski said the report will be "as all-encompassing as the authority granted this office permits . . ."