Jaworski I, 2-4 p. m. 12/5; his office.

J started off by saying how strongly he feels about our book, that it is a piece of history etc. ~~xxxx~~ which must be accurate and how he will do anything he can to make sure that it is. Says there were a lot of one-on-one conversations that nobody knows about but him and the other party. Says he been deluged with book offers, but--for the present at least--no plans to do so. After these preliminaries, J. launched into what he called "my concepts of what led to the downfall," which folows. As you will see, much of what follows in this first interview we already knew and J. thought he was really opening up.

Most important "focus" in his view was working out arrangement to get the material to House Judiciary; this especially crucial because of decision not to indict RMN (much more on that decision in J. III). HJC was "very slow" getting started, he sez, and would never have gotten off the ground without the info provided by SPO. It was "a roadmap" he stressed more than a few times.

Sez HJC "had a very difficult time getting underway," that Doar admitted it to him. Doar "an excellent man, thoro. Still, he had nothing to catch hold of; he was engulfed by the Watergate Committee material," but it was badly organized and not nearly definitive enough.

"What we did--the first real step--was to cast the die." "The grand jury had to make up its mind what to do (this in latter part of Feburary) ~~xxx~~..what action to take regarding the President. The grand jury had determined that he was guilty of obstruction." This based primarily on Dean testimony, Magruder testimony and tapes, including March 21. Importance of tapes (initial ones) was not just that they had Nixon implicating self. Also verified Dean's veracity and excellence as a witness.

"But there was no legal precedent for the indictment of a President and it was my strong judgement that in all likelihood the Supreme Court would say no. Thus the proper place (for bringing evidence against the President and securing his removal from office) was the impeachment process." Discussed at length with top staff, particularly Lochavara, who also expressed "serious question that the President could be indicted."

Knew that he could go ahead and indict RMN and then have it challenged in the courts but rejected that strategy. "To me, what was so serious was that if--as we thought it probably would--the Supreme Court held no, then we'd be in one hell of a mess; the nation would have this terrific wound that just kept getting deeper and deeper and the process would take longer and longer. So what was the alternative? Judiciary was setting up and for the first time in our history the grand jury would prepare a report which listed step-by-step the President's involvement in a crime--in the coverup."