

Ex-Justice Aide Linked to Vegas Case

By Jack Anderson

Will Wilson, the cracker-barrel crimebuster, has been chased from his Justice Department job because of ties to the scandal-rocked financial empire of Texas wheeler-dealer Frank Sharp.

Now the beleaguered Wilson may find his name drawn into yet another Texas business scandal, although the former assistant attorney general vigorously denies any wrongdoing.

The second scandal involves the huge American National Insurance Company of Galveston, Texas, which has become a treasure chest of credit for Las Vegas gambling operations and a host of other questionable business propositions.

A group of disenchanted stockholders have filed multimillion dollar suits charging the men who control the company with using it as a private financial preserve.

Investigators working for the insurgent stockholders suspect that Will Wilson may have played a backstage role in the decline of the company. Here is the evidence their pre-trial investigation has uncovered:

American National is part of the well-known Moody Foundation of Texas whose trustees control the company. Until 1959, the trustees were all members of the Moody family

and deadlocked two-to-two on most issues.

Wilson, then attorney general of Texas, sued the foundation to remove the trustees. The foundation then appointed three more trustees to avoid future deadlocks. Wilson approved the selections.

From then on, the insurance company went downhill. In early 1963, it got into a deal that proved to be of great benefit to Frank Sharp, who was then closely associated with Wilson. Wilson's term as attorney general had expired and he was practicing law, mostly for Sharp.

A real estate firm had built some apartments in Sharp's bank. Along came American National and bought the mortgage from Sharp's bank.

\$450,000 Loss

A few years later, the real estate firm failed and American National took a \$450,000 beating on the mortgage—a loss Sharp would have absorbed had not the insurance company got him off the hook.

During the Johnson administration, American National's connections with Las Vegas gambling interests sparked a criminal investigation which was still in progress when Wilson took over as head of the Justice Department's criminal division under President Nixon.

Wilson denied any sugges-

tion that he personally saw to it that the investigation came to an abrupt end.

In fact, he insists that he was interested in the case and tried to further it. "If anything had reached me on it, I would have pushed it on," he told us.

Wilson conceded there had been no indictments, nor was there any present likelihood of them.

He said he had nothing to do with the selection of the trustees of the Moody foundation, but did intervene to break the deadlock and made no objections to the new trustees.

Further, he insisted he knew nothing of the curious real estate transaction involving American National and Frank Sharp's interests, although he was one of Sharp's principal advisers.

Footnote: The insurgent stockholders are in two groups. One is represented by Roy Cohn, the onetime protégé of Sen. Joseph McCarthy (R-Wis.). The other group has hired Mudge, Rose, Guthrie and Alexander, the firm of President Nixon and Attorney General John N. Mitchell. Needless to say, the Mudge, Rose attorneys are not voicing any suspicions of Will Wilson.

Pacific Storm Clouds

Ex-Interior Secretary Walter J. Hickel tells in his mem-

oirs how Henry A. Kissinger downgraded Micronesia at a State Department meeting. Hickel quotes Kissinger as saying: "There are only 90,000 people out there. Who gives a damn?"

We charged in a recent report that the U.S. has botched its trusteeship of Micronesia, which includes the Pacific islands where Americans fought some of the most bitter battles of World War II. Now many of the islanders, once grateful to the U.S. for their liberation, would prefer to have the Japanese back.

Kissinger tells us he can't remember making the statement that Hickel attributes to him. It is contrary, he says, to his actual views. But it is all too typical of the who-gives-a-damn attitude of many officials, Republicans and Democrats alike, who have been administering Micronesia for the past 25 years.

The U.S., meanwhile, has taken a sudden new interest in the Pacific islands. As the U.S. pulls back from Asia, these islands take on increasing strategic importance. Yet the neglected natives have been alienated, and the nationalism that has stirred people in other underdeveloped nations is now reaching Micronesia.

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