

'Mr. Long' Explains Motives

United Press International

"Mr. Long," the mystery man whose allegations against former New York Gov. Nelson A. Rockefeller were dismissed as unfounded by the Watergate special prosecutor Saturday, said yesterday his motive was to protect President Ford from a too-hasty vice presidential choice.

In a statement delivered to news offices in Washington, the informant identified himself as Hamilton A. Long, whose address was listed as the Public Ledger Building in Philadelphia.

The statement said the information had been provided to the White House in order "to avoid President Ford's being caught in another 'Eagleton affair' like 1968."

Apparently the reference was to presidential nominee George McGovern's decision to drop Sen. Thomas F. Eagleton of Missouri as his running mate after learning that Eagleton had taken shock treatments for severe depression. That incident was in 1972, not 1968.

Early Saturday, the White House confirmed a Chicago Tribune story that an anonymous source had charged that Rockefeller money was used to help finance "dirty tricks" designed to disrupt the 1972 Democratic National Convention.

Press secretary J.F. terHorst said the tipster, identified only as a "Mr. Long," had talked to presidential counsel Philip W. Buchen on the telephone and in person, and that President Ford had subsequently ordered his information turned over to the office of Watergate Special Prosecutor Leon Jaworski.

Long told Buchen the proof could be found in duplicates of some 7,000 documents formerly belonging to Watergate conspirator E. Howard Hunt Jr. and now lodged in a bank deposit vault.

After an investigation that included opening the supposed hiding place of the documents and finding none, Jaworski's office said the charges were unfounded and the case was closed.

Through terHorst, Mr. Ford then said the false report may have been the work of right-wing extremists hoping to discredit Rockefeller. The former governor was still being considered for the vice presidency, Mr. Ford declared.

Long's statement yesterday protested the White House description. He said he was acting only for himself and "is not associated with any group or organization and has never been active politically."