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I.R.S. Official Calls Florida Sex Inquiry 'Money Well-Spent'

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WASHINGTON, Dec. 2 (UPI) —An Internal Revenue Service official said today he considered expenditures for Operation Leprechaun, which gathered "sex and booze" information on 30 prominent Floridians, "money well-spent."

E. J. Vitkus, who as assistant regional commissioner for the Southeast I.R.S. division had authority over the operation, told a House Ways and Means subcommittee that he had approved the plan.

"I see nothing that has happened in the past to lead me to believe it was improper or inappropriate to do that. I think it was money well-spent," he said when asked for his assessment.

The operation was not an unusual one for the I.R.S. Mr. Vitkus said. It was larger than most, he said, because of its location in an area of strong allegations of political corruption and organized crime influence.

Mr. Vitkus was reminded that in March I.R.S. Donald Alexander, the commissioner, told the same subcommittee that Operation Leprechaun had abused the civil rights of individuals and that it had been a mistake.

"If that was his statement, I think it was premature and unfortunate, Mr. Vitkus said. "I can honestly say I do not know of a single instance of abuse that grew out of Leprechaun."

An I.R.S. investigation of the operation disclosed earlier that information had been gathered on the sex and drinking habits of 30 prominent Floridians, including 11 court judges, two mayors, a city manager, two commissioners, a state representative, a state senator and three members of a state's attorney's office.
