

'Wasn't Much of a Story'

Surprised at Impact:

By BILL PRESTON JR.

Alex B. Shipley Jr. thought there "wasn't much of a story" in the questions he answered for a Washington newsman concerning a year-old incident dealing with possible political espionage.

"I thought, if anything, it would wind up on the back page — headlined something like 'Interesting Sidelight in the News,'" said Shipley, now an assistant state general.

BUT THE story, recounting how Donald H. Secrest of Los Angeles had suggested that Shipley — an old Army buddy in Vietnam — engaged in political espionage in behalf of President Nixon, was on the front page of many newspapers Tuesday.

And it was a shaken Alex Shipley, who later told reporters, beaming on his porch Monday night, what the story broke.

Red-eyed and exhausted at 1 a.m. Tuesday, Shipley had been awake for 24 hours by that time. He said he never realized he would become a central figure in a potential political scandal.

"I LOOK AT it from a different point of view," Shipley said. "I don't see it as a scandal. It's some nonconformist speculations about the history of political espionage activity a long time ago."

"I never did anything for him because he never asked me to do anything," Shipley said. "He said it was a matter of (President) Nixon's security."

Nixon or his election committee or anybody at all," Shipley said.

"Sure, it intrigued me, and I went along with him, but I was trying to get him to tell me something specific, something to do, so I could blow the whistle on him."

BUT SHIPLEY blew no whistle because, he says, he never had any specific information to report.

Shipley said he did not know what Secrest was doing. He said he did not know what Secrest was doing. He said he did not know what Secrest was doing.

him," Shipley said. "I told him what I knew because I knew it was true. I felt I had a moral obligation to tell him the truth."

ALTHOUGH SHIPLEY said later he still placed no great importance on what he was able to tell the reporter, he apparently felt it was important enough to tell to the State Atty. Gen. in a fact sheet.

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NASHVILLE TENNESSEAN

# Shipley

that I knew about all the rest of it too.

"That's just not true. Why I don't even know who some of these other people are. I've never heard of them before."

He said that his head was spinning at that point. He said that he had never heard of the name of the man who was the assistant attorney general in Tennessee with the name of Shipley. He said that when it came to the name of Shipley, it was an Army buddy.

The latest in that series came yesterday when Time magazine reported that it had learned Scaretti was linked to two White House aides and that he was paid \$35,000 from a Nixon "slush fund" by the President's personal attorney.

And in each of the reports the name Alex D. Shipley Jr. was mentioned as the man who told the world about the name of Scaretti.

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