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A Break-In Attempt at Senate Committee Office

Washington

A well-dressed burglar attempted to break into the offices of the Senate Permanent Investigation Subcommittee but was surprised by a secretary working late on Capitol Hill, Senate sources said yesterday.

An armed guard has now been posted outside the door.

The subcommittee, headed by Senator Henry Jackson Dem-Wash., is probing charges that a multi-million dollar heroin investigation was shelved when fugitive financier Robert L. Vesco's name surfaced.

The committee also begins hearings today into charges that two federal drug agents did an electronics sweep of Vesco's New Jersey home and offices while the financier was under investigation by another government agency, the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC).

Keith Atkinson, assistant counsel to Jackson's committee, said a secretary was working late Wednesday night in the Senate offices to transcribe notes.

She was way in the back and getting ready to leave

about 8 p.m.," Atkinson said, "when she heard a scratching at the door. She assumed it was one of the committee members trying to get in with a key.

"So she opened the door and this well-dressed man was trying to pick the lock. She screamed and he jumped ten feet in the air and ran down the hall.

The secretary told police the man had short-cropped dark hair, was of medium build and was wearing a conservative business suit.

Earlier in the day two committee investigators had returned from California with evidence charging that Vesco, through his close associate Thomas Richardson, had paid two federal agents to "de-bug" his home and offices in June, 1972.

Two Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs agents, apparently acting on the orders of their superior, John L. Kelly, flew from Los Angeles to New York and did an electronics sweep for Vesco, sources said.

At the time Vesco was under investigation by the SEC for a multi-million-dollar securities fraud in the International Overseas Service, a

mutual funds firm he controlled.

The agents' expenses and a \$4000 bonus were paid by Richardson, a Los Angeles stockbroker, sources said.

It has been reported that many of the securities Vesco used in the IOS scheme were funnelled through Richardson's brokerage firm.

"It seems obvious," said one Senate source, "That Vesco had to deal pretty high up to get one government agency to work against the investigation of another government agency."

Vesco's relationship with the Nixon administration has been the subject of considerable speculation in the past two years.

The President's nephew, Donald A. Nixon, is an aide to Vesco. The financier paid \$200,000 in cash to the Nixon re-election campaign although the money was returned when the transaction was criticized.

Vesco was indicted with former Attorney General John Mitchell and former Commerce Secretary Maurice Stans over the donation. Mitchell and Stans were acquitted of all charges and at-