

'Mr. Long' Wanted to Avoid Another 'Eagleton'

Washington

"Mr. Long," the mystery man whose allegations against former New York Governor Nelson Rockefeller were dismissed as unfounded by the 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.

Long is a retired Wall Street lawyer who formerly headed a conservative Philadelphia publishing company, the American Heritage Education Corp.

Long, who was described by a top White House aide

yesterday as about 70 years of age, has written a number of conservative tracts, including one, published in the 1950s, entitled "Permit Communist-Conspirators to Be Teachers."

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.

The reference was to presidential nominee George McGovern's decision to drop Senator Thomas A. Eagleton 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 claimed

Rockefeller money was used to help finance "dirty tricks" designed to disrupt the 1972 Democratic National Convention.

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

Long told Buchen the proof could be found in duplicates of some 7000 documents formerly belonging to Watergate conspirator E. Howard Hunt and now lodged in a bank deposit vault.

After an investigation, which 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 said.

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."

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