

GO-OFFICIAL INDICTED**Fortas Associates
Linked to Gambling**

By JEAN HELLER

WASHINGTON (AP) — Prior to taking his seat on the Supreme Court, Abe Fortas was an officer of a company incorporated by individuals linked with Las Vegas gambling operations. One of the individuals later was indicted for perjury in the Bobby Baker case.

Other officers of the company, Greatamerica Corp., contributed to the \$30,000 fund set up to finance a series of lectures by Fortas at American University here last summer. Fortas got half the money.

Greatamerica, a holding company for insurance firms, was the parent company of Texas-based Braniff Airways. In addition to being an officer of Greatamerica, Fortas was, during 1965, a director of Braniff. After he left the company, a spot on the board of directors went to Paul A. Porter, Fortas' former law partner. Porter still held that position last year.

IT WAS LAST year that the Civil Aeronautics Board and President Johnson granted a lucrative trans-Pacific route to Braniff despite the recommendation of a CAB examiner that Braniff not get any such award.

The CAB chairman who concurred in the Braniff award is a former member of a Houston law firm with ties to Johnson.

These facts were disclosed in an Associated Press investigation of the past business activities of the beleaguered Supreme Court Justice.

Fortas announced his resignation from the court today following intense pressure and threat of impeachment.

His action followed disclosures that while on the bench he accepted, then returned 11 months later, a \$20,000 fee from the family foundation of Louis Wolfson, who later was convicted of stock manipulation.

FORTAS' involvement in the companies can be traced to 1962 when Greatamerica was incorporated in Nevada. The incorporation papers, dated April 27, 1962, list Fortas as the company's vice president, general counsel and a director.

Yearly reports filed in Carson

City show Fortas remained an officer of Greatamerica until sometime between July 1965 and June 1966. Records for the following year indicate that after Fortas resigned Dennis Lyons assumed Fortas' former positions with the company.

Lyons, an attorney with Arnold & Porter, Fortas' former Washington law firm, told AP he became vice president, general counsel and director of Greatamerica in May, 1966. It could not be determined immediately whether Fortas retained his spot with the company until then or had resigned earlier.

FORTAS took his seat on the court in October 1965.

One of the incorporators of Greatamerica was Clifford A. Jones, Nevada lieutenant governor from 1947-54 and a part owner and then officer of the Thunderbird Hotel in Las Vegas.

The gambling license issued to Jones and a partner in the hotel was revoked by the Nevada Tax Commission in 1955 on grounds that underworld figures had an interest in the hotel. The decision was later overturned by the Nevada Supreme Court.

ON JAN. 5, 1966, Jones was indicted for perjury in connection with the grand jury investigation of Bobby Baker, former secretary to Senate Democrats.

Baker was indicted the same day for conspiracy, tax evasion and fraudulently converting to his own use nearly \$100,000 from California savings and loan executives who thought they were making political contributions.

Jones was named a co-conspirator in that indictment. Baker later was convicted of failing to pay tax on the \$100,000. Jones' case has not come to trial.

Fortas was Baker's attorney until Johnson became president in 1963. At that time he withdrew from the case.

LEGAL SOURCES say incorporation papers frequently are handled by attorneys who select the individuals to serve as incorporators.

The chairman of the board and president of Greatamerica

at the time of its incorporation was Troy V. Post. The company's fiscal 1964 report lists Gustave Levy as a director. Both men held their posts through fiscal 1968 when Greatamerica and its subsidiary, Braniff, were acquired by the conglomerate Ling-Temco-Vought. Paul Porter's name appears as a director of Braniff in 1967 and 1968.

Last year, Porter collected \$30,000 to finance Fortas' lecture series. Five men contributed to the fund. Two of them were Post and Levy.

AMERICAN University officials

told the Senate last year that Fortas got \$15,000 of the fund and the university got the other half.

Also last year, a CAB examiner held extensive hearings on the eagerly sought Pacific airline routes. When he recommended the awards, Braniff had no share of the plum.

However, when the CAB and Johnson announced the final awards, Braniff got a route to Hawaii through Mexico City and Acapulco, increasing its air route mileage by about 200 per cent.

The chairman of the CAB when the award was made was John Crooker Jr., a Houston lawyer and a former partner in the firm of Fulbright, Crooker, Freeman, Bates and Jaworski. Leon Jaworski has acted as a personal attorney for Johnson.

CROOKER first was appointed to the CAB in March 1968 to fill an unexpired term. Just a little over a month later, far from the end of the term, Johnson renominated him for a full six-year term beginning this year.

Several Republicans, led by Sen. Robert P. Griffin of Michigan, strongly objected to the renomination on the grounds that the new president, whoever he might be, ought to be able to name his own CAB chairman.

The word was passed that discussion of the matter would be delayed, at least until after the political conventions. However, on Aug. 2, with most Republicans in Congress already out of Washington and in Miami Beach at the convention site, Crooker's nomination went to the Senate floor and passed.

After Nixon took office, he threw out the Braniff award on grounds it was not economically justified.

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