

A SENATE INQUIRY ON FORTAS ASKED

Republican Cites Allegation of Justice's Intervention

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Senator John J. Williams called today for an investigation into an allegation that Justice Abe Fortas of the Supreme Court interceded with President Johnson to obtain a Federal appointment for a former attorney for Robert G. Baker.

The Delaware Republican asked that the nomination of David G. Bress, to become a Federal district Judge here be held up pending an investigation by the Senate Judiciary Committee.

Mr. Bress is now the United States attorney for the District of Columbia. Baker, former secretary to the Senate Democrats, has been convicted of tax evasion and fraud but is free pending an appeal.

Senator Williams cited a charge by William W. Greenhalgh, president of the County Council in nearby Montgomery County, Md., that President Johnson appointed Mr. Bress to his present position in 1965 at Justice Fortas's suggestion.

Says Clark Backed Him

In a Senate speech, Mr. Williams noted that Mr. Greenhalgh was quoted as saying, in a speech last Friday to the Montgomery County Press Association, that he himself had been recommended for the position by Nicholas deB. Katzenbach, then Attorney General, and by Ramsey Clark, who is now Attorney General.

Citing an article in The Washington Post of Oct. 5, Senator Williams quoted Mr. Greenhalgh as saying in the speech that Justice Fortas had gone to President Johnson and "persuaded him that I was too close to [Robert] Kennedy" and that "because the Bobby Baker case was pending in the U. S. District Courthouse, I couldn't be trusted."

Mr. Greenhalgh was also quoted as saying that just before Mr. Bress was nominated, President Johnson told Senator Daniel B. Brewster, Maryland Democrat, "I need a man I can trust."

When they were in private practice in Washington, both Mr. Fortas and Mr. Bress represented Baker and his companies, Senator Williams said.

Mr. Williams said that he had no knowledge whether the charges were true but that the Senate should investigate them.

A Supreme Court spokesman said tonight that Justice Fortas would have no comment on the charges.