

Ford Denies Offering To Help Wolson

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WASHINGTON (AP) — Vice President-designate Gerald R. Ford testified Thursday that he and two other congressmen did not offer to help millionaire Louis Wolson with his legal problems if he would help their effort to impeach Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas.

Ford testified at his House confirmation hearing that a

lawyer working for the congressmen, Benton L. Becker, offered on his own to help the financier. But Ford said the congressmen did not.

"We never offered any such action," Ford testified under oath.

The issue was raised by Rep. Jerome R. Waldie, D-Calif., who read a file of letters on the offer.

Waldie told newsmen outside the House Judiciary Committee hearing, "The inference is that Becker offered the influence of the congressmen he represented."

In a letter dated Sept. 3, 1970, Becker told Wolson's lawyer, William O. Bittman, that Ford and the other two congressmen were looking into Justice Douglas' dealings with Albert

Parvin. Becker said it was believed that a conversation with Wolson "could shed light upon the inner workings of the Parvin Dohrman Co."

Becker concluded the letter by saying, "I am personally sympathetic to your client's present plight and would be anxious to assist him in any way available to me."

Waldie then put on the record a letter from Bittman to his client Wolson saying that if he cooperated in their Douglas inquiry "the congressmen he (Becker) represented probably could be of some assistance to you in connection with your second case."

Waldie told newsmen later he did not know what Wolson's second case was except that it was connected with Wolson's conviction in a stock fraud case.

Wolson was convicted in 1967 of selling \$2.7 million worth of unregistered stock and was convicted in 1968 of obstruction of justice.

Becker was hired by Reps. Joe D. Waggoner Jr., D-La., Louis C. Wyman, R-N.H., and Ford.