

Vesco's Yacht May Be Armed With a Missile

Washington

Senate investigators are studying information that suggests fugitive financier Robert L. Vesco may have equipped his high-speed Caribbean yacht with missiles as well as machine guns and other weapons.

The information, the Los

Angeles Times has learned, came from the yacht's former captain, Jay Powell Cook, who has said under oath that he quit last month when he became convinced Vesco would shoot it out, even with U.S. authorities, if they interfered with his

Back Page Col. 4

From Page 1

movements.

Cook's testimony adds a new puzzle to the mystery of Vesco's alleged efforts to stockpile military weapons and his apparent involvement with persons associated with organized crime figures.

The Senate Permanent Investigations Subcommittee under Senator Henry M. Jackson, (Dem-Wash.) has been assembling details about Vesco's activities for more than a year.

Vesco, indicted twice by federal grand juries within the last two years, sought refuge first in the Bahamas and then in Costa Rica. He is wanted in the United States on charges of looting a multi-million-dollar investment firm he controlled and of involvement in a secret illegal \$200,000 contribution to the 1972 Nixon campaign.

Thus far he has successfully avoided extradition, although Jackson's subcommittee has produced material that raises questions about how vigorously U.S. authorities have pressed for his return.

Subcommittee investigators are unwilling to discuss details of the missile question publicly, but sources knowledgeable about the inquiry said that it rests on Cook's eyewitness account of equipment and activities aboard Vesco's 54-foot aluminum yacht, the Joya Poca.

What Cook saw convinced him that a missile was being fitted onto the ship, sources said, and his description of the equipment suggested to subcommittee staff members that Vesco may have obtained a surplus missile of a type able to destroy almost any pursuing vessel.

Washington Post