

**AIR FORCE SECRETARY
IS SILENT AT HEARING**

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WASHINGTON, Jan. 30 (AP)

—Air Force Secretary Robert C. Seaman Jr. invoked executive privilege today and refused to say whether he abolished the job of a controversial cost expert after seeking or receiving White House advice.

A Civil Service examiner, Herman D. Staiman, said he did not have the authority to compel Mr. Seaman to answer.

Testifying under oath before a Civil Service Commission hearing, Secretary Seaman said the job of A. Ernest Fitzgerald was not eliminated because of his Congressional testimony in November, 1968, that a huge cost overrun had been incurred on the C-5 transport plane.

Mr. Seaman said that, while Mr. Fitzgerald's account of an overrun totaling more than \$1-billion was correct, he did not

believe Mr. Fitzgerald properly represented Air Force cost-cutting efforts or gave the right account.

Responding to numerous questions by Mr. Fitzgerald's attorneys, Secretary Seaman said no one in the White House told him to end Mr. Fitzgerald's job. But he balked when asked whether he had consulted or been advised by the White House on the Fitzgerald case.

After a break for lunch, Mr. Seaman invoked executive privilege and repeatedly refused to answer.