

# U.S. Brands Hoffa Lawyer' a Phony

WASHINGTON — (AP) — The Justice Department said today William L. Taub, who represented himself as James Hoffa's "legal counsel" in a recent controversy over the former Teamster leader's plan to visit North Vietnam, is not a lawyer.

A Justice Department spokesman said they learned this after Taub was extensively reported to be acting as Hoffa's representative in dealings with various government officials.

"We're wondering how he was able to do all these things," Justice Department press officer John Hushen said, "without checking on who he is."

## Met With Kissinger

In an effort to obtain permission for Hoffa to visit North Vietnam and try to negotiate release of American prisoners of war, Taub met with presidential aide Henry Kissinger, attempted to see Attorney General Richard Kleindienst and held discussions with Deputy Attorney General Ralph Ericson.

Taub operated under the assumption that New York attorney Ericson was described by Hushen as "dis-

turbed by Taub's misrepresentation" in their discussions.

In Detroit, Hoffa said he was startled to learn of the apparent misrepresentation and said he took Taub at face value after "he sought me out in April.

"I met him in Miami. He took notes, had documents, everything," Hoffa said.

Hoffa said he knew Taub only on a business basis, "So you just can't tell what he's really like."

Hoffa said he had an agreement to pay Taub for his services, but declined to say if any payment had been made so far.

Hushen said the FBI had been asked to check its files on Taub but he said no investigation was ordered.

Hushen said as far as Justice Department is concerned the matter is ended and no action will be taken against Taub.

## "Legal Counsel"

When the story surfaced last week that Hoffa hoped to go to Hanoi, Taub claimed he was "Jimmy Hoffa's legal counsel," and never disputed reporters' use of the word attorney in describing him.

Taub, who gave as his ad-

dress a fashionable Park Avenue apartment building in New York City, could not be reached for comment.

The report on Taub's professional circumstances apparently caught White House press secretary Ronald Ziegler off guard during his mid-day briefing to newsmen. When asked for a comment, Ziegler exclaimed: "Taub's not a lawyer? If he's not, he should be."

## Claimed Paris Link

The New York Times reported that Taub had once represented himself as the "worldwide representative" for Pope Paul VI's film interests; had once accepted an award as a producer of the motion picture "Z," only to have the real producer denounce him as an imposter who also had tried to sell him the MGM building in Paris.

Taub was also involved in legal skirmishes for attempting to sell without authorization rights to Charlie Chaplin's films to television networks, and for signing actress Margaret Sullavan to perform in a new play that had in fact been produced before, the Times reported.