

3rd Mitchell Vesco Move Reported

Washington

John N. Mitchell, while still a member of President Nixon's Cabinet, interceded directly on behalf of Robert L. Vesco in the international financier's unsuccessful attempt to gain control of a large Lebanese bank, reliable sources told the Los Angeles Times yesterday.

The intercession, sources said, occurred in January 1972, more than a month before Mitchell resigned as attorney general to head Mr. Nixon's re-election campaign.

Going outside normal State Department communications channels, Mitchell was said to have either cabled or telephoned the legal section at the U.S. Embassy in Beirut, which can be reached on Justice Department communications facilities.

THIRD

The action is the third reported instance of Mitchell's intervention on behalf of Vesco, who is one of the defendants in a Securities and Exchange Commission civil suit alleging the "looting" of \$224 million from the mutual funds of Investors Overseas Services Ltd. (IOS). Two of the alleged three interventions took place while Mitchell was still in the Cabinet.

In November 1971, Mitchell reportedly telephoned the U.S. Embassy in Bern, Switzerland, to help Vesco and two associates get out of a Swiss jail. They had been temporarily incarcerated by a Swiss judge after an IOS stockholder filed a complaint against them.

In the other reported instance, Mitchell, while heading the Committee for the Re-election of the President, helped to arrange in May 1972 the first of four meetings with SEC officials, including then chairman William J. Casey. The meetings were held to discuss Vesco's pending investigation by the agency.

JURY

A description of the latest effort to help Vesco is reported to be contained in secret State Department files hastily turned over to a federal grand jury in New York last Friday.

Among other things, the grand jury is believed to be investigating a \$200,000 cash gift from Vesco to the Committee for the Re-election of the President on April 10, 1972, three days after a new law went into force which requires major campaign contributors to be identified.

State Department officials declined comment on the case yesterday on grounds that the matter is before a grand jury.

Mitchell could not be reached for comment. His secretary said, "You know he is not talking to the press at this time."

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