

Ex-SEC Chief Says John Dean Called Him Too

By Philip Greer

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NEW YORK, May 18—

Former Securities and Exchange Commission Chairman William J. Casey said today that he rebuffed a request by former White House counsel John W. Dean III that he seek postponement of subpoenas relating to a secret campaign contribution by financier Robert L. Vesco.

Casey, who is now under secretary of state for economic affairs and on tour in South America with Secretary of State William P. Rogers, acknowledged through a spokesman that Dean called him early last November.

At the time, the SEC had learned of mysterious movement of \$250,000 in cash by Vesco, whose financial empire was the subject of the probe. Dean, according to Casey, asked for postponement of subpoenas issued to two secretaries at a company controlled by Vesco. "Mr. Casey rejected the request," the department spokesman said.

Later, the SEC learned that the money was contributed to President Nixon's reelection campaign after a series of meetings between Vesco, a Vesco associate, Nixon finance chief Maurice H. Stans and former Attorney General John N. Mitchell.

Dean's involvement in the Vesco case came to light on May 10, when a federal grand jury here indicted Mitchell, Stans, Vesco and New Jersey politician Harry L. Sears for obstructing the SEC investigation. The indictment said Mitchell "did cause" Dean to ask for postponement of the subpoenas. The indictment does not say how Casey responded to Dean's request.

The State Department spokesman said he was unable to get Casey's response to another part of the indictment, which said that Sears, former majority leader of the New Jersey state senate, asked Mitchell as far back as June and July, 1971, to speak to Casey "about the SEC investigation of Vesco."

Casey is mentioned prominently in the indictment, although always as a target of those who were allegedly trying to sidetrack the SEC probe. For example, it says that Sears held his first meeting with Casey just four hours after he and another Vesco associate delivered \$200,000 in \$100 bills to Stans—and three hours after telling Mitchell that the money had been delivered. The indictment specified that Casey was not told of

the payment when the meeting was arranged.

According to the grand jury charges, Sears met with Casey and G. Bradford Cook, his successor as SEC chairman who resigned Tuesday, "in May, June, July and August, 1972," to discuss the case.

One of the meetings, the indictment said, was held in Miami during the Republican National Convention in August.

Throughout the indictment, there is no mention of what actions, if any, Casey took after the approaches by the Vesco representative.

The former SEC chairman, who sources here say testified before the grand jury three times, also figures in two of the six perjury counts against Mitchell. In one, according to transcripts included in the indictment, Mitchell was asked if Sears requested that Casey be present at meetings between Vesco and SEC staff members. Mitchell said Sears asked him to have "someone above the staff level" meet with him.

In another count, Mitchell denied ever talking about Vesco with either Dean or Casey. "John Dean and Bill Casey and I have had many other things to talk about, but I don't recall Vesco ever having come up," Mitchell said.