

Local D.A.'s May Get Data On Investigation of G.O.P.

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By FRANCIS X. CLINES JUN 16 1973

The State Attorney General's investigation into a suspected vote-siphoning scheme to protect the Assembly Republican majority was reported yesterday to have reached the point of deciding whether local district attorneys should be notified for possible criminal prosecution.

Sources familiar with the investigation said politicians and other persons involved in 11 Assembly races last year in different parts of the state had already been subpoenaed and questioned by the office of Attorney General Louis J. Lefkowitz. The key figure in the inquiry was reported yesterday to have refused to answer questions.

The next step is to decide what action should be taken as the result of accumulated information, the sources said, with local prosecution being considered as a possibility.

Among those subpoenaed was the key figure, Harold J. Relkin. His signature appeared on "liberal" campaign literature suspected of being a factor in a scheme to protect Republican candidates in marginal districts last year. The basic complaint being investigated is that Republicans might have financed some Liberal campaigns to draw votes from the Democrats.

Mr. Relkin, who holds a "no show" job with the Republican Assembly staff, professed his innocence in an interview Thursday at his home in Scotch Plains, N. J. He was reported by state sources to have exer-

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cised his constitutional rights against testifying during his appearance Thursday at the Attorney General's office here.

Mr. Relkin was accompanied to the office by Charles Webb, legislative counsel to Assembly Speaker Perry B. Duryea of Montauk, L. I. Mr. Duryea said that Mr. Webb was not representing Mr. Relkin, but just helping the Attorney General locate the witness.

"We had heard that the Attorney General was having trouble finding him," Mr. Duryea said, "and we said we'd be glad to make sure he shows up."

Aside from this shepherding service, however, Mr. Duryea said he knew of no other dealings his office had had with Mr. Relkin. The Speaker, who has over-all authority of dispensing the numerous Assembly patronage jobs, said he had not yet found out how Mr. Relkin, who is a nephew of Court of Appeals Judge Charles D. Breitel, came to be hired, nor what his job was.

The only comment yesterday from Mr. Lefkowitz's office was to denounce charges by Democrats that the Attorney General's Republican loyalty might hinder a full inquiry. "That's irresponsible and not worthy of reply," a spokesman for Mr. Lefkowitz said.

A Dinner Topic

The delicacy of the investigation as Governor Rockefeller, Speaker Duryea, Mr. Lefkowitz and the rest of the highly successful Republican ticket heads for next year's elections, was underlined by the Attorney General in brief chats with colleagues Thursday night at the annual Republican fundraising dinner here.

State Senator John J. Marchi, the Republican mayoral candidate, commented after one such chat that while "juicing up" third-party candidates was an old political trick, he found it difficult to believe Assembly Republicans might have formally reported it on their financial campaign statements.

He was referring to one path of the Attorney General's inquiry, in which investigators have been checking Republican campaign notations that several thousand dollars had been spent on "liberal" programs.

Suspicion on L. I.

The expenditures were listed on Assembly campaign statements filed by the Republican committee, which was headed by the Republican Assembly Majority Leader, John E. Kingston of Westbury, L. I. Mr. Kingston could not be reached for comment.

The treasurer of the committee, Henry A. Mund Jr., Mr. Duryea's executive assistant, declined to comment during the investigation.

The inquiry, which was initiated by a complaint filed during a Long Island Assembly race last year, has reached all the

HAROLD J. RELKIN
123 LIBERTY STREET
NEW YORK, NEW YORK

October, 1972

There is no other choice!

Before going to the polls on November 7th, remember what your Democratic Assemblyman, Stanley Harwood, voted *against* when he cast his "no" votes on State Purposes and Local Assistance budget bills in the Legislature:

- \$10 million in Regents scholarships and scholar incentive funds to assist 35,000 Nassau students attend college.
- \$155,000 to help the educational television maintain operations in Nassau County.
- \$3 million in operating funds for the State University College at Old Westbury.
- \$244,000 in funds to Nassau County as state aid to municipalities for the operation of laboratories and blood banks.
- \$44,000 to Nassau County as state aid to municipalities for tuberculosis care.
- \$19,624,000 for Cancer Research and \$900,000 for the Kidney Disease Institute.
- \$235,000 for assistance to cultural institutions in Nassau County.


And that's just a partial list.

Stanley Harwood is running for Assembly again. You know that if he voted against progress for Nassau County in the fields of education, health, recreation before, he'll do it again. Anything to please the New York City Democratic Clubhouse.

Frank Di Paola, Liberal Party candidate for Assembly, knows what the progressive people of this District want. And he'd fight for what he believes in Albany. That's more than can be said for Mr. Harwood or his Republican opponent.

Frank Di Paola needs your help now and at the polls November 7th.

Frank Di Paola -- There is no other choice!

Sincerely,

Harold J. Relkin
Chairman, Action Committee
for the Liberal Party

Campaign material signed by Harold J. Relkin, who has been subpoenaed in the State Attorney General's investigation of last year's Assembly elections.

way to Buffalo, where local Liberal party officials and a candidate were understood to have been subpoenaed.

Two Democrats who saw Liberal candidates deprive them of the margin of victory—Stanley Harwood, who is the Nassau County Democratic chairman, and William B. Buyers of Buffalo—have said they suspect that the Republicans promoted Liberal, anti-Democratic literature.

Republican sources denied rival politicians' charges that the Attorney General's office was not pressing the inquiry. Rather, they asserted, state investigators have had to take pains to backtrack through the Assembly races and seek out instances of literature sent out by Mr. Relkin's Action Committee for the Liberal Party. The suspicion is that the literature—later denounced by state Liberal party officials—was prepared and sent out illegally.

Discussed Earlier

The Democrats have urged a reform of the election campaign laws. Speaker Duryea commented: "That's very interesting, seeing as the Democrats didn't even bother to file campaign financial statements last year under the existing law."

His point was that some politicians regularly miss filling the required forms and that the Assembly Democrats failed to file at all last year, pleading that one of their key leaders, Sena-

Minority leader Joseph Zarecki of Manhattan, was ill.

Governor Rockefeller and Speaker Duryea said they first heard of the investigation from Attorney General Lefkowitz about a month ago during one of their daily Republican leadership meetings during the busy closing weeks of the Legislature. Mr. Duryea and the Governor said it was mentioned in passing with no substantial discussion.

The Speaker said that Nassau Democrats already had made the charges public and that he was anxious to have the air cleared. He added that he was pleased at the word from the Attorney General that he hoped to complete his inquiry.

The election and penal laws said to have been possibly violated in the suspected vote siphoning scheme involve six different offenses, all of them misdemeanors, relating to proper identification of literature, misrepresentation of political affiliation and conspiracy.

In the past, the Attorney General's office has complained that its authority is limited to investigating election law complaints, with local District Attorneys having to follow up. Bills have been submitted by the Attorney General for prosecutory power in this area, and they have withered in the Legislature, according to Mr. Lefkowitz's office.