

# Inquiry Links Vesco to Two Leaders

By Jack Anderson

Government investigators have uncovered sinister bonds between fugitive financier Robert Vesco and the leaders of the two nations that give him shelter, Costa Rica and the Bahamas.

In the Bahamas, where Vesco is now fighting extradition to the United States, they said, Prime Minister Lynden Pindling has profited handsomely from his association with Vesco.

According to U.S. intelligence sources, Vesco bought a \$450,000 house for Pindling near Nassau. Further, Vesco's Bahamas Commonwealth Bank is said to hold the mortgage on an office building owned by Pindling's family, and also made loans on the Paradise Bakery, a Pindling investment.

In Costa Rica, President Jose Figueres is not only personally indebted to Vesco, but the financial security of his nation depends in part on Vesco's continued goodwill, the sources said.

They said they have determined that Vesco has more than \$10 million in Costa Rican bonds. A demand by Vesco for return of his money would seriously affect the Central American nation's finances.

Vesco is believed to have followed similar patterns in the Bahamas and Panama. In Panama, his deposits amount to several million dollars, the sources said. His investments in the Bahamas central bank are

believed to be in excess of \$10 million. Again, the sources said, sudden withdrawal would shake the nation's economics.

"Vesco has never given anyone as much as most people in those countries believe," one source told us. "What he has done is put his money where everyone can see it, and hope to get a piece."

There have been reports that Vesco has invested as much as \$25 million each in Costa Rica and the Bahamas.

"Most of the money that he has put out is in deposits or loans that are payable on demand," the source said. "He takes care of the top people, and a few others, and leaves the rest of the officials waiting for a chance to get some, too. It makes them very friendly."

The sources believe, therefore, that Vesco's carefully structured financial deals could enable him to escape extradition. They point out that when Vesco was arrested recently in the Bahamas on a U.S. warrant, the authorities did not seize the Costa Rican diplomatic passport he carries.

Vesco has made a habit of reaching the leaders of countries where he does business. He hired President Nixon's nephew, Donald A. Nixon, to work in the Vesco financial operations both in Europe and in the Bahamas.

Footnote: We reported last May 21 that a recent CIA report showed Figueres' personal fortunes were at low ebb. The CIA

noted that Figueres' nephew, Fernando, said "all members of the President's family are deeply concerned with family financial matters." It was at this point, we reported then, that the clever Vesco began to buy his way into the good graces of Figueres.

**Perishing Primates**—Two rare gorillas and an even rarer orangutan have died mysteriously at the famous Lion Country Safari zoo outside Atlanta. The animals were on loan from the respected Yerkes Primate Center of Emory University which had hoped they would reproduce on islands at the zoo.

But a male orangutan panicked while a female was being shot with a tranquilizer for medical purposes and jumped off a low cliff into deep water. A gorilla also leaped into deep water and a second gorilla apparently died of food poisoning. At Yerkes, a spokesman conceded that since the gorillas and orangutans cannot swim they should never have been put near drops above deep water. He added somberly, "We wouldn't have put them there if we'd had enough federal money" for other outdoor quarters.

A Lion Country official said the details had been properly reported to authorities, but no state or federal action had been taken. Nevertheless, we have learned the Humane Society is quietly probing the deaths of the three rare beasts.

Schlesinger's Spanking Secretary of Defense James Schle-

singer has such a dry, offbeat sense of humor that his associates cannot tell when he is kidding and when he is telling the truth.

One day last spring, Schlesinger was director of the Central Intelligence Agency. He came to work with his hand cast. His aides asked him what had happened.

"I broke my hand while spanking one of my kids," replied the father of eight without a trace of a smile.

When we asked Schlesinger's office whether he had really broken his hand on a youngster's backside, he refused to comment.

**Censor Censored**—The General Services Administration has some good news for citizens worried about their liberties. The GSA has dropped from its catalog of materials available to government agencies a \$21.50 item called a "Censorship Kit." The kit included a magnifying glass, scratch knives, erasers and a rubber stamp marked "CENSOR" among other things. It was a carryover from World War II days when soldiers' letters were censored, but the GSA said they had not had an order for it during the last six years.

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