

Vesco Says Impeachment Plan Predated Scandal of Watergate

By MARTIN ARNOLD

Robert L. Vesco, the fugitive financier, contends that at least six months before the Watergate scandal became public he was approached to take part in what he called "a well-calculated plan" for impeachment of President Nixon.

The instigators of the plan were identified by Mr. Vesco only as "they" or "them." Mr. Vesco said that the group "had conceived a game plan which involved securing the indictment of a Cabinet-level member, utilizing leaks to the press, and were aggressively seeking cooperation of various people to help them in this game."

Mr. Vesco made this assertion in an interview to be shown at 6:30 o'clock tonight on A.B.C.-TV's "Reasoner Report." He was interviewed by an A.B.C. News correspondent, Margaret Osmer, in San Jose, Costa Rica. The program was filmed here and in the Bahamas. Mr. Vesco lives in both places.

Mr. Vesco said in the interview that the plan "to accomplish the impeachment" of Mr. Nixon "predates any public knowledge of the Watergate activities by at least six months." He did not define what he meant by "Watergate activities" nor was he asked to in the interview.

Faces Federal Charges

Asked by Miss Osmer what he did after he was approached to take part in the alleged plan, he replied, "I did two things. One, I sent word to the people, who I knew, of the existence of the plan and decided that I just don't want to get involved in it. And I left." He did not identify "the people" he had sent word to.

Mr. Vesco is wanted in the United States on charges of looting the International Controls Corporation, which he headed, of \$50,000. He was indicted by a Federal grand jury on that charge in July.

He was also indicted last May, along with former Attorney

General John N. Mitchell, former Commerce Secretary Maurice H. Stans and Harry L. Sears, chairman of President Nixon's re-election campaign in New Jersey, on charges of conspiracy and obstruction of justice in connection with a secret \$200,000 cash contribution by Mr. Vesco to the President's re-election campaign.

In addition, the Securities and Exchange Commission has charged him with having "spirited" away \$224-million from four mutual funds.

Thus far, United States efforts to extradict him have failed.

Bars Return to U. S.

Mr. Vesco said in the interview that he would not return to the United States to face the charges against him and that he had renounced his citizenship.

He said that one reason he left the country was because the plans he said were being "generated" to damage President Nixon were so "disgusting," that "I just didn't want to get involved in it."

The "various people" putting together these plans were, he said, trying "to reverse the outcome" of the last Presidential election.

He also said that there was one attempt to carry him off "physically" and return him to this country, but he added that he could not describe the plan because "it's a sensitive subject with me."

Also interviewed on the program was Donald A. Nixon, President Nixon's nephew, who said his relationship with the Vesco family was as close as his relationship with the Nixon family.

"My uncle's doing his thing. I'm doing my thing, you know," he said.