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**VESCO OFFER TIED
TO MOVE BY STANS**

**Witness Reports Effort to
Set Up Talk With Mitchell
After Campaign Pledge**

By MARTIN ARNOLD

Within minutes after Robert L. Vesco promised to contribute \$500,000 to President Nixon's re-election campaign, Maurice H. Stans tried to get him an appointment for that same day with John N. Mitchell, a government witness testified yesterday.

Mr. Vesco, who finally contributed \$200,000, in cash, sought the meeting in order to get Mr. Mitchell to help to quash a securities and Exchange Commission investigation of Mr. Vesco's financial dealings, it was alleged.

The government witness, Laurence B. Richardson Jr., a former associate of Mr. Vesco's, was unable to say whether Mr. Vesco did in fact meet with Mr. Mitchell that day, March 8, 1972. But he told of the attempt, in narrative form.

Earlier in the day, there were these other developments:

Harry L. Sears, another Government witness, completed seven days of testimony by admitting that under "severe pressure" he told a prosecutor, just before the start of this trial,

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that in his involvement with Mr. Vesco he had committed a crime.

In Washington, Lewis L. Engman, chairman of the Federal Trade Commission, told a House investigating committee that just before the 1972 election he telephoned G. Bradford Cook, then counsel to the S.E.C., and asked him the status of the Vesco case. Mr. Engman said that at the time he was working in the White House for John D. Ehrlichman, President Nixon's chief domestic adviser, and made the call at Mr. Ehrlichman's behest.

Mr. Mitchell and Mr. Stans are accused of conspiracy, perjury and obstruction of justice for allegedly attempting to impede the commission's investigation of Mr. Vesco in return for the \$200,000 campaign contribution.

The main event yesterday, however, was Mr. Richardson's narrative.

First, Mr. Richardson said, he and Mr. Vesco were introduced to Mr. Stans, a former Secretary of Commerce who at the time was chief fund-raiser

for the President's campaign, in Mr. Stans's Washington office.

"He [Mr. Vesco] started by saying he had been a big supporter of Mr. Nixon in 1968, and intends to be a generous giver in 1972, but he had a problem," Mr. Richardson testified.

"And the problem was that he and his company were under investigation by the S.E.C., and that the investigation had been going on for more than a year and had not produced any charges," he went on. "He wanted to find a way to bring it to a conference and a settlement."

"Well, how much you got in mind to give," Mr. Richardson quoted Mr. Stans as asking, and then the witness added: "Vesco said, well, he wanted to be in the front row, and how much did you have to give to be in the front row?" Mr. Richardson added.

"Mr. Stans said, well, we expect X number of people to give a million dollars, and he gave a number that might give half a million or more. Then he said, 'What have you got in mind?' And Mr. Vesco said, 'I think I would like to give a

half million, and what I would propose to do is give \$250,000 now and \$250,000 later."

He then testified that Mr. Vesco asked what form to give the contribution in, and added, "Mr. Stans said he would like it in currency."

Then, according to Mr. Richardson, Mr. Stans said, "I can't help you with this [the S.E.C. investigation], but let's see if we can get you an appointment with Mitchell today while you are here."

The witness said that Mr. Stans picked up the telephone, held a whispered conversation and then sent him and Mr. Vesco to Mr. Mitchell's office, in the same building. He did not know, he said, whether Mr. Vesco saw Mr. Mitchell that day, because when they arrived in Mr. Mitchell's outer office, Mr. Vesco told him that he did not "require" his presence any longer and sent him away.

Mr. Richardson is an unindicted co-conspirator in the case. Mr. Mitchell, former Attorney General, was an official in Mr. Nixon's re-election campaign at the time of the alleged visit.