

SEC Aide Testifies On the Vesco Case

New York

A Securities and Exchange Commission investigator, who developed a multi-million-dollar fraud case against financier Robert L. Vesco, testified yesterday he was under pressure to avoid anything that might prove "politically embarrassing."

Stanley Sporkin, stocky, dark-haired veteran of 13 years with the SEC, was a government witness at the outset of the seventh week in the criminal conspiracy trial of former Attorney General John N. Mitchell and onetime Commerce Secretary Maurice H. Stans.

Sporkin, an aggressive witness, covered pretty much the same ground as that done last week by his onetime superior, former SEC chairman G. Bradford Cook.

However, Cook's testimony was tainted by his admission to the jury that he had perjured himself at least five times before his appearance at the Mitchell-Stans trial.

Sporkin's account of the same series of events was intended to bolster Cook's trial testimony.

Mitchell and Stans are accused of impeding the SEC inquiry in return for Vesco's secret \$200,000 cash contribution to President Nixon's 1972 re-election campaign.

The two defendants had quit the cabinet to run the campaign.

The indictment charges that as part of the conspiracy, Stans caused Cook to eliminate a reference in the Vesco fraud complaint that might reveal the \$200,000 contribution and also sought



AP Wirephoto

STANLEY SPORKIN
Vesco case investigator

to have withheld transcripts of testimony in the case, which might have the same effect.

The conspiracy phase of the indictment also charged that Mitchell sought through Cook's predecessor as SEC chairman, William Casey, to have testimony from two Vesco's stenographers postponed by the agency.

"The chairman asked me," Sporkin testified, "whether we were subpoenaing in two women in connection with the Vesco investigation I said I'd check on it and call him back."

In two subsequent telephone conversations, Sporkin continued:

"I told Mr. Casey the two women had been subpoenaed and told him it had to do with the \$200,000, and he could be politically embarrassing if their testimony came out. He said, 'Stan, you know how things leak

out of the commission, and these could leak out.'

"I said the testimony could not be postponed. I said that would be wrong . . . I said he must rely on my judgment in this matter. He pursued it a little further and I stood fast.

"I said, 'Bill, you must rely on my judgment in this matter. Someday you're going to be thankful for relying on my judgment.'"

The two women were called as planned, but both took the Fifth Amendment and Vesco's contribution remained secret for the time being.

It was announced yesterday that President Nixon's brother, F. Donald Nixon Sr., will testify in the Mitchell-Stans trial this week—the first time a member of the Nixon family has appeared under oath in connection with any of the allegations against Nixon administration officials.

Donald Nixon was called as a prosecution witness.

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