

Vesco Denies Weapons Smuggling

San Jose, Costa Rica

Fugitive financier Robert L. Vesco says charges that weapons were smuggled into Costa Rica for him are "ridiculous and absurd."

Sources in Washington said Monday night that weapons and call girls were smuggled out of the United States to Vesco, who lives in Costa Rica.

Vesco's statement was in a letter presented Tuesday night to Costa Rica's minister of public security, Mario Charpantier. The minister said he is continuing investigations into the smuggling story.

In the letter, Vesco claimed that he aircraft allegedly used to transport the weapons was not his and added, "for a number of years I have not lived in the U.S. and wish to continue living in Costa Rica, which has more peace and harmony than anywhere else in the world. I support the laws of this country and deny the false allegations."

According to one source, the weapons were used to arm Vesco's bodyguards in his Costa Rican hideaway, and the call girls were said to have been procured by a Los Angeles madam.

Vesco's statement made no mention of the call girls.

Vesco is under federal indictment on charges stemming from a secret \$200,000 contribution he made to President Nixon's 1972 election campaign in an alleged attempt to influence an investigation by the Securities and Exchange Commission into a \$225 million mutual fund fraud.

The Costa Rican Supreme Court last year turned down U.S. requests for Vesco's extradition.

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