

A Lasky Rejoinder

By John Carmody

It started yesterday about 12:35 p.m., as "Panorama" co-hosts, Maury Povich and Bonnie Angelo, discussed the Nelson Rockefeller vice-presidential confirmation hearings on the mid-day Channel 5 talk show.

The name of free-lance writer Victor Lasky came up. He's the author of the controversial book, funded by Laurence Rockefeller, that attacked Arthur Goldberg during the latter's unsuccessful New York gubernatorial campaign against Nelson Rockefeller in 1970.

Miss Angelo, on vacation from her job as White House correspondent for Time magazine, mentioned that "it was also known that (Lasky) was on the payroll of the Committee to Re-Elect the President for Tricks" during the 1972 Nixon campaign.

Author Lasky overheard

the comment while talking on the telephone in his Watergate apartment ("I was waiting to see Rona Barrett"), called the station and demanded to talk either to Povich or Miss Angelo.

He was refused, so Lasky hailed a cab and showed up at the Wisconsin Avenue studios of Channel 5, where the writer said yesterday, he "was made to wait until 1:45," 15 minutes before the end of the program.

What ensued was a three-way shouting match on the air that drew hundreds of telephone calls from viewers. Lasky, claiming that Miss Angelo had charged him with election "dirty tricks," repeatedly called the correspondent a "vicious liar" and demanded an apology.

Miss Angelo in turn, said that she hadn't accused the writer of "anything illegal or immoral" but that to appear at the White House

during the 1972 campaign as an accredited journalist when on the CREEP payroll was, indeed, "a dirty trick."

Lasky acknowledged that he had received a retainer of \$20,000 from CREEP for writing speeches for Martha Mitchell, wife of the then-Attorney General. Miss Angelo challenged that statement, too.

"He was screaming," miss Angelo said later. "He was violent to the point of being scary."

Lasky, reached at home late yesterday, said "Bonnie's a nice girl but there's a climate in this town that anybody who's connected with the Republicans is guilty of something. I will not take this kind of an attack."

Two final guests, scheduled to appear on "Panorama" at 1:45 to discuss dairy prices, have been asked to return some other day.