

WXPost JAN 30 1976

# Inquiry on Farkas Is Renewed

By Timothy S. Robinson  
Washington Post Staff Writer

The Watergate special prosecutor's office has renewed its investigation into the possible sale of the Luxembourg ambassadorship in return for a campaign donation, and granted immunity yesterday to a key witness.

U.S. District Court Judge William B. Bryant signed the immunity order directing the witness, Benjamin Mates, to appear before a federal grand jury over the objections of Mates' attorney.

Mates, 73, from Manchester, N.H., was described by persons familiar with the case as a long-time friend of former Rep. Louis C. Wyman (R-N.H.) and the ambassador to Luxembourg, Ruth Farkas.

The special prosecutor's office reportedly has received allegations that Wyman told Mrs. Farkas' husband that she would receive the ambassadorship in return for a \$300,000 contribution to the 1972 re-election campaign of President Nixon. The case had been under investigation for nearly two years.

According to Mates' attorney, Benton Becker, the prosecutors now believe the alleged ambassadorship sale occurred at a December, 1971, luncheon at the Palm Beach (Fla.) Country Club. He said the luncheon was attended by Farkas, Wyman and Mates.

Farkas reportedly had told prosecutors that during the luncheon Wyman stated that in order for Mrs. Farkas to be named an ambassador she and her husband would have to contribute the money to the Nixon re-election campaign.

"Farkas responded by saying something to the effect of 'You've got it,'" Becker said yesterday in recounting the version of the meeting as he said it was told to him by prosecutors. Wyman has denied any such conversation. Members of the special

prosecutor's office refused to comment publicly on Becker's version of the incident, but they generally confirmed it privately.

Becker said Mates remembers the luncheon and a golf match preceding it, but "he has no recollection whatsoever of such a conversation" about ambassadorships.

In opposing the grant of immunity to Mates, Becker said at least one special prosecutor has told him Mates' story is unbelievable.

Therefore, according to Becker, there is a possibility Mates might be charged with perjury if he continues to give his version of the story under oath before the grand jury.

Watergate Assistant Special Prosecutor John Sale denied any intention of attempting to

trap Mates before the grand jury.

"Are we setting him up for perjury? No, we are not," Sale told Judge Bryant.

Bryant then signed the order, and Mates was taken before the grand jury.

The alleged role of Wyman in the sale of the ambassadorship became an issue in a special election in New Hampshire last fall in which Wyman was defeated for election to the Senate. The special prosecutor's office reportedly had informed Wyman at the time there was insufficient evidence to bring criminal charges in the case.

Mrs. Farkas has been the ambassador to Luxembourg since early 1973. The White House announced last week that she will be replaced in the near future.



LOUIS C. WYMAN  
...denies report