

5 MAY 69

Fortas's Statement on Article in Life

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, May 4—
Following is the text of a statement issued by Supreme Court Justice Abe Fortas in reply to a Life magazine report that he had received, and then returned, a fee from a family foundation of Louis E. Wolfson:

Since I became a member of the Court [October, 1965]:

[1]

I have not accepted any fee or emolument from Mr. Wolfson or the Wolfson Family Foundation or any related person or group.

In 1965, before I became a member of the Court, my law firm was retained in connection with civil litigation by one of Mr. Wolfson's companies.

In this connection I met Mr. Wolfson and discussed with him the significant and

commendable work of Mr. Wolfson and his family foundation in the field of harmonious racial and religious relations.

This is an area in which I have and have had a continuing interest apart from my official judicial or legal functions.

In 1966, in the hope that I would find time and could undertake, consistently with my Court obligations, research functions, studies and writings connected with the work of the foundation, the Wolfson Family Foundation tendered a fee to me.

Concluding that I could not undertake the assignment, I returned the fee with my thanks.

At no time did I have any reason to believe, nor do I now believe, that the tender of the fee was motivated by or involved any hope or expectation that it would in-

duce me to intervene or make representations on Mr. Wolfson's behalf.

[2]

At no time have I spoken or communicated with any official about Mr. Wolfson, whether with respect to a pardon or his criminal cases or his S.E.C. matters.

[3]

At no time have I given Mr. Wolfson or any of his family, associates, foundations or interests any legal advice or services, since becoming a member of the Court.

I have not participated, as a Justice or otherwise, in any legal or judicial matter affecting any of them.

In accordance with general judicial practice, I disqualify myself in cases which come to my attention concerning former clients or associates.