

A Wolfson-Fortas Parley On S.E.C. Case Reported

By FRED P. GRAHAM 19 MAY 69
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WASHINGTON, May 18—Life magazine reported today that Louis E. Wolfson had told Federal agents that former Justice Abe Fortas had discussed with him the Securities and Exchange Commission's case against Wolfson.

According to an article in the edition of Life being released tomorrow, Wolfson added that Mr. Fortas had expressed the opinion that "the charges were based on legal technicalities."

Mr. Fortas resigned from the Supreme Court last Wednesday following disclosures that after he had become a Justice he received—and later paid back—a \$20,000 fee from the family foundation of Wolfson, who was later imprisoned for selling unregistered stock.

Mr. Fortas, reached at his home here, declined to comment on the article.

In his farewell letter to Chief Justice Earl Warren last week, Mr. Fortas explained that "since I became a member of the Court, Mr. Wolfson on occasion would send me material relating to his problems, just as I think he did to many other people, and on several occasions he mentioned them to me."

He added that the fee was for research and studies for the foundation and not for any

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other advice or assistance. Moreover, he said, he did not intercede for Wolfson or take part in any proceeding affecting his case.

Wolfson was interviewed on Thursday, May 8, at the Federal minimum security prison at Eglin Air Force Base, Fla. He is serving a one-year prison term there under a conviction for what his defense attorneys contended was at most a highly technical violation of the securities laws.

According to the Life article, Wolfson also told the two Federal Bureau of Investigation agents who interviewed him that the foundation had agreed to pay Justice Fortas, or his wife, if she survived him, \$20,000 a year for life.

This information did not become public knowledge until Justice Fortas disclosed it in his letter to Chief Justice Warren.

The Justice Department said in a statement last week that Wolfson had been granted immunity from prosecution for answers he might give and had been questioned under a grand jury subpoena.

Capitol Hall sources have

said that the Justice Department is investigating possible violations of a Federal statute that makes it a felony for a Government official to represent a client in dealing with the Government and of a second law that makes it a misdemeanor for a Federal judge to practice law.

Nominees Face Inquiry

The Senate majority leader, Mike Mansfield, said today that the Senate would make a searching investigation of future Supreme Court nominees, but that Senate Democrats would not oppose President Nixon's nominees simply on partisan grounds, if they were Republicans.

In an interview with The Associated Press, Mr. Mansfield suggested that Mr. Nixon might take more time than had previously been expected in his selection of replacements for Mr. Fortas and retiring Chief Justice Warren.

Goldberg on Successor

Arthur J. Goldberg said yesterday that President Nixon was not under "any obligation" to appoint a Jew to succeed Abe Fortas on the Supreme Court.

The former United States Su-

preme Court Justice scored the concept of a "Jewish seat" on the Court, asserting that the nation had reached a point where judicial and political offices could be filled on the basis of individual merit.

Speaking at a news conference at the closing session of the annual meeting of the American Jewish Committee at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel, Mr. Goldberg said:

"I did not consider when I was appointed to the Supreme Court that I was occupying a Jewish seat. There is no need in our democracy to appoint a man to any institution of Government to preserve a so-called racial balance."