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Kickback charges probed in union loans

By TIMOTHY S. ROBINSON
Washington Post

WASHINGTON — The Justice Department is investigating charges that agents for a $1 billion dollar Teamsters Union pension fund were paid kickbacks on loans obtained from that fund according to United States District Court records

The case is being presented to a federal grand jury here by Justice Department attorneys, and sources said it is one of two ongoing federal investigations into the administration of the union's Central States, Southeast and Southwest Areas Pension Fund which is administered in Chicago

The second investigation is being conducted by the Internal Revenue Service, which has been studying the fund for at least one and a half years One I R S source called the pension fund inquiry the largest now being conducted by that agency, and said the Teamsters operation is so complicated that I R S drew a chart outlining it that covered a 6 feet by 10 feet wall

Francis Martin executive secretary of the Central States Fund in Chicago said yesterday he was unaware of any investigations into that fund

"I think we do have a loan out in that name" he said referring to the specific case being presented to the grand jury here but he said that he did not know the nature of the loan or the purpose of it

The normal procedure for a firm being lent money from the fund is for an application to be processed by the Chicago office, Martin said I R S sources said the fund has more than $700 million out on loan

The Justice Department has granted immunity from prosecution to two witnesses this month who had otherwise refused to testify before the grand jury here on the ground that their answers could incriminate them

A Justice Department spokesman yesterday refused any official comment on the case, saying the agency does not comment on whether investigations are being conducted

According to documents filed in Washington District Court the first witness, Ferris E Traylor, was being questioned concerning "payments within the District of Columbia to obtain a loan from the Central States, Southeast and Southwest Areas Pension Fund and kickbacks to an agent of that fund to obtain such a loan"

The specific loan being investigated was one made to Telesis Corp a cable-television firm, by the Central States Fund

Traylor, of Evansville, Ind., founded Telesis in 1964 and that firm now operates cable television franchises in eight states from Minnesota to Alabama Persons at the Evansville office said Traylor was a former president, but that he was no longer connected with that firm

Traylor could not be reached for comment yesterday

The second person granted immunity was Samuel Block, who at first refused to testify before the grand jury yesterday. He subsequently was granted immunity and testified He was not further identified by the department, but court sources said he also was from Indiana

Ellsberg, Russo acquittal asked

LOS ANGELES — (AP) — Attorneys for Daniel Ellsberg and Anthony Russo asked the Pentagon-papers trial judge today to order them acquitted immediately, saying the government has not proved that they committed any crimes

The motion for judgement of acquittal, which followed verbal completion of the government case, also asked the judge to drop all charges against the two men

Legal arguments on the motion were scheduled for later in the day

Listing the 15 counts of the indictment against Ellsberg and Russo the attorneys contended that in each count the government had presented "insufficient evidence" to prove charges of espionage, conspiracy and theft They attacked the government's classification system which they said wrongfully placed the marking "top secret" on the Pentagon's study of the Vietnam war

The motion said no proof had been presented in court that the defendants conspired to commit espionage — supposedly an act which could harm the United States' national defense

At most" the attorneys said, "The evidence shows an agreement of unions to copy a very limited number of documents over a very limited time span — hardly enough to show the intended objectives" of the espionage conspiracy charge

Asbestos toll to be heavy, says doctor

WASHINGTON — (AP) — A noted researcher told a Senate subcommittee today that by the end of this century asbestos will claim the lives of 1 million Americans who have worked or are now working with the fibrous mineral

"All will die in the next 40 to 50 years" said Dr Irving Selikoff of Mount Sinai School of Medicine in New York Selikoff is a recognized authority on asbestos related diseases

"It's terrible enough for these 1 million people but they're a limited group," he told the Senate commerce environmental subcommittee

But an unknown number of other persons who do not work directly with the material are exposed to asbestos every day to an unknown degree, he added

"Unfortunately, it's almost entirely a man-made disease," Dr Selikoff said "That means it's also man-preventable"

About 200,000 will die of lung cancer, another 70 000 of asbestosis or lung scarring, another 150 300 of other cancers and the rest of various other ailments, he said

Selikoff and his associate, Dr Arthur M Langer, told the subcommittee of a wide range of consumer products contaminated with asbestos

Beer, wine, liquor, soft drinks and drugs often are filtered with asbestos, they said

Dr Selikoff said that asbestos is a "ticking time bomb" that results in cancer 20 to 40 years after exposure.

Researcher blames virus, not genes, for cancer

SAN DIEGO — (UPI) — Viruses from outside rather than genes on the inside appear to be the cause of cancer, according to a Columbia University researcher

Dr Joe Spiegelman reported here yesterday on his research with identical twins indicated at least some forms of cancer were not part of a person's genetic heritage

"We've raised the curse off the disease," said Dr Spiegelman "We don't have to fight our own genes in order to control cancer"

Dr Spiegelman's research tends to disprove a theory that outside effects such as radiation chemicals nicotine and smog can start a genetic sequence that causes cancer

Dr Spiegelman believes viruses from outside the body are the cause and if true, he said many forms of human cancer were open to normal means of correction once the human cancer viruses were found and identified

For his research Dr Spiegelman used two sets of identical twins one suffering from cancer, the other normal

He said that when mixing the deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) molecule present in every cell in the twins with cancer, the DNA molecules formed hybrids But he said that when the malignant DNA was mixed with molecules from the healthy twins, they did not mix, indicating there was no inherent cancer sequence of genes in the DNA molecule of the healthy twins

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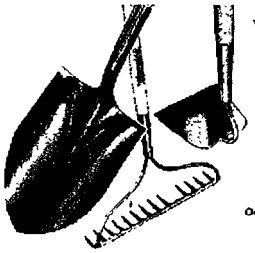
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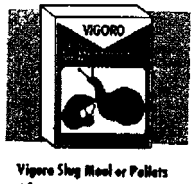
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