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Fortas Held Post In Braniff Airline Parent Company

BY JEAN HELLER
Associated Press Staff Writer

Prior to taking his job as an attorney, Abe Fortas was an officer of a company incorporated by individuals linked with Las Vegas gambling operations. One of the individuals later was indicted for perjury in the Bobby Baker case.

Other officers of the company, Greatamerica Corp., contributed to the $28,000 fund set up to finance a series of lectures by Fortas at American University here last summer. Fortas got half the money.

Greatamerica, a holding company for insurance firms, was the parent company of Texas-based Braniff Airways. In addition to being an officer of Greatamerica, Fortas was, during 1964, a director of Braniff.

After he left the company, a plot on the board of directors went to Paul A. Porter, former Braniff lawyer, who still held that position last year.

It was last year that the Civil Aeronautics Board and President Johnson granted a lucrative trans-Pacific route to Braniff despite a protest and a petition to the CAB examiner that Braniff not get such an award.

The CAB chairman who concurred in the Braniff award was Julie Crooker Jr., a former member of a Mountain law firm with ties to Johnson.

Crooker was appointed to the CAB by President John- son in March 1963 to fill an unexpired term but left in 1964—not far from the end of the Johnson term— for a full-year beginning last summer.

Fortas' involvement in the companies can be traced to 1962 when Greatamerica was incorporated, Crooker's reports showed. The incorporation papers, dated April 24, 1963, but Fortas as the company's attorney and general counsel did a deal.

Ex-Laxus Was Agent
Yes, it also lists Paul Laxalt as the company's agent—the official representation. Laxalt, now governor of Nevada, resigned from the job on Dec. 31, 1966, before taking the governor's job.

Yearly reports filed in Carson City show Fortas received an officer's salary for a five-month inter- val between July 1963 and July 1964.

Fortas took his seat on the Supreme Court for the first time last December, one year before the records for the following year became public Fortas was re- signed Dennis Lyons assumed Fortas' seat.

Toner and Dennis were attorneys with Ar- mel & Porter, Fortas' former Washington law firm, said he be- came vice president, general counsel and director of Greatamerica in May 1963. It could not be determined immediately when he resigned from the company with the decision to resign until then or when he retired from it.

One of the incorporators of Greatamerica was Glen Irvin Jones, Nevada Senate govern- or from 1947 to 1954 and a part- ner in the law firm of Jones, Carson & Irvin, which handled Fortas' divorce.

FORTAS
President Receives Letter of Resignation

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The Chief Justice of the United States has agreed to make it public late today.

The probe apparently was inspired by the news that the Justice Department had appointed a special prosecutor to investigate whether Fortas had received money in U.N. matters while he was on the bench, and the president of Greatamerica at the time of the incorpora- tion of the company had written to the Justice Department asking for an opinion on the matter.

A statement accompanying the letter, on which Fortas was to receive that amount if McCarthy won, was signed.

The trial judge said the evidence indicated Fortas was assisting Wollstone in the prosecution of the two senators.

Wollstone had obtained a warrant for the arrest of the senators while they were in the federal prison colony at Ostend, Europe, a statement of facts filed with the government said.

While Wollstone was in prison, he said the senators were "in the press of court business.

The charge was filed two years ago, a Washington administration official said, and there was talk of the possibility of a Justice Department investigation of Fortas.

In a statement, the White House said no further inquiry would be made into the possibility of a Justice Department investigation.

Presumably, Warner handed the letter to Attorneys General, who considered it for a full week before concluding it was too late to do anything about it.

In the meantime, there were congressional impulses of im- munity, and there was talk of the possibility of a Justice Department investigation of Fortas.

As recently as yesterday afternoon, some of the department's investigations reached the highest levels of the government. The Senate Finance Committee, headed by Sen. Allen J. Quayle, R-Ind., is considering the possibility of a Justice Department investigation of Fortas.

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COFFEE BREAK?

The concrete slab he was lifting proved just a little too heavy. He tugged and twisted, and R. J. Turnquist of Portland, Ore., found himself rising gently into the air. "It was a thrill," the power and light company worker recalled, as he ducked 12 feet to the ground and watched the set break.

FORTAS

President Receives Letter of Resignation

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errs, and he had agreed to make it public later.

Fortas' resignation was precipitated by the latest damaging revelations in the Johnson administration. The two other incorporators of Great America were Helen Irving and Katherine Waldman, both of Las Vegas, and both also directors of a Las Vegas concern which got a gambling license in June 1964.

The chairman of the board and president of Great America at the time of its incorporation was Troy V. Post. The company's fiscal 1968 report lists Gustave Levy as a director. Business men held their post through fiscal 1963 when Great America failed to make federal income taxes on the $100,000 paid by the company to Johnson's lecture bureau.

In 1968, the report states, the company was dissolved, and the Justice Department had documents and testimony indicating that the company was to be a lifetime matter.

Money for Lectures

Last year, Fortas collected $30,000 to finance Fortas' lecture circuit. Five men contributed to the fund. Two of them were Post and Levy.

A Los Angeles University official told the Senate last year that Fortas got $15,000 of the fund, and the university got the other $15,000.

Also last year, a CAB examiner held a hearing on the company's dealings with the CAB and its officials. The examiner got a $2,100 fee for the service, and the CAB paid him $1,000 for his work.

Fortas had an additional $500 from the CAB and its officials for his work on the CAB and its officials.

Michael's "Information"

A week ago yesterday, the Nixon administration's pressure on Fortas to resign because of the CAB's dealings with the CAB and its officials was being pushed by the CAB and its officials.

The CAB had given $1,250 in advance royalties on a book written by a former CAB commissioner, and had agreed to pay another $1,000 to the CAB and its officials.

His Background

Fortas, who was 59 last month, is a graduate of South Carolina and received his law degree from Yale in 1937. He taught law at the University of Texas and the University of Chicago before joining the law firm of Arnold, Fortas and Porter.

He was an undersecretary of the Department of Justice in the Justice Department in 1965 and 1966, and had served in the Justice Department as a lawyer in the Department of Justice in 1965 and 1966.

Until he joined the Supreme Court in 1965, he was a partner in the Washington firm of Arnold, Fortas and Porter.

His name was stricken from the rolls of the state bar when he joined the firm, but Fortas' wife, who uses her maiden name of Carolyn Agnew, remained a partner in the firm.

The committee's ranking members — Chairman Emanuel Celler, D-N.Y., and Senate Majority Leader Robert J.Kennedy, D-N.Y. — are the two most powerful men in the Senate, and Kennedy has been the most vocal in their opposition to the nomination of Fortas.

He was a Democrat, and Kennedy has been a strong supporter of Fortas' nomination. He has said that Fortas would be a great addition to the court.

Twelve senators, including Fortas, have made speeches in his favor, and the Justice Department has asked that Fortas be confirmed by the Senate.

In addition to a Playboy article, McCarthy and his colleagues have been critical of Fortas, and have said that Fortas should not be confirmed by the Senate.

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