

Subcommittee Gives Aide Clean Bill In Refund Case

WASHINGTON (AP)—Some Democratic and Republican members of a House subcommittee differ sharply on whether their report vindicates the conduct of Sherman Adams in a military contract settlement case.

The report, made public yesterday by the House Armed Services Investigations subcommittee, said it found no evidence indicat-

Jet To Start Noise Tests

NEW YORK (AP)—A British Comet IV jet airliner, which streaked here on its first transatlantic flight, is at Idlewild Airport for noise tests.

The plane, the first four-engine commercial jet to land at the field, is equipped with noise suppressors.

The tests, starting today, are aimed at determining whether the plane meets noise limitations set for the field. The Port of New York Authority, which operates Idlewild, gave permission for the Comet IV to visit the field. Four-engine jet planes without silencers have been banned at the field to lessen the noise nuisance to residential areas nearby.

The jet landed at Idlewild yesterday after a 10½-hour flight from England, including a 1½-hour stopover at Gander, Nfld.

The Comet carried 22 persons, including the crew. It was piloted by group Capt. John Cunningham, 41, chief test pilot for the De Havilland Aircraft Co., manufacturer of the plane.

Cunningham said the silencers were effective on the ocean flight and did not cut the plane's power materially.

Cunningham said that in regular service the Comet should make one-stop flights from England in about nine hours and nonstop flights eastward in seven hours with the help of prevailing winds.

British Overseas Airways Corp. hopes to start Comet IV passenger service across the Atlantic later this year.

ing presidential assistant Adams intended to influence the \$40,382 penalty refund, after nearly 17 years, to Raylaine Worsteds, Inc., Manchester, N. H.

But when interviewed, members of the subcommittee divided along party lines in putting their own interpretations on their findings.

The report, adopted unanimously, was described by Rep. Porter Hardy (D-Va.), a member, as "a minimum in the way of conclusions, but a maximum on which the subcommittee could agree."

Republicans hailed the report as vindication of Adams, who has been involved in two congressional investigations of reports that his prestige was used to get favored treatment for others. Adams has denied bringing any improper pressure to bear, either in this case or another involving textile manufacturer Bernard Goldfine.

In its report, the subcommittee determined that Sen. Styles Bridges and Rep. Chester E. Merrow, both New Hampshire Republicans, and Sen. Irving M. Ives (R-NY) at various times made inquiries about the Raylaine case. But there was no criticism of them.

On the Adams aspect of the case, Hardy suggested the public read the transcript of the subcommittee's closed door hearings and "judge for themselves whether the conduct disclosed in the subcommittee hearings conforms either to their personal standards to the precepts which have been voiced in high places."

senior Republican member of the subcommittee, said such a reading would show "not one scintilla of evidence of any attempt to influence the Armed Services Board of Contract Appeals either by Sherman Adams or members of Congress."

Hess discounted the "Dear Sherman" letters from persons interested in Raylaine, which were relayed to the Pentagon from the White House with requests for replies.

"I would venture to say Sherman Adams never even saw those letters, but they were sent along by some secretary," Hess said.

Hess joined Rep. William H. Bates (R-Mass.), another subcommittee member, in saying Americans properly expect they can write to their elected or appointed officials about problems and get replies.

"I can't think of anybody doing less than Adams did, or see how anything could be more routine," Bates said.

Bates said the findings do not reflect in any way on Adams.

Chairman F. Edward Hebert (D-La.) told a news conference the subcommittee could not determine Adams' intent, since Adams turned down an opportunity to appear before it.

But the members who testified said they do not think the decision itself was influenced by the show of White House interest.

Raylaine, penalized \$49,784 in 1941 for late delivery of cloth to the Army, fought the decision intermittently until 1957 when the comptroller general and the contract appeals board reversed earlier findings and granted a new hearing. This resulted in a finding that much of the delay was excusable because of war shortages. The company got back \$40,382.

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There is no doubt that the memoranda he transmitted on White House stationery had their effect in bringing about speedy action," Hebert said. "I don't want to say it influenced the decisions of the members of the board."

Hebert termed the committee report a "Scotch verdict"—an inconclusive decision.

In the Raylaine case, Adams wrote the Armed Services subcommittee that he never communicated directly with the contract appeals board. But Adams said that over a period of four years he "routinely referred" seven or eight letters received from Raylaine to President Eisenhower's military aide, asking the aide to get suggestions for answers.

The letters aroused some resentment on the contract appeals board.

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