

U.S. Probes '71 Vote in 34th Ward

BY WILLIAM CURRIE

Federal prosecutors are widening their investigation of Chicago vote fraud to include a bitterly contested aldermanic election in 1971, and separate charges involving Ald. Edwin P. Fifielski (45th).

Government attorneys are studying affidavits by hundreds of registered voters who swore that they voted in the 1971 34th Ward aldermanic race for losing candidate Augustus (Gus) Savage.

On the basis of those affidavits, the federal lawyers could obtain a subpoena order-

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ing the Chicago Board of Election Commissioners to produce the records of that election for a recount in the far South Side ward.

Denied a Recount

Savage was denied a recount after the election last year when Board Chairman Stanley T. Kasper Jr. successfully fought the request in Circuit Court. The records remain impounded by order of the court while an appeal is pending in the Illinois Appellate Court.

The federal agents are looking at voting records in the 45th Ward of Fifielski, a Democrat, to determine if he conspired with his brother, Walter T. Fifiel, Lincolnwood, to allow Fifiel to vote in his Northwest Side ward for the past 15 years.

Asked why his brother voted in his ward and precinct, the alderman replied: "Because that's his own personal business."

Information leading to these new phases of the investigation was gathered by The Tribune Task Force after its recent series on vote fraud, which has resulted so far in the indictments of scores of election judges and Democratic precinct captains.

Affidavits Are Signed

In some of the precincts of the 34th Ward contested in 1971, affidavits were signed a few days after the election by more registered voters than

there were voters tallied for Savage, an independent.

For instance, in the 14th Precinct, the official canvass gave Savage 3 votes, and his opponent, Wilson Frost, presently the Democratic alderman, 243 votes.

However, 115 registered voters in that precinct swore in the affidavits that they had voted for Savage. Kasper and his lawyer, William R. Mint, charged later that the evidence was vague and unspecific. Circuit Court Judge Harry G. Comerford agreed, dismissing the plea for a recount.

In the Fifielski case, a reporter interviewed the alderman's brother, who said that he has been living in Lincolnwood with his wife and sister-in-law for the last 15 years, but has been voting at his and his brother's business address 4758 N. Milwaukee Av.

"I have a bed, a suit of clothes, and I hang my hat there," Fifiel said, explaining why he votes there. State records show that Fifiel has used his Lincolnwood address, 6557 Knox Av., on his state driver's license application for 15 years.

An inspection of the apartment above the Fifiel-Fifielski business address, where the alderman and his wife also live, revealed one bedroom

with two beds.

"I have a day bed in the reception area up front," Fifiel said.