

# Millionaire Land Developer Indicted on Bribery Charge

## Official Says Offer Made on Rezoning

Milan Roven, millionaire Southern California land developer, was indicted by the grand jury Tuesday for allegedly trying to bribe the president of the City Planning Commission.

The six-count indictment charges the 52-year-old Roven, of 183 S Detroit St., with two counts each of offering a bribe to a city official, of offering a city employee a bribe and of soliciting a public official to accept a bribe in connection with land zoning in the San Fernando Valley.

Dep. Dist. Atty. Fred Henderson, who presented the case to the grand jury, informed Superior Judge Evelle J. Younger that Roven's attorneys had told him the developer would surrender this morning. Bond was set at \$2,500.

### Two Attempts Charged

Roven is accused of making two attempts to bribe Charles F. Flanagan, president of the Planning Commission, beginning last April.

Flanagan reported the incidents to Mayor Yorty, who subsequently ordered a police investigation based on two tape recordings Flanagan reportedly made of his conversations with Roven.

The commission president is understood to have told the grand jury that Roven allegedly offered him a partnership in some Orange County land developments in exchange for the rezoning of property at Arleta Ave. and Chamberlain St. in Mission Hills from residential to commercial usage.

Flanagan reportedly made a tape recording of this conversation in his office but it was reported that much of the tape is unintelligible.

The second alleged bribe attempt came in September, Flanagan is reported to have testified.

### Application Denied

He is understood to have told the grand jury that Roven offered him \$1,000 for use in a political campaign if property at Topanga Canyon and Parthenia St. in Canoga Park was rezoned from RS (one residence for each 7,500 square ft.) to R-3 or multiple dwelling use.

The Planning Commission denied the application for the Mission Hills rezoning and also for the rezoning in Canoga Park although Roven reportedly sought to have the Canoga Park request withdrawn after learning his conversation with Flanagan had been recorded.

It is common knowledge in the land development and promotion business that property zoned for multiple dwellings and for commercial use is far more valuable

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than land zoned for single family use.

Roven was not available for comment.

Twelve witnesses testified before the grand jury, including members of the City Planning Department and Leonard Shane, a member of the city Recreation and Parks Commission who is a friend of Roven.

Roven is a partner in the Roven Spiegel Construction Co., Inc., with headquarters at 5656 W 3rd St.

Although the firm is the parent corporation of an estimated 80 other sub-corporations and companies and does millions of dollars worth of business each year in Los Angeles, Orange and Ventura Counties, it has drawn little public attention since its formation in 1950.

Co-partner with Roven is Abraham Spiegel, 56, who lives in the same duplex on Detroit St. that Roven does.

Both men were born in Czechoslovakia and came to this country after World War II.

Roven was active in business in Europe for 25 years and during the war was in a German concentration



Milan Roven

camp. He came to the United States and California in 1947 and was naturalized here in 1953. He is married and has three children.

Spiegel and his family were active in the lumber business and as contractors in Europe until World War II and he likewise was interned with his wife Edita in a German concentration camp.