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Sep. 13, 2001

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Sunday, December 31, 2000

Late Update

What's the Buzz?

Securities dealers take Fifth Amendment

Under investigation by the Indiana Securities Commission, the two operators of a Grenadian bank have invoked their constitutional right against self-incrimination.

John Brinker of Withamsville and Gary Bentz of Loveland took the Fifth Amendment in their official response, Securities Commissioner Bradley Skolnik said.

Indiana regulators issued the "cease and desist" order in mid-October, ordering Mr. Brinker and Mr. Bentz to stop misleading investors and selling unregistered securities.

The pair sold securities through a bank registered in Grenada called Wellington Bank and Trust. Mr. Skolnik would not say how many investors and how much money are involved.

They sold the stock throughout Greater Cincinnati, much of it in Dearborn County.

The Indianapolis lawyer representing Mr. Brinker, Mr. Bentz and CastleRock Consulting, another company named in the Indiana complaint and operated by Mr. Brinker, could not be reached for comment.

Mr. Brinker and Mr. Bentz did not return calls seeking comment.

In a separate filing, an attorney for Wellington Bank and Trust has filed a motion to dismiss the cease-and-desist order, arguing there is not enough evidence to support it, Mr. Skolnik said.

"We strongly believe there's overwhelming evidence to support the fact that there's been a violation of the state securities act," he said.

— Cliff Peale

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