

Leads Name to YAF Drive

Return to HW

Martha Leans to the Right

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By Eugene L. Meyer
Washington Post Staff Writer

Three weeks after the conservative Young Americans for Freedom voted to oppose President Nixon's re-election, a letter bearing Martha Mitchell's name was mailed on behalf of a YAF-sponsored fund drive.

Mrs. Mitchell's husband was Nixon's campaign manager in 1968, and is expected to leave his job as Attorney General to head the re-election drive in 1972.

The stated purpose of the drive, called Project Appreciation, is to raise money for "Appreciation Kits" for hospitalized G.I.s. The kits would contain such innocuous items as toothpaste, after shave lotion and (no foreign policy pun intended) dominoes.



MARTHA MITCHELL

... project sponsor

But, along with the apolitical items servicemen will receive, conservative publications that have been strongly critical of the

Nixon administration have been "added specially to the kit" according to the accompanying brochure.

These include Human Events, a weekly newsletter; Battle Line, published by the American Conservative Union; New Guard, magazine of YAF; William F. Buckley Jr.'s National Review and Barry Goldwater's "Conscience of a Conservative."

These publications have attacked the President's welfare reform package, his planned trip to China and, most recently, his 90-day wage-price freeze.

Mrs. Mitchell's letter went out last week to 250,000 people, according to Bruce Eberle, director of Project Appreciation and a member of YAF's national board.

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Martha Gives Aid to the GOP Right

YAF, From B1

The envelope contains her name and YAF's Washington address, 1221 Massachusetts Ave. NW, while the letterhead gives her Watergate East residence.

The letter describes Project Appreciation as "a united effort by patriotic citizens to demonstrate how we care." YAF, it says, "is particularly well-suited to head up this project. As the largest anti-Communist youth organization—with 66,000 members in over 800 chapters—these young patriots are volunteering their time to pack and deliver the kits to the hospitals.

"Unlike the far left radicals who can only criticize our boys, YAFers are grateful citizens," the letter said. Each kit cost \$9.20, the letter noted. "Keep in mind, these kits contain personal items not provided by the government."

Mrs. Mitchell's letter makes no mention of the political literature listed in a separate brochure.

Neither the Attorney General nor Mrs. Mitchell could be reached for comment yesterday. But Jack Hushen, an aide to the Attorney General, said, "I doubt if he knows about it. Mrs. Mitchell does many things he finds out about after the

fact or when they come to public attention."

Eberle said the YAF sought Mrs. Mitchell's endorsement this summer and received it a month later, one week before its national convention. "When we contacted her, she took a long time before saying yes or no, so we assume someone in the administration—probably not Dick Nixon—approved it."

Asked if Mrs. Mitchell knew that political items were being added to the kits, Eberle said, "I'm pretty sure she's seen the entire brochure."

The project "does go a little beyond the charitable as-

pect by putting this literature in," Eberle said, but he said administrators at various Veterans Administration hospitals would make final decisions about "who's getting what."

Eberle said YAF has worked closely with the VA on the venture. "I'm not sure if they've seen any of our solicitation brochures," he said.

YAF, at its recent Houston convention, said Vice President Spiro Agnew should be elected president next year and set up a \$750,000 fund drive to support a conservative challenge to Nixon's re-election.