

Hill Unit Finds 'Pervasive Manipulation' Of Civil Service System in Nixon Years

Associated Press

The Nixon administration violated civil service regulations hundreds of times in an effort to get federal jobs for politically favored persons, a House subcommittee has concluded after a 22-month investigation.

In its final report on abuses in federal employment between 1969 and 1973, the subcommittee said there was "pervasive manipulation of merit systems procedures to provide preferential treatment for favored candidates for career appointments."

It said the White House personnel operation was the "nerve center" of this operation.

The 246-page report of the Subcommittee on Manpower and Civil Serv-

ice is expected to be released later this week. A copy was obtained by the Associated Press.

The report urged changes in federal personnel laws, including a prohibition on political referrals for career federal jobs, which are supposed to be filled by the best qualified applicant.

The report said President Nixon ordered White House personnel chief Frederic V. Malek to look not only for ability in prospective office-holders but for political compatibility with Nixon as well.

Malek's personnel operation mainly was concerned with finding persons for noncareer jobs, which are openly political appointments. But, the report said, the White House also referred

political favorites of the administration or of certain members of Congress for career jobs.

Meanwhile, the Civil Service Commission, the agency that is supposed to insure that nonpolitical jobs are filled by the best applicant, "aided and abetted" the administration, the report said.

During the four years covered by the report, "The commission consistently assumed an ostrich-like stand in response to repeated and specific allegations of political influence."

The political favoritism has "seriously damaged the integrity of the whole system," the subcommittee said. A Civil Service Commission spokesman declined comment on the report.