

S. Korean Declared to Cust His List Showed a Payment

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By CHRIS CONNELL

WASHINGTON (AP) — Federal investigators are weighing the significance of a handwritten list, taken by customs agents from South Korean businessman Tong-sun Park in 1973, which outlined apparent cash payments to many prominent U.S. politicians, including then-President Richard Nixon.

Park, a wealthy rice trader, is a key figure in a federal grand jury probe of alleged influence-buying in Congress by South Korean agents.

Donovan Working, former head of the customs office in Anchorage, Alaska, said Park boasted to inspectors who searched him in Anchorage on Dec. 8, 1973, that the politicians on the list, including Nixon, had received thousands of dollars in campaign contributions in connection with Park's ice deals.

But a government source said yesterday that Justice Department investigators are still trying to determine the meaning of the list and have not discovered whether Park had made payments to the officials named on the paper.

"That list can be viewed as one of Park's wildest dreams," said the source, who added that the meaning still has to be checked.

Agents were unable to confiscate the list and it was returned to Park at the time, but Working said his inspectors who saw it tried to recreate it from memory later.

Park's papers were written in Korean, but contained the politicians' names in English, followed by numerals that Park said represented thousands of dollars, according to Working.

Most of the names have not been made public. But Working said that in addition to Nixon's he recalled the names of Sens. Barry Goldwater, R-Ariz., and Hubert H. Humphrey, D-Minn., on the list, along with then-Rep. Richard T. Hanna, D-Calif.

Spokesmen for Humphrey and

Goldwater said yesterday the senators never got contributions from Park or any other Korean agents.

The largest number on the list, 500, was next to Nixon's name and Park told the inspectors that stood for \$500,000. Working recalled yesterday in a telephone interview from Laredo, Tex., where he is now district customs director.

The South Korean government has denied that Park, a prominent figure in Washington social circles, ever acted in its behalf in his dealings with congressmen.

Meanwhile, the Washington Post reported in today's editions that during the final months of the Nixon administration, the South Korean government tried to give a \$10,000 cash gift to a White House aide and expensive presents to presidential staff members and their wives.

It quoted the aide, John E. Nidecker, as saying a close confidante of South Korean President Park Chung Hee named Park Chong Kyu signed the envelope containing \$10,000. Nidecker said it was handed to him as he was leaving Korea, where he had gone to attend a prayer breakfast for President Park in May 1974.

The envelope had "Bon Voyage" written on it, the Post said. When Nidecker realized it contained money, the story said, he turned it over to Philip C. Habib, then U.S. ambassador to Korea. He

gave the cash to the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency station chief in Seoul to return to the Korean president.

Nidecker said he also was given a variety of gifts while in Korea, which he turned over to the General Services Administration.

The Post said Nidecker related that shortly thereafter, a Korean national assemblyman named Ro Chin Hwan visited Washington and left expensive gifts for between 10 and 12 White House aides and their wives. According to Nidecker, the gifts were refused and he mailed them back to Korea, the newspaper said.

Nidecker could not be reached

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for comment immediately. Habib, reached by telephone, declined to discuss the matter.

Park reportedly has told federal prosecutors that he gave gifts to several former and present congressmen but he has denied that he was acting for the Seoul government.

The customs inspectors in Anchorage searched Park because they suspected he was bringing an expensive camera into the United States as an undeclared gift, Working related. The inspectors found the list with the politicians' names while searching for the camera's invoice, and Park made frantic efforts to recover it, Working said.