

New White House Cover-up Alleged

By Jack Anderson

The Watergate cover-up continued in at least one instance after President Nixon left the White House.

President Ford's associate counsel, Dudley Chapman, allegedly tried to conceal the fact that a secret White House fund was used to pay government aides to serve as "advance men" during the 1972 campaign.

Chapman informed government auditors that the fund belonged not to the White House but to the Republican National Committee and the Nixon campaign committee.

This has been disputed by the General Accounting Office, which has just concluded a secret investigation. "Contrary to Mr. Chapman's statement," the GAO found, the fund "was a White House account."

"The failure to disclose the existence of such a political fund in the White House until two years after the campaign period," charged the GAO, "appears to constitute a violation of the act."

The case has been referred to Attorney General William B. Saxbe for action.

The secret fund, listed on the books as "The White House Subsidiary Account," was opened in October, 1970. Since 1971, its treasurer has been Wilbur Jenkins, the chief White House Administrative Officer, a career employee, who confessed to GAO accountants that he "made bank deposits for the Subsidi-

ary Account and signed the checks."

But Jenkins apparently was the fall guy for Nixon aides who really controlled the fund. He told the GAO auditors that Bruce Kehrli, then the White House staff secretary and later a minor Watergate figure, "approved and directed all such transactions."

Exactly how the fund was manipulated is still a mystery. It was used to pay the political expenses of Nixon "advance men," including luncheons and cocktail parties that they arranged for political purposes.

We have learned that at least \$10,000 in cash was slipped into the fund by Nixon campaign treasurer Hugh Sloan, who delivered the money secretly to Kehrli.

But this didn't cover all the political expenditures, so some of the taxpayers' money apparently was spent on the campaign. After the Watergate case broke, a second secret \$5,000 was siphoned from campaign coffers into the fund as "reimbursement to White House -- Campaign Expenses."

The existence of the White House fund remained a secret until March, 1974, when a cryptic reference to it turned up in the liquidation papers of the Nixon finance committee.

This aroused the interest of the GAO, which got the run-around for months before its auditors finally gained access to the records. They found that the

fund, in violation of federal law, had failed to file any campaign statement for more than two years. This forced the White House to submit a belated filing. But even after President Ford's takeover, his associate counsel continued to deny to the GAO that the White House had run the mysterious fund committee.

Footnote: Chapman disputed the cover-up charges, saying, "I don't think the GAO knows what they're talking about." There was no delay in turning over the papers to GAO, he told us. Kehrli, now a Los Angeles construction official, told us the fund was set up to make sure political expenses were not paid for by the taxpayers. He said Nixon-era White House lawyers assured him there was no need to register the fund as a committee.

Election Rigging? The crusading attorney who broke up the corrupt former United Mine Workers hierarchy, Joseph Rauh, has taken on a new client.

Representing the underdog as usual, Rauh is battling to overthrow the leadership of the United Steelworkers' controversial District 31. This is the largest district in the AFL-CIO's largest union.

The district is now in the middle of a rerun of a 1973 election, which was thrown out by the courts after evidence of ballot fraud and election irregularities.

Sam Evett, the hand-picked candidate of the steelworkers

hierarchy, won the 1973 election for district director. But the evidence was strong that Edward Sadlowski, the reform challenger, should have won. A new vote was ordered.

Now Rauh has charged that the Labor Department, which has always been allied with the old-line union powers, is secretly favoring Evett in many little ways.

In an emotional private appeal to Labor Secretary Peter Brennan, Rauh reminded him of the United Mine Workers case. In 1969, Rauh had warned Brennan's predecessor, George Shultz, to take action to prevent bloodshed.

But Shultz did nothing. Later, dissident candidate Jock Yablonski, his wife and daughter were murdered in their beds by allies of incumbent Tony Boyle.

Any violence in the steelworkers election, warned Rauh, "will be on your conscience just as Shultz's failure to act will always be on his."

Footnote: United Steelworkers official Elmer Chatak, now on leave to manage Evette's campaign, denied that the "minor infractions" in the last election affected its outcome. He called Rauh's charges of new campaign irregularities "completely unfounded." The Labor Department told us they are working hard to ensure fair elections and are favoring neither candidate.

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