

# Sources Name Md. Donor of

By Richard M. Cohen  
and Edward Walsh  
Washington Post Staff Writers

Florenz R. Ourisman, a former owner of Ourisman Chevrolet, was the Maryland resident mentioned in a government report who last year secretly donated \$150,000 to President Nixon's re-election campaign, according to informed sources.

Part of that money, the federal General Accounting Office said in a report last week, later was transferred back to Maryland where it was used to inflate the proceeds from a 1972 Baltimore testimonial dinner for Vice President Spiro T. Agnew.

Ourisman, these sources said, contributed \$3,000 to each of 50 Nixon campaign committees in the hope that the large donation would bring him an ambassadorship. The checks were given to Maurice Stans, the former Secretary of Commerce who served as chairman of the Finance Committee to Re-elect the President.

The first indication that a Maryland resident had donated more than \$100,000 to the Nixon campaign came

last week when the GAO reported the secret contribution. The report said that the contribution was solicited by Alexander Lankler, Maryland State Republican chairman, who "exact[ed] a commitment . . . that \$50,000 of these funds would be transferred to his committee upon request for the Maryland presidential campaign."

The commitment, Lankler said, was extracted to pay for the overhead of the Maryland Committee for the Re-election of the President. Later, when the overhead of all the state committees was picked up by the national headquarters, the money was funneled into the Agnew testimonial committee.

The money, which Lankler received from Stans in \$100 bills, was later manipulated through the "Salute to Ted Agnew Night" committee and attributed to donors who never contributed the amount stated. The committee did this, Lankler has said, to make the Agnew event look like a success.

An Anne Arundel County grand jury is investigating the committee's activities and has already indicated one unnamed person on four counts of violating the state's Fair Election Practices Act. The indictment, however, has been sealed and the name of the person not revealed.

Ourisman, a Bethesda resident, has not returned any telephone calls and could not be reached for comment. Lankler has confirmed the accuracy of the GAO report but has steadfastly refused to reveal the name of the secret donor. He said that the donor requested anonymity and that

he would honor that request.

Sources said the Ourisman contribution was made April 5, 1972, two days before a new campaign reporting law went into effect. As a result, neither the contribution nor the donor was reported.

Last January, a suit filed by Ralph Nader's Public Citizen, Inc., revealed that Ourisman had contributed \$42,000 on April 5, 1972, to various Nixon campaign committees. That donation, sources said, was part of the \$150,000 contributed by the Maryland resident. At that time, Ourisman told a Washington Post reporter that he knew nothing of the contribution. "I have no comment whatsoever," he added. "I wish you'd leave me alone."

It was also learned yesterday that the General Accounting Office is investigating more than \$47,000 in corporate contributions to the Agnew affair.

Corporate contributions to candidates for federal office are illegal under federal law. Maryland law allows corporate contributions to candidates for state office.

The contributions, totaling \$47,400 from ticket sales to the dinner, were made by 66 corporations, most of them in Baltimore, according to records in the State Board of Election Laws office in Annapolis. The corporate contributions were listed in reports filed with state authorities but omitted from the reports of receipts from the Agnew dinner filed with the GAO.

B. H. Wharton, treasurer of the Maryland Salute to Agnew Committee, said in a telephone interview Wednesday that the corporate

elections for state offices in Maryland. Wharton, however, said most of the corporate donations were turned over to the Republican State Central Committee, which operates year-round. Some of the funds also were turned over to the Maryland United Republican Finance Committee, which supports only GOP candidates for state office, he said.

Wharton, who signed the finance reports to both the state and the GAO, expressed surprise that the corporate contributions were not reported to the GAO.

"They should have been listed," he said. "Maybe they were not because they were not going to be used in a federal election."

Robert L. Higgins, counsel for the GAO's Office of Federal Elections, said a corporate contribution "received for the purposes of a federal candidate or spent for any federal candidate would appear to be a violation."

Higgins said an election law violation probably would not be involved if the Agnew dinner fund raisers kept the corporate funds entirely separate from other contributions and could "show that the corporate funds were not raised or spent for federal election purposes . . ."

He said the mere maintenance of funds were kept separate from other contributions in a separate bank account at the Maryland National Bank. He said the corporate contributions "were all used in the state," and not for federal election purposes.

In 1972, there were no

# \$150,000

nance of separate accounts at the Maryland National Bank "does not answer the question one way or another."

Higgins said the GAO became aware of the corporate contributions when its investigators checked state records on the Agnew dinner earlier this week.

Meanwhile, a GAO investigator flew to St. Louis, yesterday to question campaign consultant Roy Pfautch on his part in the operation of the Agnew gala. Pfautch, whose firm, Civil Services, Inc., of St. Louis, organized Agnew fund raising committees in Baltimore and Washington is described by sources close to the investigation as having been in charge of the "nuts and bolts" part of the fund raising.

Pfautch also was questioned about whether he knew who gave the \$50,000 that was transferred from the Nixon campaign to the Agnew testimonial dinner.

Pfautch declined to say in a telephone interview whether he was aware of the true source of the money.

He said the corporate donations were used solely for state campaigns.

Ourisman and his brother, Mandell, inherited the automobile dealership from their father, Benjamin, who died in 1955. Florenz Ourisman has since left the business and is now engaged in real estate and development in the Washington area.

*Contributing to this account were Staff Writers Bill Richards and Douglas Watson.*