

Automen Rejected Nixon Fund Bid

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American Motors Corp. officials said yesterday that the Finance Committee to Re-elect the President asked for a contribution of \$100,000 from its executives, but that the corporation flatly refused.

The episode began last spring, said William M. Trevarrow, who serves as a Washington representative for American Motors and other firms. As he described it yesterday, Robert P. Odell Jr., executive director of the Republican National Finance Committee, visited Trevarrow's office in the National Press Building, and asked for a \$100,000 contribution, which American Motors presumably would collect from its executives.

Campaign contributions out of corporate funds are illegal.

Trevarrow said he told Odell "No—after I stopped laughing," adding that "the amount was absurd so far as I was concerned." Trevarrow then reported the solicitation to Frank Hedge, vice president for public relations.

About a week later, Trevarrow said, Odell again visited him and asked for \$50,000 from American Motors officials.

In his pitch for the money, Trevarrow said, Odell stressed that funds contributed before April 7 would not have to be reported under a new campaign disclosure law. Trevarrow said, as he recalls, the Odell solicitations took place in late March.

After the second solicitation, Trevarrow said, he again

telephoned Hedge at the automaker's Detroit headquarters. "I'm not here to make that kind of decision," Trevarrow said.

Hedge said he told Trevarrow that American Motors would not meet such a request to solicit money from its employees, and Trevarrow then informed Odell there would be no contribution.

Hedge said he in turn told board chairman Roy D. Chapin of his action, and Chapin concurred.

"I disapprove of the idea of executives telling their employees to contribute money to a certain candidate," Chapin said.

Odell was out of the country on vacation and could not be reached for comment. Odell

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ROY D. CHAPIN, JR.

... approved the turndown

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worked during the campaign both for the Republican National Finance Committee and the Finance Committee to Re-elect the President.

Maurice Stans, chairman of the Finance Committee to Re-elect the President, also was unavailable for comment, but the general counsel, Stanley Ebner, said: "I don't doubt that there is some truth to the basic elements of the story, but so far as the coloration I don't know, or the amount Odell requested or the way he requested it."

Chapin, when asked yesterday if he had heard anything about General Motors may have been asked to contribute, said he had not. Chapin then laughed and added that on a proportionate basis, "maybe 15 times as much." (General Motors had 1971 sales of \$28 billion compared to American Motors sales of \$1.2 billion.)

Earlier, officials of U.S. Steel Corp. told The Post that Stans, the President's chief fundraiser, had asked the company to collect a specific

quota of money from its executives. U.S. Steel executives contributed to the Nixon campaign but the amount was far less than Stans requested, said William Whyte, the firm's Washington representative.

Chapin said American Motors made no organized effort until this year to encourage its executives to give to political campaigns.

This year, Chapin said, he encouraged executives to make contributions on a non-partisan basis and that many responded. He said a "double envelope" system was used so that no one would know to

which campaign executives had given money.

Chapin says he disapproves of the "conduit system" in which companies support specific candidates and raise money for them from their employees.

Chapin said he personally supported the President's campaign, "but I don't believe in that kind of thing."