

# Hughes Gift To Md. GOP Race Cited

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Billionaire recluse Howard Hughes contributed \$10,000 in cash to the losing 1970 Maryland gubernatorial campaign of Republican C. Stanley Blair at the personal request of Blair's longtime friend, Vice President Spiro T. Agnew, a Hughes aide has testified in a civil suit deposition in Las Vegas.

"I delivered \$10,000 . . . for delivery, I believe, to the then candidate for governor of the state of Maryland, who was a dear friend of the then Vice President of the U.S., Mr. Agnew, who had requested it of Mr. Hughes," Thomas G. Bell, Hughes' former assistant for political affairs, stated in the March 19, 1973, deposition.

"Mr. Hughes had instructed Mr. Maheu (former Hughes aide Robert A. Maheu) to honor the request for the money," Bell said. "I then delivered the money to Mr. Al Bishop in a manila envelope, \$10,000."

Receipt of the money by the Blair campaign was acknowledged last night in interviews with two former aides to Blair, who is now a federal judge in Baltimore. Blair could not be reached for comment.

According to Newsday, a Long Island newspaper that published a story about the \$10,000 contribution in its Saturday afternoon editions, Bishop, who was a public relations employee of Maheu's, carried the envelope containing the \$10,000—in \$100 bills—to Washington and gave it to Gus Constantine.

Formerly employed in Vice President Agnew's office and

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a campaign associate of Blair. Constantine deposited the money in a Blair campaign account at a suburban Washington bank, Newsday reported.

Newsday also reported that the cash came from the cashier's cage of Huges' Silver Slipper casino in Las Vegas, the source of cash contributions to other candidates in other parts of the United States, according to depositions filed along with Bell's in Los Angeles. The depositions were filed in connection with a libel suit filed by Maheu against Hughes, who fired Maheu.

Constantine last night acknowledged to The Washington Post that he had received the money from Bishop and that he knew at the time the money had come from Hughes.

He said he then left the money at Blair for Governor Committee headquarters in the Washington Hilton and that it was later deposited in a

suburban Washington branch of the Maryland National Bank.

Constantine said he did not recall if, in leaving the money at the Blair headquarters, he had made a notation as to where the money came from. He said it was his "understanding that the money was later reported as coming from tickets to a ball or bullroast."

Constantine said he was questioned about the contribution last fall by agents of the Internal Revenue Service. However, he said IRS was not investigating the Blair campaign but rather appeared to be looking into Hughes' and Maheu's financial affairs.

The \$10,000 contribution to Blair, who has since been appointed to a U.S. District Court judgeship in Baltimore by President Nixon, was acknowledged yesterday in an interview by Alvin B. Krongard, who was treasurer of the Blair for Governor Committee.