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Herbert W. Kalmbach, President Nixon's personal lawyer, leaves U.S. District Court here after pleading guilty.

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# Kalmbach Enters Guilty Pleas

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President Nixon's personal lawyer, Herbert W. Kalmbach, pleaded guilty yesterday to secretly raising millions of dollars and peddling an ambassadorship in an illicit 1970 fundraising operation organized by the White House.

He admitted his complicity in federal court here and promised to cooperate with Watergate prosecutors in return for their wiping the slate clean of other charges that might be lodged against him.

In a letter submitted to U.S. District Court Judge John J. Sirica, Watergate Special Prosecutor Leon Jaworski indicated that Kalmbach will be named as an "unindicted co-conspirator" in forthcoming indictments.

Charges stemming from the Watergate cover-up—in which Kalmbach has publicly cast himself as an unwitting accomplice—are expected to be returned shortly.

A longtime fund-raiser for the President, Kalmbach, 52, admitted raising \$3.9 million that the White House surreptitiously funneled into 1970 congressional races through a political committee that had neither a chairman nor a treasurer.

He said the violation was willful, which makes the offense a felony under the old Corrupt Practices Act. It carries a maximum penalty of two years in prison and a \$10,000 fine.

Kalmbach also pleaded guilty to a misdemeanor in promising a European ambas-

sadorship in return for \$100,000 in campaign contributions from Maryland Republican J. Fife Symington Jr.

Watergate prosecutors said Kalmbach gave the guarantee to Symington at a Sept. 16, 1970, meeting in Los Angeles after calling a member of the White House staff and receiving assurances that the promise would be honored.

"Thereupon," associate Watergate prosecutor Thomas F. McBride told the court, "the pledge was firmed and the deal was made."

Symington, who was ambassador to Trinidad and Tobago at the time, was never nominated for the European post. Prosecutors said Kalmbach eventually offered him his money back but "Symington refused to take it."

The President's lawyer, however, still faces a maximum penalty of one year in prison and a \$1,000 fine for making the offer. Federal law prohibits any such promise in return for political support.

Judge Sirica released the Newport Beach, Calif., lawyer on his own recognizance while probation officials prepare a pre-sentencing report. Kalmbach was told to confine his travels until then to the United States.

The charges against Kalmbach were set down in typically murky "informations" drafted by Watergate prosecutors in place of grand jury indictments. The Prosecutors added some details when Judge Sirica asked them to

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summarize the evidence, but withheld the names of the White House aides with whom Kalmbach worked. Although apparently one remains on Mr. Nixon's staff, Jaworski's office refused to confirm even that much.

The 1970 fund-raising effort, which is still under investigation, has been dubbed "Operation Townhouse" because it was run out of the basement of a downtown Washington townhouse by former White House aide Jack A. Gleason.

According to Watergate prosecutors, it funneled money to Republican candidates for the Senate and House that year in at least 19 states.

Assistant prosecutor Charles O. Ruff said three members of the White House staff decided to organize the secret committee in March of 1970. He said Kalmbach was asked to solicit contributions and he eventually secured \$2.8 million in pledges. In addition, the court was told, he also obtained \$1.1 million in checks from a single contributor that was doled out to favor GOP candidates in amounts determined at the White House.

Kalmbach has testified elsewhere that he was enlisted for the fund-raising drive by former White House chief of staff H. R. (Bob) Haldeman.

Meanwhile, Gleason was detached from then-White House political adviser Harry Dent's staff to implement the program and designate the congressional campaign committees that were to get the money. Originally a professional fund-raiser from New York, he worked out of a back-room office in the basement of a townhouse at 1310 19th St. NW.

"The procedure that I followed was to solicit contributions for this program and advise Mr. Gleason of the person or persons who made the pledges," Kalmbach testified in a deposition for a civil suit challenging the administration's controversial 1971 increase in milk price supports. "It was his responsibility to then talk to these people, give them names of committees,

and to receive their contributions."

As Kalmbach recalled it, one of the dairy farm co-ops that successfully lobbied the White House for the higher price supports, the Associated Milk Producers Inc., pledged him \$110,000 for 1970 Republican senatorial candidates.

The individual contributor who gave Kalmbach \$1.1 million in checks was not named although there were published reports that the anonymous donor was John J. Mulcahy, president of a firebrick subsidiary of the Pfizer pharmaceutical firm who was Mr. Nixon's host during a presidential trip to Ireland. Mulcahy, who gave nearly \$600,000 to Mr. Nixon's 1972 re-election campaign, could not be reached for comment.

According to Watergate prosecutors, "Operation Townhouse" doled out money to Senate and House GOP candidates in Alaska, Connecticut, Florida, Indiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Missouri, New Jersey, New Mexico, Nevada, North Dakota, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Vermont and Wyoming. Gleason once reportedly boasted that it produced more than \$12 million for the congressional elections that year.

One of the biggest recipients was Sen. J. Glenn Beall Jr. (R-Md.), who has publicly acknowledged getting some \$200,000 from "the national Republican administration" for his 1970 campaign.

Evidently alluding to Haldeman, Dent and Gleason, prosecutor Ruff said "the three gentlemen" from the White House and Kalmbach constituted a political committee under federal law, but failed to designate a treasurer or chairman or to make the periodic reports to the Clerk of the House that were then required under the Corrupt Practices Act.

Prosecutors said Symington pledged and made his contributions in two installments—\$50,000 through his wife for the 1970 congressional races and \$50,000 in 1972 to the Committee for the Re-Election of the President and satellite Nixon campaign committees. But he offered the money, Judge Sirica was told, "only

on condition that he be offered an ambassadorship to one of several agreed-upon European countries."

A retired building-material supplier and former Maryland GOP finance chairman, Symington was ambassador to Trinidad and Tobago from August of 1969 until November of 1971. The White House said at the time that he was resigning "for personal reasons."

Symington, 63, could not be reached for comment, but according to his lawyer, he was never definitely told that he would not get the desired ambassadorship. The lawyer, Thomas D. Washburne, had no comment on the \$100,000 refund Kalmbach admitted offering with White House approval.

In the letter filed with Judge Sirica, Jaworski said Kalmbach's guilty pleas yesterday would "dispose of pending or potential charges based on matters presently known to this office and specifically including charges relating to the so-called Watergate cover-up, contributions from the milk producers, other contributions from persons seeking ambassadorial appointments and any charges arising out of grand jury testimony heretofore given by Mr. Kalmbach."

Kalmbach refused to make any comment except to confirm to reporters that he is still "the President's personal lawyer." He helped arrange the purchase of Mr. Nixon's San Clemente estate and his law firm handles the President's tax returns.

White House deputy press secretary Gerald L. Warren said yesterday that Kalmbach, whose job has included payment of Mr. Nixon's personal debts and expenses, is still authorized to write checks on the President's personal bank account.

An active campaign worker for Mr. Nixon since 1960, Kalmbach told the Senate Watergate committee last summer that he raised \$220,000 which was channeled to the original seven Watergate defendants. He said he undertook that assignment on instructions from then-White House counsel John W. Dean III without any knowledge that the payments were intended as hush money.