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Firm Guilty Of Muskie, Nixon Gifts

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A New York corporation, Diamond International, and one of its vice presidents pleaded guilty yesterday to making illegal contributions to both the Nixon and Muskie presidential campaigns.

The company executive, Ray Dubrowin, said that the $1,000 Muskie campaign contribution was solicited from him by Kenneth M. Curtis, Democratic governor of Maine.

Dubrowin said Deputy Assistant Secretary of Transportation Vincent F. DeCain solicited another $5,000 for Mr. Nixon'sre-election.

Associate Watergate Special Prosecutor Thomas F. McBride said the case is still under investigation.

Both the corporation and Dubrowin, 52, Diamond vice president for public affairs, entered guilty pleas here yesterday to charges of making the contributions from corporate funds.

U.S. District Court Judge Howard Corcoran fined Diamond $5,000 and Dubrowin $1,000—the total amount of the illegal contributions. No jail sentence was imposed.

Originally Diamond Match Co., the corporation now makes lumber, printing and paper products from bank checks to toothpicks. It has annual sales of more than $600 million and is one of Maine's so-called "Big Eight" pulp and paper mill operators.

Diamond International gave the $5,000 to the Nixon campaign through a dummy committee called the Committee for Effective Government and $1,000 to Maine's Muskie for President Committee.

The five-minute court hearing produced no detail. Afterwards, Dubrowin told repotrer sthat "Ken Curtis" asked him for a contribution to the campaign of Sen. Edmund S. Muskie (D-Maine) sometime in December of 1971.

DeCain asked for $5,000 fo rthe Nixon campaign on a visit to New York sometime in February of 1972, according to Milton Gould of New York, lawyer for Dubrowin and Diamond International.

DeCain did not respond to repeated attempts to reach him by phone.

Gov. Curtis, in Washington fo ra winter meeting of the National Governors Conference, said he did not know that the Muskie contribution had been corporate money.

"It wasn't my worry where the money came from," he told a reporter. As he recalled it, the contion was made in connection with a Portland, Maine, fund-raiser in January of 1972 which was highlighted by a $1,000-a-ticket reception with Sen. Muskie and his wife.

Honorary chairman of the 1972 Muskie campaign in Maine, Curtis said he sent out letters of invitation to the fund-raiser with pledge cards enclosed. An aide said later that one starting "Dear Ray" went to Dubrowin.

"I'm pretty sure I've met him," Curtis said. "They have several plants in Maine."

Curtis said he received "a few contributions myself" for the fund-raiser but immediately turned them over to the Muskie campaign treasury. Basically, he said, "all I did was invite people to the function."

According to Dubrowin's lawyer, Gould, both the Muskie and Nixon campaign contributions were made by cashier's checks drawn on the account of the Diamond International Corp. Gould said DeCain, a Transportation Department official at the time, supplied the name of the Committee for Effective Government.

"It was authorized by the hierarchy in the company," Gould said of the $5,000 for the President's campaign, "but just how it was handled, I don't know. It was a routine request. It got routine treatment."

He said Diamond International voluntarily disclosed the corporate contributions to Watergate prosecutors three months ago.

Both were made before the April, 1972, effective date of the stiff federal campaign financing disclosure law.

The Muskie campaign, in a voluntary disclosure of pre-April 7 contributions, listed Dubrowin personally as having given $1,000. Washington lawyer Berl Bernhard, Muskie's 1972 campaign manager, said yesterday that "there was absolutely no way" of telling that the cashier's check had come from corporate funds. He maintained that "we had every reason to believe that the Dubrowin contribution was personal."