

2nd Haldeman Fund Reported

Washington

While he was President Nixon's chief of staff, H. R. Haldeman maintained a fund from which he dispensed cash gifts to White House employees, a former aide says in newly surfaced testimony.

Lawrence M. Higby, now in the Office of Management and Budget, said the money was in a two-inch-thick stack of \$100 and \$20 bills that were kept in Haldeman's safe.

The testimony, given in a Watergate civil suit deposition last December, was unsealed yesterday by U.S. District Judge Charles R. Richey.

Higby said he understood that the money was given to Haldeman late in 1968 after Mr. Nixon's election as president "to be passed on to those members of the staff who needed funds" for moving expenses.

That would make it a different money cache from the \$350,000 that Haldeman

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obtained on April 6, 1972 from fund-raiser Herbert W. Kalmbach who had the money left over from the 1968 campaign. Some of that fund eventually went to the Watergate break-in defendants.

Higby said he personally disbursed \$2500 of the money to two men when they left the White House. He said they were Bill Gavin and Harry Dent, one receiving \$1000; the other \$1500.

In Columbia, S.C. last night, Dent said he couldn't recall the amount he was given, but "it was given to me as a gift.

"It was to compensate for moving expenses," he said. "Haldeman just offered it. I didn't ask for it."

He said he wasn't told where the money had come from.

"Other people received money from that money that Mr. Haldeman had," Higby said. "To my knowledge oth-

er people did receive money from Mr. Haldeman, as I understood it, before we ever were in the White House."

Q. Do you know from whom he received it?

A. No sir, I do not, not with an certain knowledge.

Q. Would it have come from Mr. Kalmbach?

A. I don't believe so. I think you should ask Mr. Haldeman.

Q . . . Do you know how much money Mr. Haldeman had?

A. No, sir, I do not.

Judge Richey unsealed the deposition, taken last December 11 and 17, after a request from the House Judiciary Committee that asked judges in Watergate-related cases to supply it with secret testimony for its impeachment inquiry.

"An investigation of impeachable wrongdoings imposes a duty upon every citizen of this country, including this court, to cooperate," Richey's order said. "It is in the interest of justice and the public's right to know to break the seal."

In the deposition Higby, a top aide to Haldeman, said he was present at conversations the chief of staff had with John D. Ehrlichman, Mr. Nixon's domestic adviser, in which Haldeman considered going on television and answering Watergate-related charges against him.

"We quizzed Haldeman for two hours or something and came to the conclusion that while he might help himself, it would raise the issue to a higher profile and therefore hurt the President."

Haldeman and Ehrlichman resigned April 30, 1973, and have pleaded innocent to indictments charging

them with conspiracy to obstruct justice in connection with the Watergate coverup.

Higby also testified that in late November or December, 1972, another Haldeman aide, Gordon Strachan told him that White House counsel John W. Dean III was going to use some of the \$350,000 fund for the break-in defendants—then about to go on trial. Higby said he told Haldeman.

"What was Mr. Haldeman's reaction to that?" he was asked.

"That that should not be done, that that money was the committee's money and should be returned to the committee and he, in my presence, called Mr. Dean and indicated those instructions to him." He was referring to the Committee for the Re-election of the President.

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