

A \$100,000 Campaign Offer Is Linked to Nixon Friend

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By LINDA CHARLTON JUN 6 1974
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WASHINGTON, June 5 — Elmer H. Bobst, the drug company executive who is one of President Nixon's closest friends, wrote in 1971 to John N. Mitchell, who was then Attorney General, that an unidentified close friend would contribute more than \$100,000 to Mr. Nixon's 1972 campaign in exchange for a "more favorable attitude" by the Federal Trade Commission on a pending case.

The letter, a copy of which was obtained and published today by The Washington Post, did not identify the case. In the same paragraph, however, Mr. Bobst made an apparent reference to an F.T.C. challenge of a merger between the Warner-Lambert Pharmaceutical Company, of which he is the largest stockholder and honorary chairman of the board and Parke, Davis, Incorporated, another pharmaceutical company.

The case has not yet been resolved.

The 89-year-old Mr. Bobst, who has described himself as Mr. Nixon's "honorary father" and is known as "Uncle Elmer" to the Nixons' two daughters, could not be reached today for comment on the letter, which was written on his personal letterhead and sent to Mr. Mitchell at his residence in the Watergate East apartment complex.

Statement by Company

But the Warner-Lambert Company, in a statement issued today, disclaimed any knowledge of the letter and any involvement with Mr. Nixon's campaign finances.

"Whatever the letter referred to," said E. Burke Giblin, chief

executive officer of the company, in the statement, "the management and directors of our company are astonished and embarrassed by the nature of the comments in this personal letter of one of its directors."

The letter was dated Oct. 13, 1971, some six months after the F.T.C. had announced that it would challenge the merger of the two companies. In the fifth of the letter's six paragraphs, Mr. Bobst wrote:

"I take this opportunity of mentioning that the F.T.C. situation has not altered significantly. The lower echelon seems to have a complete hold on the show to the extent that the top 5 [the commissioners] appear to be not much more than puppets. I might say that one of my close friends interested in the case mentioned that if there was any evidence of a more favorable attitude on the part of the tops, he would come up with 100,000 for the '72 fray."

Statement by Kaufman

Mr. Kaufman issued the following statement here yesterday:

"I am, of course, totally unaware of Mr. Bobst's suggestion to the former Attorney General that consideration be given to my appointment to the Supreme Court. The context within which he made his recommendation is unfortunate, and as I have said unknown to me. I have met Mr. Bobst casually two or three times at an annual luncheon given by a mutual friend attended by about 60 people. But I was not aware he was initiating any proposal regarding my judicial status."