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Ex-Aide to Gurney Reports He Handed Rep. Bafalis \$10,000

NYTimes

TAMPA, Fla., June 12 (UPI)—A witness in the bribery-conspiracy trial of former Senator Edward J. Gurney testified today that when he was the Senator's aide he handed a \$10,000 political contribution to L. A. Bafali, who is now a Representative of Florida that Mr. Bafalis failed to report.

James Groot, Mr. Gurney's top administrative aide for three years, said that he gave Mr. Bafalis the cash three days before the 1972 general election because two close associates of Mr. Gurney had committed the Gurney campaign committee to assist the Senator's fellow Republicans.

Mr. Groot testified that the \$10,000 had come from funds collected in Florida by a Gurney fund raiser, Larry Williams, who allegedly got contributions from builders in return for getting them favored treatment from the Federal Housing Administration.

Mr. Groot said that the financial assistance for Mr. Bafalis had been promised by a former state G.O.P. chairman, Earl M. Crittenden, and the party's former state finance chairman, George Anderson. Both were indicted in the case and have negotiated plea agreements with the Government, as has Mr. Groot, who pleaded guilty last week to one count of conspiracy.

Mr. Groot said that he had never told Mr. Gurney about the delivery of the \$10,000 to Mr. Bafalis. He said that after Mr. Bafalis had won the election, Mr. Bafalis and an aide had visited Mr. Gurney at the Senator's Washington office and thanked him.

Mr. Groot said that Mr. Gurney later asked him, "What did we do for them?" and that he had told Mr. Gurney, "Well, we raised \$10,000."

When he was asked by Mr. Gurney's attorney if he was sure he had not pocketed the money he said he had given to Mr. Bafalis, Mr. Groot replied, "Absolutely sure."

"I know Mr. Bafalis did not report the money," Mr. Groot said. "I searched the records in preparation for my case. I'm well aware Mr. Bafalis denies adamantly he got the money. I want to assure you I gave Mr. Bafalis the \$10,000."