

Nixon Democrats Get Rent

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Washington — Nearly three-fourths of the rent paid by the Federal Government for space in the Baltimore area goes to a small group of businesses associated with prominent Democrats who switched their support to President Nixon in 1972.

An examination of records at the General Services Administration, the Government's housekeeping agency, shows that of the \$4,744,000 paid out every year in rent under leases awarded by the GSA in the Baltimore area since Mr. Nixon took office, 73.6 percent goes to this group.

Even if renewal options in some leases are not exercised, the leases will yield between

\$50 million and \$60 million in rental income before they expire.

New Leases

Since July, 1969, the group, operating through three separate partnerships, has negotiated three leases with the GSA worth \$3,491,000 in annual rental.

In addition to these new leases, one of which was negotiated while the potential lessors were raising money for the Nixon campaign and donating to it themselves, the GSA three months ago extended one of the group's Johnson-era contracts, making it worth an additional \$18 million.

The Justice Department looked into the matter, but nothing came of its investigation.

Sources said that the man

instrumental in bringing the lessors into the Nixon-Agnew camp last year is J. Walter Jones Jr., friend and adviser of Vice President Spiro T. Agnew.

Johnson Era

Much the same set of partners were able to secure three lucrative leases from the GSA during the last two years of the Administration of the late President Lyndon B. Johnson, whom they supported financially in his 1964 campaign. They are all strong supporters of Maryland's Democratic Gov. Marvin Mandel.

Last year, however, while the governor acted as cochairman of the Maryland campaign for Sen. George McGovern, the federal lease holders were key figures in the state's Democrats for Nixon organization.

That group, collected more than \$100,000 for the President's campaign, most of which came in during lease negotiations.

Partner's Denial

Harry W. Rodgers 3d, one of the partners, has denied any connection. Nevertheless, since last November's election, the partners have received \$20 million in contracts from the Nixon Administration.

Veteran political observers in Maryland have told the New York Times that the Democratic Party accepts the development partners as loyal members and recognizes that their campaign activities were undertaken to preserve their ongoing relationship with the

Windfall in Maryland

GSA.

Members of these partnerships that have experienced such noteworthy success in their dealings with the GSA for at least the last seven years include:

—Rodgers, a top Democratic fund raiser, regarded for years as a key to much political influence, and currently a ranking member of Mandel's "kitchen cabinet."

—William A. Rodgers, brother and follower of Harry Rodgers.

Mandel Aide

—W. Dale Hess, former Democratic whip of the Maryland House of Delegates,

who functions now as a fund raiser and adviser in the Mandel administration.

—Edward H. Dickinson, millionaire developer and builder, a significant portion of whose wealth is traceable to a zoning decision by Agnew, when the vice president was a member of the Baltimore County Board of Appeals.

As Democrats for Nixon, Harry Rodgers and Hess attended the reception for the President at the Texas ranch of John B. Connally, former governor of Texas and treasury secretary in the Nixon Administration who was also national head of Democrats for Nixon.