

Millionaire Contributor Still Confident In Nixon

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CHICAGO (AP) — W. Clement Stone, who has contributed nearly \$7 million to Republican campaigns since 1968, said Friday that President Nixon was deceived in the Watergate affair by the men he trusted.

Stone, who for the first time revealed the extent of his GOP campaign gifts and loans, said Watergate disclosures show Nixon made "some mistakes of judgment" in trusting the men around him.

But the millionaire insurance magnate and philanthropist said he has not lost any confidence in the man "I felt provided the one chance in a lifetime to change the course of history for the better."

Stone said in an interview he contributed nearly \$5 million to Nixon during the 1968 and 1972 campaigns and said that if more money had been needed, he would have given it.

Stone condemned the Watergate affair but said he is con-

fident Nixon will tell the "other side in a way that will inspire us

"He's a man of integrity," said Stone. "But he has made some mistakes of judgment.

"He trusted those men around him who did not disclose what they knew. They deceived him by not disclosing" the Watergate bugging and coverup, Stone said.

Stone did not name the persons he said deceived Nixon but he specifically excluded John N. Mitchell, Nixon's campaign manager and former attorney general.

Mitchell told the Senate Watergate committee this week he put the election of the President above all consideration except "high crimes and treason."

Stone said he has had no communication with Nixon about Watergate.

Stone said he is almost certain that none of his money

contributed to Nixon was used to finance the Watergate break-in and cover-up. He said he has not asked for nor received any personal assurance his money was not used for illegal activities, but he will order his own investigation to see if any of his contributions were involved in the Watergate affair.

Stone founded his highly successful Combined Insurance Co. of America in the 1920s on \$100. He said he is currently worth about \$450 million.

He first became close to Nixon, he said, through the Boys Clubs of America. Stone is a national official and met Nixon in 1964 when Nixon was national chairman of the Boys Clubs.