

POW Rebuts His Praise of McGovern

Sacramento

Former prisoner of war Thomas Hanton said yesterday a message he sent home from North Vietnam asking people to donate \$25 to George McGovern" was a "bunch of baloney."

Hanton, describing himself as a Nixon man "all the way," said the purpose of the letter to his wife, taped by Hanton for Hanoi Radio, was to tell her he was alive. His message received widespread publicity.

Hanton, a 28-year-old Air Force captain whose plane was shot down last June 27, said he was given permission at a prison camp to send a message home.

PERMISSION

When he asked a North Vietnamese official what he would be permitted to write, he said, the official read part of McGovern's acceptance speech at the Democratic National Convention which included something about making small contributions to his campaign. Hanton said the official told him to "say something about sending \$25 to McGovern."

Hanton said he figured the letter would not leave Hanoi without something like that in it so he wrote that and "a little tipoff phrase so those who know me would know this was a bunch of baloney."

TIPOFF

He said the "tipoff" was part of the letter which said: "We receive news and I was happy to hear McGovern had been nominated. You know how apolitical I am, but a lot of us have had sufficient times to think through things and you can make your own choice."

Hanton said his wife and friends in Sacramento knew him as anything but "apolitical." He said he and his wife met at a meeting of Sacramento Young Republicans and he was all for Nixon for president.

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