

Nixon Re-election Unit Got \$1-Million to 2-Million in Cash and Destroyed Records

RECEIPTS PLACED AT \$22-MILLION

MAY 5 1973
Estimate by Common Cause
Exceeds G.O.P. Figures
in Court Statements

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Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, May 4—Top officials of President Nixon's main fund-raising organization here, the Finance Committee to Re-Elect the President, solicited \$1-million to \$2-million in large cash contributions during 1971 and early in 1972 and then destroyed the records through which the contributors could be identified.

The hidden transactions were reported by the former treasurer of the Nixon Finance Committee, Hugh W. Sloan Jr., in sworn statements disclosed today.

Court sources were said that the transactions may have involved two violations of the Federal Corrupt Practices Act, which was the controlling law at the time. The violations suggested were failure to disclose the contributions publicly and willful destruction of financial records.

The Sloan depositions, totaling 520 pages of testimony, and others obtained from Maurice H. Stans, Mr. Nixon's former Secretary of Commerce and later the chairman of his 1972 finance committee, were taken last October by lawyers for Common Cause, a public interest group that is suing to force full disclosure of all Nixon campaign gifts. The depositions had been under court-ordered seal until today.

Common Cause lawyers said their research indicated that the total secretly amassed by the Republican fundraisers was \$22-million.

When the new Federal Election Campaign Act became law on April 7, 1972, the finance committee reported that it then had \$10.2-million in "cash on hand." But it was not required to identify the donors.

\$11.8-Million in Doubt

This amount was included in the Common Cause estimate that the actual amount raised before April 7 was \$22-million—leaving \$11.8-million not only unidentified by donor but unreported as receipts.

The common cause estimate apparently was based on months of examination of Republican finance records, given up by the finance committee's lawyers under order of United States District Judge Joseph C. Waddy, who is hearing the Common Cause disclosure suit.

The records have been maintained under seal in a small room in the United States Courthouse here, available only to a handful of lawyers in the case, as were the Sloan and Stans depositions until today.

Government sources, meanwhile, said that the Nixon finance organization had apparently "pre-spent" about \$5.5-million of its pre-April 7 money for advertising and direct-mail programs in an attempt to avoid reporting expenditures, as well as receipts, just before the new disclosure law took effect.

The last-minute flood of incoming cash and the hasty expenditures, designed to avoid disclosure under the new law, created a "madhouse" atmosphere at Republican campaign headquarters here as April 7 approached, according to another sworn statement of Mrs. Sally J. Harmony, a former employe there.

Espionage Fear Cited

Mr. Sloan's figures were given under pretrial questioning last Oct. 24, 25 and 28 by two Common Cause lawyers, Mitchell Rogovin and Kenneth Guido. Mr. Sloan testified that many of the finance committee's records of undisclosed cash gifts of "over \$1,000" each and "a sort of day-to-day log of cash contributions" had been removed to "storage in New York" because "we were an obvious target for political espionage, what have you."

"We were concerned with the security of those records," he said, "that they might fall into the hands of reporters and political opponents."

Ironically, although neither Mr. Sloan nor Mr. Stans was asked directly about the Watergate scandal, Government investigators have said that the hundreds of thousands of dollars used to finance the Republicans' covert espionage and sabotage operations against the Democrats last year came from the cash donations Mr. Sloan was describing.

Mr. Sloan testified that "At Secretary Stans's instruction I personally destroyed the working copy, as it was no longer deemed necessary, and turned the summary sheet [based on the same data] over to the secretary. I have since been used to understand that that has been destroyed."

Because of conflicts in Mr. Sloan's statement and an earlier deposition taken from Mr. Stans, it was not clear who had ordered the destruction of the records. Mr. Stans's testimony under questioning by Common Cause lawyers on Oct. 20 had been that Mr. Sloan "may have consulted me on one item or another," but that "Mr. Sloan made the suggestion as to what would be destroyed and what would not."