

Federal Help for Nixon Campaigner

Washington

A firm headed by a Nixon campaign leader in Florida received a \$75,000 federal grant last year after a national official of President Nixon's re-election committee intervened to have the grant application submitted from the White House.

The grant was approved seven weeks before the November election for a company whose president, Woodrow Page, said he ran the Nixon campaign for black voters in Jacksonville. . . A memo obtained by the Washington Post, dated May 22, 1972, shows that the application went from Paul R. Jones of the president's re-election committee here, to White House aide Edwin L. Harper before ending up at the Office of Minority Business Enterprise.

An OMBE spokesman said yesterday the application, which originally asked for \$185,000, was received at the agency on June 29.

The applicant, Gate City advertising and Public Relations Inc., received final approval for a \$75,000 grant on September 20 from OMBE.

Federal sources familiar with the contract said it was unusual, and probably improper, for the president's

re-election unit to try to use the political weight of the White House to obtain a grant for a private firm.

All persons involved in the application or the memo who were contacted by the Post disclaimed any knowledge of any attempt to influence improperly the OMBE decision on the application.

The memo, from Jones to Harper, states that it concerns a "proposal submitted for OMBE funding." It goes on to say: "Please find enclosed a proposal for funding by the Office of Minority Business Enterprise. . ." It adds that the proposal is "for the establishment of a minority business services (sic) of Jacksonville." And names the Gate City firm as the applicant.

Harper said in a telephone interview that he does not recall the specific application, but he said it was likely Jones did send it to him.

Asked if the forwarding of an application by the White House might be interpreted by the receiving agency as an endorsement of the application, Harper said: "That was not my intention."

Repeated efforts over the last week to reach Jones failed.

Washington Post Service