

## Nixon Donor

# Ex-Milk Official Gives Testimony

### Washington

A former official of a milk cooperative that gave \$227,500 to President Nixon's re-election campaign has testified he believes that a controversial decision to raise milk price supports was made in the White House rather than by the Secretary of Agriculture.

The testimony came in the pretrial deposition of a lawsuit in which consumer groups charge that the Nixon administration raised milk price supports in 1971, reversing an earlier decision, because three giant co-ops gave the Nixon campaign a total of \$422,500.

Harold S. Nelson, former general manager of the Associated Milk Producers Inc., also described in his testimony how his organization delivered funds in fulfillment of "commitments" made to the Nixon campaign; and how the co-ops recruited the assistance of then treasury secretary John Connally and Ways and Means Committee Chairman Wilbur Mills to help them get a price support increase.

The Nixon administration

and the co-ops have denied any connection between the huge campaign gifts and the decision to raise milk price supports.

Nelson revealed in his testimony that he and David Parr, another top milk producers official at the time, held a private meeting with the President in addition to the now much publicized March 23, 1971 meeting between the President and dairy co-ops officials.

Two days later, on March 25, the Agriculture Department reversed its earlier decision, and raised price supports which Nelson testified were worth an additional \$300 million of income to dairy farmers.

Asked where the decision to raise price supports was made, Nelson said: "To be very candid with you, we never figured this was (Agriculture) Secretary (Clifford M.) Hardin's decision. I don't think any secretary makes that decision. I think the White House makes the decision and it's announced through the secretary. . . . I'm talking about any administration."

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