

# \$2,000 Spent on Haiphong Backers

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A former Nixon campaign official has said that he received an unreported \$2,000 disbursement from the President's re-election committee and used it to bring six to eight people from Chicago to present a petition supporting the mining of Haiphong harbor last May.

Paul R. Jones, the former executive director of the black voters division of the Committee for the Re-election of the President, said in a telephone interview last week that the petition effort was not manipulated by the committee, but rather represented "genuine, spontaneous" support of the President's mining decision "among the black community in Chicago."

Jones, now a regional director in Atlanta for ACTION, said he received the payment from Robert C. Odle Jr., the administrative director for the re-election committee.

The General Accounting Office has accused the re-election committee of an apparent violation of campaign financing law by failing to report that the \$4,000 was disbursed to Odle last May. The GAO has asked

the Justice Department to investigate the matter.

Odle, in testimony before the Senate Select Committee on the Watergate last week, acknowledged receiving \$3,000 to \$4,000 last May, which he said was used to finance vigils and rallies in support of the Haiphong mining. He said some of the money went to Jones.

In his testimony, Odle said the effort to drum up support for the Haiphong mining was done "openly, publicly" and "I don't think there was anything wrong about it." None of the senators questioned him as to why the \$3,000 to \$4,000 disbursement was not publicly reported, as required by law.

Jones said that he does not recall to whom he gave the \$2,000. He said he did not recall the names of any of the persons who, he said, flew to Washington from Chicago with the petition. He said he understood there were between 12,000 and 15,000 signatures on the petition, but he didn't receive the petition and does not know to whom it was given.

Jones said he recalled that a group whose name he couldn't remember had contacted him from Chicago

and had asked him for financial assistance so they could bring the petition to Washington. Jones said he recalled that several members of the group were indigent.

"This petition was something that sprang up and was handled by an ad hoc type of organization," Jones said. "It involved people who felt very strongly about the President's position. The committee (for the re-election) had nothing to do with the petition drive."

In addition to being mentioned in last week's Watergate hearings, Jones also was listed as a key figure in a Washington Post story May 17 regarding a \$75,000 federal grant to a Jacksonville, Fla. firm.

The story quoted from a memo sent May 22, 1972, by Jones to Edwin L. Harper, who then was a special assistant to the President. Harper has since left the White House. The memo was attached to an application by Gate City Advertising and Public Relations Inc. for a grant from the Office of Minority Business Enterprise (OMBE).

Sources had said the application might not have obtained approval if it had not

been submitted from the White House. Harper, who said he did not recall the specific application, has said it was not his intention for OMBE to interpret his forwarding of the application as an order to have it approved.

Jones said that he had not asked the Gate City firm to submit the application to him, nor had any one from Gate City asked him for help on the matter. He said the application had come to him, unsolicited in the mail. (Woodrow Page, the firm's president last week denied sending the application to Jones.)

Jones said he sent the application to the White House, rather than to OMBE, because he "didn't want OMBE to infer I was putting any pressure" on the agency. Asked if OMBE might feel just as much pressure, or more, if it received an application from the White House, Jones said:

"I don't think so. It was our policy when we received items of this nature to forward them to the White House."

Asked what other grant applications were forwarded to the White House, Jones said there were no others.