

Calif. Nazis Were Recruited

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LOS ANGELES, June 6—The Committee for the Re-election of the President spent \$10,000 in campaign money in an elaborate plan to deter a possible third-party presidential drive in California by George Wallace in 1971.

The scheme failed, but not before the local California operatives allegedly hired a team of American Nazis to convince American Independent Party voters to change their registration. If enough people changed, the operatives figured, Wallace could be knocked off the

California ballot on a technicality, freeing those crucial votes for President Nixon.

Payments for the re-registration drive were authorized by Jeb Stuart Magruder, former national CRP director, The Washington Post learned, and may have involved then-Attorney General John N. Mitchell.

The connection between CRP and the re-registration scheme was established today in testimony before the Senate Watergate committee by Hugh Sloan Jr., who was treasurer of CRP in 1971 and early 1972.

Sloan told the committee that the \$10,000 was given to

Lyn Nofziger, who later became director of the re-election campaign in California, in late 1971. Its purpose, Sloan said he later heard from "people in the campaign," was "with regard to the Wallace primary."

Nofziger, reached in Sacramento, where he is now running the 1974 gubernatorial campaign of Republican Lt. Gov. Ed Reinecke, acknowledged that he received the money on the request of Magruder to be passed on to a California go-between for use in the re-registration drive.

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time offered him more money.

Earlier in the year, according to another source, G. Gordon Liddy was compiling dossiers on third party candidates as part of an attempt to challenge Wallace's place on the ballot in several states.

Given the go-ahead from Mitchell and Magruder, Parker said he and Walters met the following day with Lindsey, who gave him the first of several payments totaling \$10,000. The first payment was \$2,500 in \$100 bills, Parker said.

Walters, who had broken with Wallace a year earlier and had had a running factional battle with other lead-

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That drive, Nofziger said, was the brainchild of Robert Walters, an advertising man and former Wallace worker long active in right-wing causes in Orange County and Los Angeles.

"Bob Walters, who used to be a member of AIP, came around to them (Magruder and the Committee for the Re-election of the President)

and said there was a way to purge the AIP voter list so they wouldn't have enough voters to qualify for the California ballot," said Nofziger, who was formerly press secretary to California Gov. Ronald Reagan. "He (Walters) had talked to Magruder and Magruder came to me around September or October, 1971, and said can you find somebody in California to pay the expenses. The price tag by Walters was \$10,000. I said I could, and I did. I then went over to the Committee to Re-elect at Magruder's invitation and picked up an envelope from Sloan.

"I assume it was cash, because the envelope was quite thick, but I didn't look inside. I gave it to a guy who worked for me (I was still with the Republican National Committee at the time) and he carried it to California and gave it to somebody who distributed it," Nofziger said.

Nofziger refused to name the California intermediary, but the man was identified independently as Jack B. Lindsay, a Los Angeles food wholesaler and active Republican who once served in the Reagan administration and was close friends with Nofziger.

Both Lindsey, who is head of California Foods, Inc., and Walters, approached on the same subject eight months ago by The Washington Post, flatly denied any involvement with the national Nixon campaign. Walters acknowledged he ran an AIP re-registration drive, but said he had raised the money—which he estimated at \$9,000—from independent sources, including Willis Carto, head of the right-wing Liberty Lobby.

Walters, who heads an agency called American Advertising and Sales, again denied in a telephone interview today any connection with CRP or any of its officials, and said Nofziger's statement was "a lie."

But details of the re-registration plan, including the involvement of American Nazi canvassers, were outlined by a former aide to Walters, Glenn Parker, during The Washington Post's initial investigation last October.

Parker, a Nazi sympathizer who broke with Walters, met with John Mitchell, Magruder and a group of unidentified aides in the Los Angeles Hilton in late October, 1971, to discuss the re-registration plan.

"Mitchell started the conversation," said Parker. "He said he had heard there was a way to remove the AIP from the ballot. He said they had run a poll between Muskie, Nixon and Wallace that showed that without Wallace, 4/5ths of the Wallace vote would go to Nixon. He emphasized that they thought they were in trouble, and that Nixon especially wanted to win California."

The re-registering plan

was based on a provision of California law that requires a political party's registration to exceed one-fifteenth of total state registration to qualify for the ballot. With a deadline of Jan. 1, 1972, it would be necessary to convert all but 10,000 of the 140,000 registered AIP voters—an enormous task.

(Actually, even if that had been accomplished, California law automatically qualifies a party for the ballot if it received more than 2 per cent of the vote in the previous gubernatorial election—which AIP had done. Thus, the re-registration effort was doomed at the start—why this was not known or taken into account during the planning is still not known.)

It was revealed in March of this year that even after Wallace was shot in May, 1972, top-level Republicans—were attempting to block a third-party movement in his behalf.

Two draft-Wallace workers—Tom Turnipseed and Peter Beter—told the Washington Post that in a July, 1972, meeting in the Mayflower Hotel, Mitchell and Harry S. Dent, then special counsel to the President, tried to enlist them to block a Wallace candidacy.

Beter, a wealthy businessman and Wallace contributor who sought the Republican gubernatorial nomination for governor in West Virginia in 1968, said the gist of the pitch was "don't you know that this third-party draft movement could hurt Mr. Nixon?"

Beter said Dent offered Turnipseed, a South Carolina lawyer and close Wallace associate, a job "four, five, six times" and each

ers of AIP in California, launched the registration drive, but soon ran into problems. He tried to use as recruiters conservative Republicans, notably members of a right-wing Republican volunteer group, United Republicans of California. Using the name Committee Against Forced Busing as a front, the plan was for volunteer canvassers to visit AIP registrants throughout the state and convince them to change registration temporarily to Democrat or Republican so they could vote against candidates in the primary who favored forced busing.

Then, the pitch went, voters could re-register as AIP or vote for Wallace anyway in the general election. In effect, however, the goal was to wipe AIP off the ballot so that Wallace would have no party listing at election time.

But word got out, not only to AIP leaders, but to conservative UROC members, that the scheme was a disguised effort on behalf of Mr. Nixon, who had become anathema to right-wing Republicans because of his overtures to Red China. They denounced the scheme and refused to cooperate.

It was then, around mid-November, according to Parker, that he and Walters turned to the American Nazis for help.

Parker said he and Walters met with Joseph Tommasi in mid-November, 1971, and offered him \$5,000 if he

would use some of his storm troopers as registrars. Tommasi, 22, a lieutenant who runs the Southern California branch of the Nazi Party out of a swastika-decorated frame house in El Monte, a suburb of Los Angeles, confirmed the offer. He said that a group of about 20 of his men, dressed neatly in civilian clothes, fanned out in the area, carrying registration lists denoting AIP-member homes.

The Nazis' involvement was cut short after a few weeks, however, when the money was stopped after only \$1,200 had been delivered, Tommasi said.

There was no evidence that the use of Nazis was known at high levels of the CRP operation in Washington.

The registration drive was a dismal failure. California AIP registration actually increased by 6,500 voters over the period that Walters and his group were trying to wipe it out.

Walters denied that he had hired the Nazis, even when shown photostat copies of checks made out to Tommasi with Walters' signature. Walters said he often had given Parker blank signed checks to fill out for expenses.

Walters also denied dealing with Lindsey—the alleged go-between—but admitted he “may have” asked Lindsey by phone to contribute to the re-registration effort. He said Lindsey turned him down.

Lindsey, who was unavail-

able today, said in October he had business dealings with Walters involving a trucking subsidiary Walters owned, but denied ever receiving or passing money along to Walters.

Nofziger said today he received “two, possibly three” handwritten reports on the re-registration drive from his unidentified California connection, and had passed them along without reading them to Magruder.

“I was involved only in a peripheral way”, he said.

Nofziger said he heard from Walters twice; once during the spring of 1972, when Walters offered to campaign for Nixon votes among Wallace-type voters. The second time was last October, Nofziger said, when Walters phoned to say “the lid was about to blow off” and insisted on talking to Nofziger.

Nofziger said he assumed Walters was talking about newspaper investigations into the re-registration drive, but he refused to take the calls because he did not want the California CRP office involved in any way with the Walters operation.

One source who asked not to be identified said he assumed the money was filtered through an intermediary because the national CRP wanted to “stay away from this.” He said the committee probably did not want to arouse the antagonism of the AIP at a time when Wallace was still seriously a candidate.