

G.O.P. Fund Plea Tied Rewards to Size of Gift

By MARY BREASTED

A Nixon campaign worker, now an Assistant Secretary of Agriculture, solicited campaign funds from a meat company executive last year, telling him that large contributions would bring a rising scale of rewards.

Both men said that they had discussed the treatment the White House would give large contributors, but each recalled the details of the conversation differently.

At the time of the conversation, March or April last year, the executive, Currier Holman, and his company, Iowa Beef Processors, Inc., were under investigation by the Federal Organized Crime Strike Force of the Southern District of New York and by the office of Manhattan District Attorney Frank S. Hogan.

In October, 1972, Mr. Holman contributed \$2,000 to the Nixon campaign.

In March this year, Mr. Holman and his company were indicted by a state grand jury for conspiracy to bribe union and supermarket officials to sell the company's products here. Mr. Holman was also indicted on similar charges by a Federal grand jury, but his company was not.

Conversation Recalled

Clayton Yeutter, Assistant Secretary of Agriculture for Marketing and Consumer Services, who solicited funds from Mr. Holman, had resigned another Agriculture Department post to work in the campaign. He said that he had not known of "Iowa Beef's problems until the thing hit the papers."

Mr. Holman, reached last weekend at his home in Sioux City, Iowa, recalled what Mr. Yeutter had told him. He said:

"If you gave \$25,000, if you had a problem, you could talk to someone in the White House. I think I said, 'What if I gave more?' And he said maybe the yardstick would be for \$25,000 you get to talk to somebody in the White House, a Cabinet officer or someone like that. For \$50,000 you get to talk to President. I can't remember the exact amounts, really, but I remember something to the effect that with a very large contribution you can talk to the President—if you had a serious problem."

Mr. Yeutter, who returned to the Agriculture Department after the election, discussed various amounts of money with Mr. Holman and the rewards that might go with those amounts.

"But it was purely a public relations kind of thing," Mr. Yeutter said. "And I probably said something about the large contributors getting invited to a White House function, and maybe medium contributors having lunch with Stans or Cabinet officers. It was definitely not that you could come and talk to the President about your problems."

Maurice H. Stans, former Secretary of Commerce, headed the Nixon fund-raising drive.

Mr. Holman, who is chairman of the board of Iowa Beef, said he recalled that two other executives of the com-



Associated Press

Clayton Yeutter, Assistant Secretary of Agriculture.

pany had contributed to the Nixon campaign, and Mr. Yeutter said he recalled being told by the Nixon campaign staff that "employees of the company" had given \$5,000 to the campaign.

No other executives of the company could be reached for comment, and the only record of a contribution in the Government Accounting Office is Mr. Holman's \$2,000, dated Oct. 13, 1972.

Investigation by Hogan

District Attorney Hogan's office began an investigation into corruption in the meat industry here in January, 1971. Mr. Holman's company was among those under scrutiny, sources close to the investigation said.

These sources said that the Federal strike force was brought into the investigation in July, 1971.

In early April, 1972, Mr. Hogan's office served a subpoena on Iowa Beef, asking for all the company's books and records, according to Jeffrey Atlas, the attorney for Iowa Beef, and sources in the District Attorney's office.

Mr. Holman said he could not recall precisely when he learned that his company was under investigation, but he said he did not think he was aware of the investigation when he received the call from Mr. Yeutter.

Recalls No Pressure

"I felt no pressure," Mr. Holman said. "I think I asked Clayton how much I should give, and he said, 'That's up to you.'"

Mr. Yeutter said, "I knew Currier from my work in the Agriculture Department, and we were hoping he would head up a committee of independent meat packers."

He said that he had done little fund-raising in the campaign, adding, "This may have been the only call I made for fund-raising," he said.

He said that, before calling Mr. Holman, he discussed what he ought to say to a potential donor with Lee R. Nunn, who worked with Mr. Stans. Mr. Nunn could not be reached for comment.

Mike Shaw, the head of the strike force, said that the decision not to seek a Federal indictment against Mr. Holman's company had been his alone.