

Humphrey and Bag of Cash

Los Angeles

Former Vice President Hubert H. Humphrey knew he was to receive Howard Hughes contributions of \$50,000 cash and \$50,000 by check in 1968 and was aware the currency was in a bag delivered to his limousine, Robert A. Maheu testified yesterday.

Humphrey, reached in Washington, described Maheu's account as "fantasy and sheer poppycock."

Maheu, deposed chief of Hughes' Nevada operations,

told a federal court jury here that the commitment for the contributions was made at a meeting he had with Humphrey in Denver. A Humphrey campaign aide has testified he ushered Maheu to such a meeting on May 5, 1968, but the senator denied yesterday that he was ever in Denver that day.

"From then on we had several conversations by telephone and the matter was handled very delicately," Maheu testified.

Maheu was called by attorneys for Hughes' Summa Corp. as part of the defense against Maheu's suit for \$17.3 million in damages on the grounds that he was defamed by Hughes' allegations, in a news conference, that "se stole me blind."

At the time, Hughes was concerned about underground nuclear testing being conducted by the Atomic Energy Commission in Nevada, near where the billionaire industrialist had begun to acquire gambling casinos and other properties.

"He (Humphrey) certainly indicated he would give us all the help we needed in our fight relative to atomic energy and he seemed very grateful," Maheu related.

Maheu said the cash was delivered following a fund raising dinner July 29, 1968, at the Century Plaza Hotel here.

He testified that he got his

cash-filled briefcase from his room and boarded Humphrey's limousine in front of the hotel main entrance.

"I made some reference to the atomic energy problems which Howard Hughes wanted curtailed in Nevada," Maheu related. "I left the briefcase on the floor of the limousine, bade the vice president good-bye, said good-bye to his wife and I left."

Humphrey told the Times the truth is in his previously disclosed deposition, in which he swore he did not personally receive any cash contribution from Maheu.

The Minnesota senator said his appointments calendar shows he was in Washington on the morning of May 5, 1968, that he left for Chicago at 1:10 p.m., that he was at an Israel bond dinner that night in Chicago and was in New York the

next day.

As for the alleged conversation with Maheu in the Century Plaza Hotel here on July 29, 1968, Humphrey commented:

"I have no more recollection of a cocktail conversation with him than of going to the North Pole — and I've never been to the North Pole."

Los Angeles Times