

Ex-Nixon Aide Guilty In Fund-Raising Case

By Timothy S. Robinson
Washington Post Staff Writer

Former White House aide Jack A. Gleason pleaded guilty yesterday to running an illegal fund-raising operation organized by the White House in 1970 to raise and distribute funds for the congressional elections that year.

Gleason, who will be sentenced later by U.S. District Court Chief Judge George L. Hart Jr., could face a maximum jail term of one year in jail or a fine of \$1,000 on the misdemeanor plea.

Herbert W. Kalmbach, ex-President Nixon's former personal attorney and fund-raiser, pleaded guilty in February to charges growing out of the same fund-raising operation. He currently is serving a jail term of 6-to-18 months. Watergate special prosecutors have said that the investigation into the illegal operation is continuing.

Gleason, 38, of Washington, entered his plea to one count of aiding and abetting a violation of the Federal Corrupt Practices Act. Essentially, a criminal information filed by Assistant Watergate Special Prosecutor Charles Ruff said that the fund-raising committee was illegal because it was not organized with a chairman and a treasurer, as required by law.

The fund-raising activity, which came to be known as "Operation Townhouse," raised more than \$3 million that was funneled, at White House direction, into 1970 Congressional races. It operated in a backroom office in the basement of a town house at 1310 19th St. NW, and prosecutors said that Gleason was "essentially the administrator" of the fund.

The operation was organized by certain members of the White House staff, prosecutor Ruff said during a brief court session in which Gleason entered his plea. The prosecutor did not mention anyone else involved other than Kalmbach.

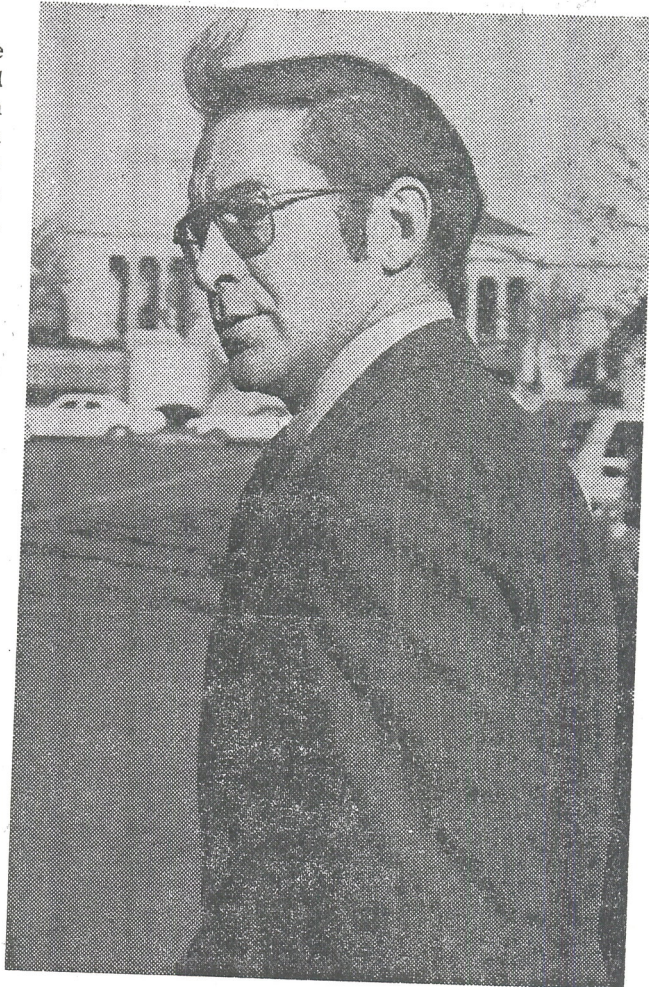
Gleason, a former professional fund-raiser from New York, was detached to the project from the staff of then-White House political adviser Harry Dent to implement the program and designate the congressional campaign committees that were to get the money.

Kalmbach previously has testified that he was enlisted for the fund-raising drive by

former White House chief of staff H. R. (Bob) Haldeman.

Although the Gleason role in the operation, was not outlined in detail yesterday, Kalmbach once testified during a civil suit that: "The procedure that I followed was to solicit contributions for this program (Operation Townhouse and advise Mr. Gleason of the person or persons who made the pledges. It was his responsibility to then talk to these people, give them names of committees, and to receive their contributions."

According to Watergate prosecutors, "Operation Townhouse" doled out money to Senate and House GOP candidates in Alaska, Connecticut, Florida, Indiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Missouri, New Jersey, New Mexico, Nevada, North Dakota, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Vermont and Wyoming. Gleason once reportedly boasted that it produced more than \$12 mil-



Associated Press

Jack Gleason, ex-White House aide, before verdict.

lion for the congressional elections that year.

A letter from Special Prosecutor Henry B. Ruth Jr. to Gleason's attorney, Arthur I. Cantor, was released yesterday outlining the agreements between the special prosecutor's office and Gleason in connection with the guilty plea.

"This plea dispose (s) of potential charges against Mr. Gleason based on matters presently known to this office . . . Mr. Gleason will make full and truthful disclosure of all information and documents in his knowledge and possession relevant to matters within the jurisdiction of this office," the letter said in part.

In addition, the agreement calls for Gleason to testify on behalf of the government in "any hearing, trial or other proceeding arising out of the matters under investigation."

Gleason was released on personal bond pending his sentencing in the case.