

GUILT ADMITTED BY A NIXON DONOR

Montana Ex-Governor Says
\$54,000 From Dr. Hammer
Was Channeled Illegally

By ANTHONY RIPLEY

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WASHINGTON, Dec. 10— Former Gov. Tim M. Babcock of Montana pleaded guilty today to allegations that he illegally channeled \$54,000 from a millionaire oilman, Dr. Armand Hammer, into President Nixon's political treasury in 1972 and 1973.

The sources of the payments, according to the list of charges filed against Mr. Babcock today by the special Watergate prosecutor were disguised by the use of the names of Mr. Babcock and four other prominent Montana men.

Mr. Babcock, 55 years old, entered his guilty plea before Chief Judge George L. Hart Jr. in United States District Court. Judge Hart delayed sentencing.

The former Governor was charged under Federal election laws defining as a misdemeanor any political contribution made in the name of another person. It is also a misdemeanor to accept such contributions.

The maximum penalty for the offense is a \$1,000 fine and one year in jail.

Friend of Lenin

The associate special prosecutor, Thomas F. McBride, declined to comment on whether further charges would be brought in the case against those who received the money and Dr. Hammer.

Dr. Hammer, 76 years old, a physician who went to the Soviet Union in the nineteen-twenties and became a personal friend of Lenin, is chairman of the Occidental Petroleum Corporation of Los Angeles and a well-known art collector.

Last June Dr. Hammer arranged the largest single commercial transaction ever made between the Soviet Union and the United States. It was a \$20-billion, 20-year series of agreements between Occidental and the Soviet Government on trading chemicals.

The plea by Mr. Babcock was negotiated last August but disclosed only today. The special prosecutor's office delayed taking the matter into court because of the ongoing investigation. There was no indication from the prosecutor's office whether that investigation was complete.

Last August the (former special prosecutor, Leon Jaworski, secured grants of immunity from prosecution for John B. Trigett, an American businessman living in London, and James B. Atton, counsel of an Occidental subsidiary in Washington. Both had refused to testify before a Watergate grand jury.

Both are figures in the investigation of the Hammer-Babcock Campaign contributions.

At Occidental headquarters in Los Angeles, a company spokesman said that Dr. Ham-



Tim Babcock

mer had been advised by his lawyers that it would be "improper" to comment on today's court action.

According to the charges, Mr. Babcock delivered the first payment, \$15,000 in cash, to the Finance Committee to Re-elect the President on Sept. 15, 1972. That day Dr. Hammer was in Moscow, having had a meeting with Leonid I. Brezhnev, the Soviet Communist party leader.

\$14,000 After Election

The Finance Committee was told by Mr. Babcock that the payment represented \$5,000 contributions from himself; Jerome Anderson, a Billings, Mont., lawyer prominent in State Republican affairs, and William L. Holter, a former State Republican chairman and manager of a radio station in Great Falls, Mont.

On Nov. 3, just before the election \$25,000 in cash was delivered, and finally, on Jan. 17, 1973, \$14,000 arrived, also in bills.

According to the charges, Mr. Babcock told the Finance Committee four months later that the last two payments had come from himself, Mr. Holter, Mr. Anderson and two others: Elmer G. Balsam, owner of a truck line in Miles City, Mont., and Gordon L. Doering, a Helena dentist and former member of the Montana State Board of Regents.

The final payment of \$14,000 was made well after the campaign ended. During that campaign Mr. Nixon and his fund-raisers gained contributions of more than \$60-million, a record, and had a surplus of about \$5-million.

Campaign records list an additional \$48,000 in donations by Dr. Hammer during the 1972 campaign, all but \$2,000 in cash.

Mr. Babcock operated a small, failing truck line in Helena in 1962 when he was first elected Governor. Political opponents were critical when his company was awarded a major Federal contract in the construction of the Yellowtail Dam. When he left office in 1968 he owned Helena's only major modern motel and a radio-television station.

At the time he made the contributions, Mr. Babcock was Washington based executive vice president of Occidental International Corporation an Occidental subsidiary.

Some of the funds from Dr. Hammr and Mr. Babcock, according to the Watergate investigators, were used as "hush money" for defendants in the original Watergate burglary.