

GSA Political Hiring Detailed by Official

By Douglas Watson
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The General Services Administration broke civil service regulations to hire the ex-chauffeurs of former Attorney General John N. Mitchell and Jeb Stuart Magruder, Mitchell's deputy at the Committee for the Re-Election of the President, a GSA official testified yesterday and Tuesday.

Arthur G. Palman, personnel officer for the GSA region that includes Washington, D.C., and five neighboring states, also said civil service requirements were disregarded to hire Peter Shultz, son of former Treasury Secretary George P. Shultz.

Palman was testifying in a Civil Service Commission hearing on commission charges that GSA, the federal government's construction, supply, and housekeeping agency, operated an illegal job-referral system for political favorites.

The hearing is in the case of Benjamin Schiffman, director of administration in the Washington, D.C., GSA region, and is the first to be held for eight GSA officials who were charged with operating an illegal job referral system.

Palman in 1973 made the initial allegations that resulted in the Civil Service Commission's charges against the GSA officials. He testified

that in the cases of the ex-chauffeurs, Schultz's son and three others, Schiffman directed him to hire the individuals contrary to civil service regulations.

Palman estimated that during the Nixon administration his regional personnel office received 1,000 requests for "must" hiring of political favorites. He said 125 to 150 of these persons backed by political sponsors were actually hired in violation of regulations.

Palman said that Donald J. LeMay, one of those charged with operating the illegal hiring system in GSA, would telephone him frequently and say something such as, "Art, I've got to have this one (job). Harry Flemming is calling me from the White House. I have got to have a response within an hour." Flemming is a former White House and Nixon campaign aide.

Palman testified that at Schiffman's direction Carl Foster, who had been Magruder's chauffeur, was hired as a forklift operator in a GSA warehouse in Franconia, contrary to regulations.

Palman testified that Tom Wince, former driver for Mitchell, was in January, 1973, hired as a "confidential assistant" and then transferred to a GSA guard job contrary to regulations. However, a Civil

Service Commission lawyer withdrew the Wince charge against Schiffman, acknowledging that CSC itself had erred in approving Wince's hiring.

Palman said that Peter Shultz was hired for a temporary, part-time custodial job at National Airport though at the same time GSA was discharging a more qualified employee with nine children because of lack of work.

Palman also said that Schiffman directed him to disobey civil service regulations to hire Gary Scarpelli, son-in-law of Pennsylvania's secretary of transportation, and to reinstate Douglas Spradling, who was supported by former Rep. Richard C. Poff (D-Va.)

Palman testified that former GSA Deputy Administrator Rod Kreger telephoned him after he resisted the reinstatement of Spradling and allegedly said, "I want no problems. I want no discussion . . . Mr. Spradling is supposed to be picked up (hired) by Monday morning."

Lawyers for Schiffman and GSA sought to show that GSA's job referral system was no worse than that which prevails in most federal agencies, that in many instances the Civil Service Commission approved controversial hirings,