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Ashland Oil Makes New Disclosure

Ashland, Ky.

An official of Ashland Oil, Inc., said yesterday that it contributed \$633,000 illegally to political candidates from 1967 through 1972, an amount higher than disclosures reported earlier.

"These contributions were made with the genuine belief that they were necessary and in the best interest of the company, given the political environment which existed," said board chairman Orin E. Atkins.

In July, 1973, Ashland announced it had contributed \$100,000 to former President Nixon's re-election campaign. The money was returned, the company fined \$5000 and Atkins \$1000.

Last year the Watergate special prosecutor's office filed additional charges against Ashland, claiming Atkins lied about an additional \$170,000 in contributions, including \$50,000 to the Democratic National Committee. Ashland pleaded guilty and was fined \$25,000, which Atkins said he would pay.

At the same time, the special prosecutor's office reported Ashland handed out \$150,000 in illegal contributions in 1968, bringing the total to \$420,000.

But in his report to stockholders yesterday, Atkins said the total was \$533,000, "excluding the amount returned by the Committee to Re-elect the President."

Atkins said the company now is in the process of resolving problems with the Internal Revenue Service as well as the Securities and Exchange Commission.

United Press