

Influence Peddling Is Hinted in U.S. Job Referrals

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WASHINGTON, Feb. 1—The General Services Administration released today a list of 311 Congressmen and members of the executive branch who made job referrals to the agency, many of which are believed by investigators to have been a result of influence peddling in the Nixon Administration.

The referrals were made to the Federal housekeeping agency from 1969 to 1973, the agency said. Subsequent investigations by the Civil Service Commission and others found that many Government officials were in violation of the merit system when they hired political favorites who had been referred by Congressmen and members of the executive branch rather than promoting career civil servants.

The G.S.A. and a number of other Federal agencies were said by investigators to have

hired persons referred on a political basis as part of an operation directed by Frederic V. Malek in the White House personnel office.

Not all the referrals to the G.S.A., of course, were necessarily political. As the report noted, referrals are not illegal. It is illegal, however, to use a political connection to put a person in a job that is supposed to be filled by Civil Service procedures.

Aimed at 1972 Campaign

The Senate Watergate committee found that the so-called responsiveness program was an effort by the Administration to gear up in support of President Nixon's 1972 re-election campaign by spreading political operatives throughout the executive branch.

The greatest number of referrals to the G.S.A., according to the report, was 196 by Harry S. Flemming, a White House "talent scout," who boasted that political loyalty

was in his mind a leading criterion for job selection in the Nixon Administration.

Daniel T. Kingsley, another Nixon White House aide, is recorded with 155 referrals. Mr. Kingsley was nominated by Mr. Nixon in May 1974 to be a member of the Federal Power Commission, but the nomination encountered such heavy opposition because of his role in the responsiveness program that President Ford later withdrew it.

Mr. Flemming said in 1970 that his job application form was designed to discover party registration, campaign experience, Congressional sponsorship and former Government jobs, and that it was devised to exclude not only Democrats but also persons who had worked for Democrats.

"We're politically sophisticated, balanced, of course, by the search for competence," he said.

The releasing of names today

was in response to a Freedom of Information Act suit filed by a Washington lawyer, Joseph D. Gebhardt, who is seeking to uncover the extent of the responsiveness program.

The G.S.A. said in its report, "the files themselves are rarely clear or accurate, and therefore a completely accurate summary is impossible."

But it stated that out of 1,751 referrals from Congressmen, White House officials and campaign executives, 147 persons had got jobs "and an additional eight were offered jobs."

The report said that many Congressmen were recorded as having made from one to a half-dozen referrals. President Ford, for instance, is listed as having made five when he was in the House. Senator Edward M. Kennedy, Democrat of Massachusetts, made four, Senator Hubert H. Humphrey, Democrat of Minnesota, two, and Senator James L. Buckley, Conservative-Republican of New York, five.