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Lobbyist Said to Have Claimed Watergate Panelists Took Money

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WASHINGTON, Sept. 9 — Claude C. Wild Jr., according to a witness who testified in a suit against him, once told Watergate prosecutors that all of the Senators on the Watergate Committee "except for Sam Ervin" had taken money from Gulf.

Mr. Wild, as the Washington lobbyist for Gulf, is said to have aided Congressional campaigns regularly for the Pittsburgh-based petroleum concern.

It is estimated that in nearly 15 years, he distributed about \$4 million to campaigns, with some of the money coming from a "good government fund" raised by Gulf executives, and some channeled through the Bahamas subsidiary of the company.

While most of the money went to benefit Washington-based politicians, Mr. Wild had a habit of putting some money in envelopes and mailing it to his subordinates in various states to be distributed in local campaigns, according to an anecdote recounted by Fortune magazine in June.



United Press International

Claude C. Wilde Jr., Washington lobbyist for the Gulf Oil Company.

Gifts to Dole, Heinz, Nixon

Asked about the safety of the procedure, he replied: "Don't you trust the U.S. Mails?"

Mr. Wild has told The New York Times about a gift to Senator Robert Dole, and he has talked about a gift to Representative John H. Heinz, Republican of Pittsburgh, much to the embarrassment of both.

He has been suspended from the practice of law here for a year for an acknowledged illegal gift to the 1972 campaign of President Richard M. Nixon.

Mr. Wild, who has spent most of his professional career in the oil business, was born in Austin, Tex., on Aug. 9, 1923. After receiving a business administration degree from the University of Texas in 1943, he joined the Navy

and served for three years in the Pacific.

He received his law degree from Texas in 1949. In the 1950's, he came to Washington, and joined the Mideast Oil and Gas Association as legal counsel.

Mr. Wild began his career with Gulf in 1959, as a legislative representative. In 1968 he was promoted to the rank of vice president. Shortly after his acknowledgment in 1974 of the gift to Mr. Nixon's campaign, he resigned but still lives in Washington.

Mr. Wild was acquitted in July of a charge that he gave campaign money illegally to an aide to Senator Daniel K. Inouye, Democrat of Hawaii, but he still faces charges lodged by the Securities and Exchange Commission that he was an agent for illegal corporate gifts.