

Nixon Discloses Work on Homes Costs \$10 Million

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The Nixon administration disclosed yesterday that the federal government has spent nearly \$10 million for new construction, repairs, security installations and communications at the presidential compounds in California and Florida.

The White House revealed that \$5.9 million was spent for military facilities —mainly communications installations —at Mr. Nixon's homes in San Clemente and Key Biscayne and at the island resort in the Bahamas owned by the President's close friend, New York industrialist Robert H. Abplanalp.

The General Services Administration, meanwhile added \$2.7 million to its previously disclosed estimates of outlays on presidential family homes and adjacent office complexes. It described the new total expenditure of \$3.7 million as a "comprehensive and total breakdown."

It was GSA's third attempt to provide an accounting of improvements, security expenditures and the installation of office facilities at Mr. Nixon's homes. The estimate has risen in steps from \$39,000 to \$1.3 million to \$3.7 million.

The Secret Service said yesterday it had spent less than \$300,000 since 1969 on security equipment for the homes of the President and his two daughters. Much of the equipment is removable and reusable, a government spokesman said.

GSA Administrator Arthur F. Sampson said yesterday that the largest single expenditure by GSA was \$1.7 million for an office complex at San Clemente. Nearly two-thirds of that went for the maintenance and opera-

tion of the offices over a four-year period, Sampson said.

The office complex is located adjacent to the Nixon property on a small Coast Guard station. Sampson said construction of the offices has "appreciated" the Coast Guard outpost, but he said he did not know what the buildings will be used for after Mr. Nixon leaves office.

In releasing the GSA expenditures, Sampson said the government was reluctantly, but wittingly, violating its own long-standing policy on maintaining secrecy of security procedures.

Displaying serial photographs of the San Clemente home, he said, "I can guarantee you that putting these pictures in front of you is compromising the security of the President . . . Anyone who now wants to go in there and do something to the President now has more information than he had before."

Sampson said that the administration's previously disclosed lower estimates of spending on presidential homes were based on a "basic decision" made during an August, 1969, meeting in San Clemente among White House staff members, GSA officials and members of the Secret Service.

He said a decision was made then to "minimize" the cost estimates so as to not jeopardize the security of Mr. Nixon.

The new figures were being released at the direction of the President because of "the atmosphere that exists today," Sampson said, in an apparent reference to the Watergate investigations. Almost as an aside, he noted that approximately \$100,000 has been spent by the government to "satisfy press inquiries."

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Sampson said that a disproportionate amount of attention had been focused on reported expenditures on Mr. Nixon's palatial Spanish-style main house at San Clemente. Only \$68,148—or less than 2 per cent of the total GSA outlay of \$3.7 million—was spent on that one structure, he said.

Expenditures for security installations and improvements on the grounds totaled \$635,000, most of which, Sampson claimed, was spent on "security needs such as walls, lighting and alarm systems."

At the Key Biscayne compound, \$137,482—or about 10 per cent of all GSA expenditures there—was spent on Mr. Nixon's two homes, Sampson said. Of that, \$130,000 was spent on bulletproof glass windows and doors.

Sampson claimed that most of the outlays at both homes were requested by the Secret Service.

The GSA said that all of the installations at San Clemente and Key Biscayne will be removed eventually "provided that the cost of removal is not prohibitive."

Sampson said that some installations are of such a nature that it would be foolish to dismantle them after Mr. Nixon leaves office.

He did not specify which items would remain intact, but presumably they include the new \$13,500 electrical heating system, a new \$11,500 redwood fence surrounding the property, approximately \$140,000 in landscape work and a new \$3,200 tile roof for a gazebo.

Other stationary items at San Clemente include: \$3,800 for a sewer line, \$1,950 for a new walkway over railroad tracks, \$53,000 for interior electrical wiring, \$7,500 for asphalt paving and \$6,200 for a water line. Some of these items were included in a GSA accounting issued last month.

Most of the work on the President's San Clemente home was done in a two-month period in the summer of 1969, shortly before Mr. Nixon's first official stay here.

"Because of the flurry of

activity then, we would be the last to say that our performance was perfect. But considering the scope of the work, the imperfections were not significant," Sampson said.

He was referring to the expenditure of \$76,000 to "repair and replace landscaping and sprinklers damaged by construction work" and to repair roadways which the GSA said were damaged by heavy construction equipment.

Sampson argued that the GSA construction neither enhanced the attractiveness of the San Clemente property nor increased the comfort of the Nixon family.

Some installations, Sampson asserted, have detracted from the value of the home. Bulletproof windows, for example, tend to discolor and

require constant maintenance.

However, Sampson justified the installation, at government expense, of the new electric heating system. The Secret Service, he said, found the old gas furnaces to be unsafe and ordered that the system be converted to electricity.

Sampson stressed that the San Clemente estate is more than a private home for the Nixon family, because of its use as a retreat by foreign dignitaries visiting the United States.

Also in defense of the expenditures, Sampson said the assassination of President Kennedy stimulated an atmosphere in government that "nothing was to be spared in providing for the security of the President or a candidate for that office."

Officials said comparable security expenditure totals for past administrations were not available, but Sampson said the GSA plans to come up with an accounting of projects in the Johnson and Kennedy administrations by next month.

The GSA said the major

expenses at Key Biscayne were \$152,000 for security lights and alarms, \$131,000 for construction of a command post and \$75,000 for walls, fences and screening.

The GSA reported that the government had spent \$16,000 at Grand Cay, the 125-acre Bahamian island owned by Abplanalp and frequently visited by Mr. Nixon.

This outlay included \$10,471 for a bunkhouse for Secret Service agents, exterior lighting and a 16-foot trailer used as a security outpost. Sampson said Abplanalp had spent approximately \$1 million of his own money upgrading the property for the President's use.

Additionally, Sampson said, GSA has spent about \$50,000 at five privately owned apartments and houses occupied at various times by Mrs. Eisenhower and Mrs. Cox. Most of that money, Sampson said, went for security command centers and communications systems.

The disclosures of expenditures for the military facilities was made at the White

House yesterday by Deputy Press Secretary Gerald L. Warren.

Warren said that one-time costs at Key Biscayne totaled \$730,000, including \$418,000 for a helicopter pad, \$14,000 for a shark net and approximately \$300,000 for communications equipment. Additionally, Warren said, about \$330,000 has been spent at Key Biscayne in each of four years for communications equipment.

The military expenditures at San Clemente, Warren said, totaled \$3.7 million, including \$1 million in one-time costs for communications systems and office buildings. Additionally, he said, annual recurring military costs at San Clemente have been \$677,000.

Military agencies spent an additional \$160,000 installing communications equipment at Grand Cay Island and the nearby Walter Cay, Warren said.

None of the military figures include salary costs, Warren said. The White House refused to give an accounting of salaries because of security considerations.