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Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, June 24—

The General Services Administration has placed responsibility for the spending of more than \$2.2-million in public funds to improve President Nixon's personal homes on the Secret Service, which has accepted it with a few reservations.

Federal agencies explained last week that the large expenditures had been made to assist the Secret Service in its mission to protect the President, and to help Mr. Nixon fulfill his national security responsibilities.

The controversy over the propriety of using tax funds to improve what is the private property of the President or his friends is another in the series of disputes about money that have haunted Mr. Nixon from the early days of his political career.

In previous episodes, the arguments have involved gifts from wealthy California businessmen; a loan from Howard R. Hughes; the purchase at a low price of a lot mortgaged by the International Brotherhood of Teamsters pension fund (James R. Hoffa, trustee) and owned in part by the Murchinson interests of Texas, and the still unexplained financing by which Mr. Nixon acquired his San Clemente, Calif., home.

The Government has spent \$703,367 on the San Clemente property, the G.S.A. said Thursday. The detailed list of expenditures indicated that the work involved a complete restoration of a rundown estate.

\$6.83 for picture frame

At Key Biscayne, the Government said, \$1,180,522 has been spent on improvements and operation. The nearby houses owned by Mr. Nixon's friends have also benefited from some of this work.

At San Clemente the Government has paid the following bills, among others:

Stain entrance gates, other painting, \$312; replace stairs and landing on walk to beach, \$1,950; build a wall around entire 24.6-acre estate, \$57,582; install new furnace heating system, \$13,500; provide landscaping and sprinkler system, \$76,000; pave driveway, \$7,515; picture frames, \$6.83; roof tiles, \$3,200; move trees, \$3,278; fertilizer, \$999; tree trimming, \$575, and "landscape maintenance" \$25,524.

There was also \$4,834 to furnish "the President's office" in his home in San Clemente. However, Mr. Nixon's office is in a different building there, and it was thought that the furniture was for his study. An accounting of expenditures at the adjacent office area has been promised.

Similar sorts of entries were on the list of money spent at Key Biscayne. This included \$4,786 for removing a wall and

planting a hedge; demolition and removal of trees, \$3,050, and paving, landscaping and installing cables and lights, \$42,293.

Ice-Making Machine

Also, a septic tank, \$1,395; a flag pole, \$587; repair of beach erosion, \$2,000; an ice-making machine for the Secret Service detail, \$621.50; a swimming-pool cleaner, \$475, and two golf carts, \$3,580. The figure of \$78,872 was given for "repair and maintenance, Presidential complex area."

The G.S.A. statement did not include those public funds spent on the Nixon properties by other agencies. For example, the largest single expenditure, a helicopter pad at Key Biscayne, was not listed. The pad was built in 1969 so Mr. Nixon could walk directly into his home rather than take a two-mile ride from the existing public helicopter landing field.

The new pad was built on dredged land held in place by pilings driven into the bay bottom. It was built under a contract supervised by the Army Corps of Engineers from military appropriations, and is connected directly to the Nixons' property on the beachfront.

It cost \$400,000, a spokesman for the corps said. The pad was built, he said, "at the request of the executive department to enable the President to carry out his national security responsibilities."

Secret Service Position

Jack Warner, an assistant to the director of the Secret Service, said that after the assassination of Senator Robert F. Kennedy in Los Angeles in June, 1968, a law was passed that directed all Government agencies to give support to the Secret Service when asked.

Mr. Warner said that when Mr. Nixon took over the former Hamilton Cotton estate in San Clemente in the summer of 1969, it was found that the furnace was inoperative. He said it was judged to be a danger to Mr. Nixon's safety.

"We work in matters of this type with the G.S.A.," Mr. Warner said. When asked what appropriation the \$13,000 for installing the new furnace had come from, he said "as to the money, that's the G.S.A.'s concern."

Mr. Warner said that the Secret Service took the position that any situation that threatened harm to the President should immediately be corrected. This included planting or transplanting trees to obscure possible lines of fire, or cutting out dead grass that might provide a fire hazard, or installing a fan to create a draft in the Presidential fireplace.

He was asked if some procedure existed to ask Mr. Nixon—or some of his friends who share ownership of the properties involved—to pay costs of the changes the Secret Service

wanted. "No," he said. "It was well understood that we would do it to the G.S.A."

Swimming Pool Heater

The G.S.A. apparently bought everything it was asked to buy for the Presidential properties. It even bought a \$2,800 swimming-pool heater for San Clemente, but left it off the list of expenditures. When reporters asked about it the G.S.A. confirmed the purchase.

Mr. Warner said the Secret Service had not asked for the heater. Nor, he said, did it ask for land surveys of the San Clemente property. These cost \$4,400. Nor did it ask for the furnishings of the President's study, or for a flag pole that

In all, the Government has put \$500,000 more into Mr. Nixon's properties in California and Florida than was paid for them to begin with. The heater cost \$1,833 to install and \$476 to paint.

There are five houses in the Key Biscayne "Presidential complex." Mr. Nixon owns two, while two friends, Robert H. Abplanalp and Charles G. Rebozo, own one each. Mr. Abplanalp is rented to the Government for \$1,500 a month, as is the fifth house, held in trust by a Miami lawyer who is close to Mr. Rebozo.

Mr. Nixon's own assessments of net worth have risen from \$28,000 in 1952 to \$765,422 in September, 1972. Except for a few years when he practiced law in New York, he has never enjoyed a big income. His single other source of income appears to be about \$200,000 he got for his book "Six Crises," published in 1961.

The first of Mr. Nixon's political difficulties over money involved the office operational fund built up for him by California businessmen when he was a Senator. This blew up suddenly in September, 1952.

On the night of Sept. 23, 1952, the 49-year-old Senator made one of the famous speeches in American political history. He denied any wrongdoing. He listed his assets—equity in house, a car, some insurance. He said in a radio interview Mrs. Nixon had spoken of their daughters' wish for a pet. A stranger had sent them one, he said.

"It was a little cocker spaniel dog in a crate that he sent all the way from Texas," Mr. Nixon said that night. "Black and white spotted. And our little girl—Trisha, the 6-year-old—named it Checkers."

The Hughes Loan

After the Checkers speech, Mr. Nixon survived to serve two terms as Vice President. The money in the fund that had caused the trouble was \$18,235.

His next big problem came in December, 1956, when, very quietly, a loan was made by

the Howard R. Hughes interests to F. Donald Nixon, the then Vice President's brother. A lot given as security was not worth the \$205,000 loan, in the estimate of researchers who have studied the transaction.

Also, the loan was handed in away that concealed the parties involved. When Mr. Nixon ran for President in 1960, the loan became known, and it was an element that contributed to his defeat, in the judgment of many.

In "Six Crises," Mr. Nixon wrote that the day after his narrow defeat, "Don [Nixon] said with his voice breaking: 'I hope I haven't been responsible for losing the election.'" He reassured his brother, Richard Nixon, wrote.

While Richard Nixon tried to disassociate himself from the Hughes loan, Noah Bourich, in his memoir, "Howard, the Amazing Mr. Hughes," recounted an interview in the office of Vice President Nixon in December, 1956. Mr. Dietrich, for three decades the Hughes mayor domo, wrote:

"About the loan to Donald, I began, 'Hughes has authorized it, and Donald can have it. I realize that it involves a loan to your brother and not to you. But I feel compelled to tell you what's on my mind. If this loan becomes public information, it could mean the end of your political career, and I don't believe it can be kept quiet.'"

'Put My Relatives Ahead'

Mr. Dietrich wrote that the Vice President "responded immediately, perhaps having anticipated what I had said."

"Mr. Dietrich," he said, "I have to put my relatives ahead of my career."

Mr. Nixon in 1961 bought a lot in a development in Beverly Hills, Calif., and ran into reporters' questions that implied some impropriety. The facts were that the lot was encumbered by about \$42,000 of a \$4-million loan the developers had taken from a teamsters pension fund, of which Hoffa was a trustee. The Murchison brothers were partners in the development.

The developers paid off the mortgage and sold the lot to Mr. Nixon for \$35,000, which was \$7,000 less than the mortgage and did not include any profit for them. The lot next door was offered at \$99,000.

'This Kind of Smear'

On Sept. 27, 1961, Mr. Nixon held a news conference to announce his candidacy for Governor of California. He was asked "how you managed to buy a piece of property for \$35,000 which had a \$42,000 mortgage on it. Was this a gift?"

Mr. Nixon said he was glad to answer that question, but never did deal with in the terms in which it was asked. He said, "I think it was a reasonable price" and that no-

body is going to frighten me out of this contest and that, as far as this kind of smear is concerned, and that is exactly what it is, I intend no longer to take it lying down." Mr. Nixon was defeated for the governorship.

Records show that in July, 1963, the Nixons received about \$86,000 for the lot they bought for \$35,000 two years before.

Once in office as President, Mr. Nixon bought the San Clemente property, acting behind a hidden trust. After four years, he announced that the \$1.5-million deal had been financed mostly by Mr. Abplanalp, a multimillionaire manufacturer.

The complex statement of facts made about that transaction by the White House press office makes it plain that Mr. Nixon is able to occupy a 24.6-acre estate and a large Spanish-style house at San Clemente because Mr. Abplanalp has assumed responsibility for about \$1.2 million of the cost.

No Record of Division

The White House has explained that Mr. Abplanalp's money has brought Mr. Abplanalp all but the 5.9 acres of the property on which the Nixon house is situated. But property records in Orange County, Calif., do not reflect any division of the estate.

Nor do any of the disclosures by the G.S.A. and the Secret Service explain whether Mr. Abplanalp made any contribution to the improvement of his property through the construction of walls, beach access walks, stairways and landscaping.

When Mr. Abplanalp bought his house on Bay Lane in the Key Biscayne Presidential complex, he paid \$150,000 to a couple from Indianapolis as old friends that they were selling because they felt harassed by the Secret Service. They do not know that Mr. Abplanalp was the buyer, they said.

The Government has been paying \$1,500 a month rent since 1969, and will continue to pay that amount—plus any increase in taxes—until Mr. Nixon leaves office.

By 1977 Mr. Abplanalp will have received almost all his purchase price back in rentals and the Government meantime will have protected and improved his property while its value has risen spectacularly.