

Estate Outlay Expected to Top 17-Million

NYTimes MAR 23 1974

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Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, March 22 —

The tally of Government spending associated with President Nixon's private estates in California and Florida is likely to be even higher than the \$17-million reported yesterday by the House Government Activities Subcommittee, officials on Capitol Hill said today.

The report, approved by the subcommittee yesterday over the strong objections of its Republican minority, asserted that personnel costs added \$7-million to the total of \$10-million previously reported as total Government expenditures on security and support for the President in and around his private residences in San Clemente and Key Biscayne.

The White House today assailed the report as distorted and misleading, although it did not dispute the \$17-million figure.

In fact, according to the Capitol Hill officials, investigations being conducted by two other Congressional committees are producing evidence that they believe will show that total spending related to the President's use of his private estates is higher than the \$17-million.

The two bodies are the House Judiciary Committee, which is deliberating the possible impeachment of the President, and the Joint Committee on Internal Revenue Taxation, which is investigating Mr. Nixon's personal taxes.

Both are reportedly looking into matters related to the finances of San Clemente and Key Biscayne that have not been touched on in the report by the Government Activities Subcommittee.

One such matter is the "special projects fund" of \$1.5-million appropriated each year for the White House and used by

the President at his own discretion.

The fund became a matter of controversy when it was alleged that some of the money from this fund was used to finance activities of the "plumbers unit," the clandestine White House security force, and this year the fund was not included in the Administration's budget request for the fiscal year 1975.

However, at least one of the Congressional committees is reportedly gathering material that allegedly indicates that some of this special projects fund was used to defray expenses incurred at the President's private residences.

The White House has declined to tell voluntarily the specific use to which the special fund has been put.

Military Fund

Another matter being looked into with regard to spending involving the President's private retreat in a secret "military fund" expended by the White House military aide at the discretion of the President.

This is said to be a "blind" fund set up by the Office of Management and Budget in the name of the Department of Defense but used by and for the White House. According to Congressional sources, the Defense Department is not even told how much money is in the fund, much less how it is spent.

This line of investigation is reportedly concerned with the role of White House military aides in the planning and operations at the two estates. Whether any link has been established to expenditures from the secret fund was not disclosed.

The Government Activities Subcommittee report has been sent on to the full Government Operations Committee for approval. The chairman of the subcommittee, Representative

Jack Brooks, Democrat of Texas, mentioned the \$17-million figure in a statement yesterday prior to the vote on the report.

At the White House, Gerald L. Warren, deputy press secretary, said today that it was wrong for Mr. Brooks to have said that \$17-million was spent on the President's homes when, in fact, a report by the General Accounting Office, indicated that the spending on the homes was under \$1-million. The White House also severely criticized the press for reporting the \$17-million as expenditures on the President's homes.

The ranking Republican on the House subcommittee, John Buchanan of Alabama, called a news conference this morning to attack the report as a "total distortion" of the facts.

Mr. Buchanan said that "only" \$205,000 was spent on the two homes and a little over \$1-million was spent on the surrounding property owned by the President at the two estates.

Neither Mr. Warren nor Mr. Buchanan disputed the \$17-million total figure. They contended that the number was used out of context for partisan reasons. The money was spent on security and support of the President and not in any way to enrich Mr. Nixon, they said.

Mr. Brooks issued a statement yesterday saying that every assertion in the subcommittee report had been thoroughly documented.

Mr. Warren was asked at today's press briefing at the White House if he had any "quarrel" with the statement that most of this expense to the taxpayers could have been avoided if President Nixon had not insisted on spending so much of his time at his two private estates.

Mr. Warren replied that the American people "do not want the President to be a prisoner in the White House."