

# Rebozo Suit Against Post Dismissed

Post 9/19/78

MIAMI (AP)—A federal judge yesterday dismissed a \$10 million libel suit that banker Charles G. (Bebe) Rebozo, former president Nixon's friend and Key Biscayne neighbor, had filed against The Washington Post.

U.S. District Court Judge Sidney Aronovitz ruled that the Key Biscayne banker had become a public figure by the time The Post reported in 1973 an insurance investigator's testimony indicating the Rebozo had cashed \$91,500 in stocks after being told they were stolen.

Since Rebozo was a public figure, Aronovitz said, the rules set down by the U.S. Supreme Court in 1974 and

1964 prevent his winning a judgment against the newspaper.

Under the 1964 New York Times decision, as expanded later by the high court, public officials and public figures may collect libel damages only if they prove there was malice against them. Aronovitz said Rebozo hadn't shown malice.

The 1974 Gertz decision defined public and private figures for purposes of using The Times case, and that's the standard Aronovitz cited in his ruling yesterday.

Rebozo has said all along that The Post report was not only false but malicious.

In the report that Rebozo sued over, The Post quoted sworn testimony by insurance investigator George H. Riley Jr. that he told Rebozo on Oct. 22, 1968, that 900 shares of IBM stock Rebozo accepted as loan collateral had been stolen. The Post wrote that 300 of those shares were then sold a week later, for \$91,574. The story said Rebozo's lawyer denied Rebozo had been told the stock was stolen before he sold it.

In his suit, Rebozo said that neither the broker from whom the stocks were stolen, nor the broker's insurance company, had known about the theft until Dec. 5.