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House Panel Bars Fund to President

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The house appropriations committee yesterday wiped out a \$15 million "special projects" fund traditionally given to presidents over the years because the White House refused to state whether any of the money went to the Watergate burglars.

The action came on a White House budget that was part of a \$4.8 billion appropriations bill for the Treasury Department, the U.S. Postal Service and several Executive Branch agencies. The special projects fund for the White House has been voted routinely for about 15 years.

Frederic V. Malek, deputy director of the Office of Management and Budget, had told an appropriations subcommittee hearing May 31 that the fund "is used by the President for staff assistance on special projects which arise from time to time but are outside the area of responsibility of an existing agency."

Rep. Edward R. Roybal, (D-Calif.), repeatedly asked Malek for the names of persons who received money under the special projects fund and Malek later supplied for the record a list of consultants hired since July 1, 1972. It did not contain the names of any of the convicted Watergate burglars.

At one point in the hearing Roybal asked Malek, "Was Mr. Howard Hunt paid out of this fund for special projects on the day that the so-called burglary occurred?" E. Howard Hunt was one of the seven convicted Watergate burglars.

Malek said he could not answer without checking the records and later submitted the following statement for the hearing record:

"Mr. E. Howard Hunt was employed by the White House as a consultant from June 6, 1971, to April 1, 1972. In regard to the alleged burglary, this matter is currently under investigation by the Senate Select Committee on Presidential Campaign Activities and we would prefer not to get into these matters concerning the on-going Watergate investigation."