

**\$525,000**

## **Offer in Bugging**

### **Would Avert Damage Trial**

WASHINGTON — (UPI)—President Nixon's campaign organization, apparently, anxious to avoid a summer rerun of the Watergate trial, has offered a \$525,000 out-of-court settlement to the Democratic Party for the bugging of its offices last year, sources said today.

If accepted, the reported settlement would put the Nixon campaign in the unique and uncomfortable position of helping to underwrite the Democratic multimillion-dollar debt with contributions from GOP faithful.

It would also write an end to the \$6.4 million civil damage suit the Democratic National Committee slapped on the Committee for the Re-election of the President shortly after the Watergate break-in last June 17 before it could come to trial.

The trial was expected to begin in June, involving many of the same witnesses from the Nixon campaign who figured in the January criminal trial of the seven men indicted for the Watergate raid.

Spokesmen for both the Democrats and the Nixon committee said late yesterday that negotiations — initiated by Republican lawyers — have been under way for some time toward a possible out-of-court settlement.

"There has been serious discussions between the lawyers, intensive in the last two weeks," Democratic Chairman Robert Strauss said through a spokesman.

Strauss said today that "a payment of a very large sum of money would also be

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# **TO END WATERGATE GOP IN CASH OFFER**

# ***GOP Offers Money for Watergate***

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an indication of guilt on the part of the Republican Party. You don't go around paying a half million dollars . . . just for fun."

A spokesman for the Nixon campaign, DeVan L. Shumway, said, "I don't think it would necessarily be an admission of guilt in the case," he said. "It's more an attempt to get the matter resolved."

But Shumway conceded that the settlement would be in favor of the Democrats.

Both men refused to discuss money figures, but would not deny the reported \$525,000 offer.

The suit, which also names as defendants the Watergate Seven and several individual Nixon campaign aides, charges invasion of privacy and conspiracy to violate the civil rights of Democratic officials through political espionage.