

Five May Be Called As Hearings Reopen

By Lawrence Meyer
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The staff of the Senate select Watergate committee has decided to ask the committee to call at least five witnesses including President Nixon's friend, Charles G. (Bebe) Rebozo, when the committee resumes public hearings next Tuesday, informed sources said yesterday.

The committee voted Wednesday to hear three days of testimony on a \$100,000 Nixon campaign contribution made by billionaire Howard Hughes through an emissary to Rebozo in two \$50,000 cash installments in 1969 and 1970.

Among the other witnesses the staff is recommending are Richard G. Danner, the Hughes aide who delivered the money to Rebozo; Robert A. Maheu, a former Hughes aide; Thomas H. Wakefield, a lawyer and a director of Rebozo's Key Biscayne, Fla. bank, and William Griffin, a lawyer for industrialist Robert Abplanalp, another close friend of Mr. Nixon.

Chief committee counsel Samuel Dash said yesterday that these five persons were only "possible" witnesses and that the final witness list could not be released until committee chairman Sen. Sam J. Ervin Jr. (D-N.C.) had a chance to approve it. Ervin was delayed in North Carolina last night.

Dash said the staff has more witnesses to recommend, but he declined to say who are or how many more would be recommended.

The staff was forced to trim its original list from about 15 persons after the committee voted to hold only three days of hearings and to limit the scope of the testimony to the Hughes-Rebozo transaction.

At the same time that the committee is moving forward with its hearings on the Hughes-Rebozo transaction, the committee's vice chairman, Sen. Howard H. Baker Jr. (R-Tenn.), has told the committee he may be conducting an investigation of his own.

During the committee's closed meeting on Wednesday, Baker read a list of witnesses whom he said he may call to answer questions.

The list, said by other sources to be possibly only partial, includes Secretary of State Henry Kissinger; White House chief of staff Alexander M. Haig Jr.; CIA director William E. Colby; former CIA director Richard M. Helms; former White House aide Egil (Bud) Krogh Jr.; White House

counsel J. Fred Buzhardt; former Defense Secretary Melvin R. Laird; Joint Chiefs of Staff chairman Adm. Thomas H. Moorer; former Joint Chiefs liaison to the National Security Council Rear Adm. Robert O. Welander; columnist Jack Anderson; Watergate conspirator G. Gordon Liddy; former Democratic National Committee chairman Lawrence F. O'Brien; attorney Edward Bennett Williams; Washington Post reporter Bob Woodward and William Haddad, a former government official who served in the Kennedy administration.

Baker told a reporter Wednesday night that he wants to look into a "whole wealth" of national security leads that have cropped up and that "have been gnawing at me for months."

According to Baker, when he and chairman Ervin met with President Nixon at the White House on Oct. 19 Mr. Nixon referred to national security matters but would not say what they were. "I want to find out what there is and what there isn't and if these things are really national security," Baker said.

According to other sources, Baker's possible inquiry breaks down into three main parts: the possibility that Democratic Party officials knew in advance about the Watergate break-in; possible participation of the CIA in the Watergate break-in and military spying on the White House.

Baker has periodically suggested that the American public has not been told the full story about the Watergate affair. He said in November that the American people may have "seen only the tip of the iceberg" in Watergate related scandals. When asked a few days later by a reporter if he cared to elaborate on that statement, however, Baker merely smiled, answered, "no," and walked away.

Last Dec. 20, on ABC's "Issues and Answers," Baker cited "a matter of grave national importance," and said, "There are animals crashing around in the forest. I can hear them, but I can't see them." Although Baker said that a matter of "grave national importance . . . would justify or at least explain some of the conduct that appears otherwise unexplainable," he declined to say what he had in mind.

In a related matter, White House press secretary Ronald Ziegler yesterday rejected the latest attempt by the committee to meet with President Nixon to ask him questions about the Watergate affair.

The committee has been attempting to meet with Mr. Nixon since last fall but has no response to at least two requests made by the committee's lawyers to White House lawyers for such a meeting. At its meeting Wednesday, the committee approved a resolution offered by Sen. Lowell P. Weicker Jr. (R-Conn.), who originated the idea, again requesting a meeting with Mr. Nixon.

Weicker's proposal states that if the committee receives no response by the end of this week, written questions from committee members may be transmitted to the White House on Feb. 5.

Ziegler told reporters yesterday morning, "Our position has not changed. We do not contemplate that a meeting between the President and the Senate Watergate committee will take place."