

Watergate Probe Fund Asked

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Sen. Alan Cranston (D-Calif.) said yesterday that the special Senate Watergate committee will reopen its investigation of possible extortion of Nixon campaign support from minority businessmen who received federal contracts and loans.

Cranston, chairman of the Senate Small Business Subcommittee, made his statement as Sen. Sam J. Ervin Jr. (D-N.C.) chairman of the Watergate committee, asked the Senate to appropriate another \$500,000 for the committee's expenses. If approved, the total outlay for the Senate probe would rise to \$1.5 million.

Ervin did not indicate that any of the new money would be used to investigate reported pressures on small businesses, especially those run by black and Spanish-speaking businessmen, to contribute to the Nixon campaign.

Ervin presented the resolution authorizing the new money on behalf of himself and Sen. Howard Baker (R-Tenn.), ranking Republican on the Watergate committee. He said the new money was needed because witnesses have to be brought long dis-

tances from all over the country and committee investigators often are required to make long trips.

He also hinted at possible contempt citations against some uncooperative witnesses and said in response to questions by Sen. Paul J. Fannin (R-Ariz.) that the committee is looking into charges of corrupt campaign contributions by unions as well as businesses, specifically citing the Seafarers Union.

On Nov. 7 and 8, the Watergate committee questioned White House aide William H. Marumoto and Benjamin Fernandez, chairman of the National Hispanic Finance Committee for the Committee to Re-elect the President, about reported pressures on small businessmen to contribute to the Nixon campaign.

Marumoto described a "Responsiveness Committee" that attempted during the 1972 campaign to inspire support for President Nixon among Spanish-speaking groups by emphasizing increases in financial aid to Spanish-speaking businessmen under the Nixon administration.

Both Marumoto, a Japanese-American who grew up in a Spanish-speaking community

in Southern California, and in Southern California, and Fernandez, a California businessman, denied demanding campaign contributions as a payoff for government contracts and small business loans.

The House Small Business Subcommittee is investigating charges of criminal violations and lax management in Small Business Administration lending offices around the country. These hearings have produced allegations that the White House exerted pressure to obtain loans for business supporters and that White House aides had an interest in a company seeking SBA assistance.