

Nixon Ferry Ride Cost

\$10,000

SF Chronicle

A 45-minute ride by President Nixon aboard the Golden Gate ferry on September 5—to dramatize the administration's support for the Golden Gate National Recreation Area—cost the Golden Gate Bridge District \$10,000, officials acknowledged yesterday.

The costs involved painting of the ferryboat so the President would have a photographic backdrop free of rust stains, as well as test runs for the boat ride, which began and ended at Fort Point.

In addition, the district chartered a boat from Harbor Tours, Inc. to carry on its regular ferry services while the presidential visit was taking place, said Golden Gate's ferry transit manager Stanley Kowleski.

The charter cost \$1500.

EXCURSION

The bridge district also purchased new carpeting for the President's excursion—and the carpeting is now being used at the district's administrative offices at the toll plaza.

"We felt it was a distinct honor," Kowleski said yesterday.

"After all, it's not every day you get a president of the United States riding a ferryboat in our Bay," he said.

PASSENGER

The only other ferry ride taken by a chief executive was in 1932 when President Herbert Hoover rode as a passenger aboard the Eureka between San Francisco and the Oakland mole.

Kowleski said the White House gave very short notice for President Nixon's visit. "After they checked out security, they let us know," he said.

The short notice caused the district to place workmen on overtime over Labor Day weekend painting, cleaning, setting up a gangway at Fort Point, where the district has no regular landing facilities.

AREA

Kowleski said he personally checked out the Fort Point docking area in a small craft, and that he "hand leaded" the waters to make sure depths were safe for the big ferryboat.

The bridge district also put up \$400 for a luncheon to honor the President's Citizens Advisory Council for Environmental quality. The council, headed by Laurance Rockefeller, had a meeting with the President aboard the boat.

Kowleski said yesterday the costs did not exceed budget limitations for operating the boat.

BUDGET

"Though we had no funds in our budget for the President's visit, we simply accelerated work on the boat for the occasion.

"We keep our boat in top shape all the time, with painting going on every night. We accelerated this painting, which did involve some overtime pay," he said.