

# Making Island Safe for Nixon

By Maxine Cheshire

WASHINGTON — The federal government has "expanded" housing facilities for its personnel and installed an electric power generator on the privately owned Bahamian island of Grand Cay which President Nixon uses as a retreat.

The 125-acre island, which the president has visited 21 times since he took office in 1969, is owned by multi-millionaire industrialist Robert Abplanalp.

Abplanalp, one of the President's closest friends, financed the purchase of Nixon's home in San Clemente.

## Secret Service

Abplanalp also owns houses in the Nixon Key Biscayne compound which he rents to the Secret Service. But the government pays no rent on Grand Cay, according to a spokesman.

The generator for Grand

## More Housing, a New Generator On Privately-Owned Grand Cay

Cay was requested by the Secret Service, press officer Jack Warner said yesterday. It is "owned by the Air Force and is only to be used when the President is there," he said. It will be removed when he no longer visits there.

Regular power for the 125-acre island is supplied from a generator on nearby Sea Horse Cay, which Abplanalp also owns. Sea Horse Cay has both a power plant and an emergency stand-by generator for power failures. But the Secret Service "wanted its own," Warner said.

The Air Force installed the new Grand Cay generator, Warner said, adding he had no information on either its size or cost.

The General Services Administration is preparing to release figures next week on government expenditures on the island, along with cost information on other properties used by the Nixon family, including the house owned in Bethesda by Charles G. (Bebe) Rebozo and leased to Julie and David Eisenhower.

## Elaborate

(Government painters, carpenters, clean-up crews and gardeners were seen around the Rebozo house by neighbors and reporters before the young Eisenhowers moved in. The White House press office explained at the time that some of the workmen had taken "annual leave" to help the couple on their own time and others

were there on assignment for the Secret Service.

A private citizen who saw the Grand Cay generator recently and is familiar with such installations in the Bahamas described the facility as "elaborate" and capable of providing "enough power to light up a small city."

There is a dispute between the Secret Service and Abplanalp on who paid for other recent improvements on Grand Cay.

Abplanalp's public relations director at his Precision Valve Co. in Yonkers, N.Y., Vincent Carberry, maintained yesterday that Uncle Sam had paid for "none" of the buildings on Grand Cay.

According to the Secret Service, however, the government recently paid for materials and labor to "expand" and "equip" living facilities which Abplanalp provided there for White House communications technicians and agents guarding the President. Added were sleeping facilities, toilets, a kitchen and a dining hall extension.

Abplanalp did pay a "portion" of the labor costs but the bulk of the expense was federal, said Warner, who could supply no breakdown on the figures.

## Paradise

Both the Secret Service and Abplanalp's spokesman emphasized that the multi-millionaire industrialist has spent large sums of his own money in making Grand Cay a "paradise" for the President's enjoyment.

A spokesman for Abplanalp, who bought the island in the mid-1960s for a reported \$250,000, said he installed a helicopter pad, built a paved road to the beach and added a second floor "presidential suite" to the modest two-bedroom, single story, bungalow which came with the property.

The huge new master bedroom which President Nixon uses gives him a sweeping view of the ocean. There are a couple of other smaller bedrooms on that floor. Another bedroom on the ground floor has been converted to a presidential study.