

What a Friend Has Spent On Nixon's Bahamas HQ

Washington

President Nixon's friend Robert H. Abplanalp has spent approximately \$1 million for facilities to accommodate frequent presidential trips to an island in the Bahamas, the head of the General Services Administration said yesterday.

GSA administrator Arthur F. Sampson suggested that costs to the taxpayers might be higher were it not for Abplanalp's beneficence.

Sampson, in an interview, defended government spending on Mr. Nixon's homes and offices in California and Florida. He said he was surprised that the \$2,444,000 spent on improvements at

the Western White House at San Clemente — as announced by the GSA last Monday — was not a larger sum.

PROTECTION

He said he favored the concept of "maximum protection" for any president. The expenditures were necessary for security purposes, including \$141,000 for landscaping to screen the San Clemente home and to replace lawns, trees, and shrubbery that were dug up to install highly sophisticated electronic security devices, he said.

Referring to a current congressional investigation into government spending on Mr.

Nixon's private properties, Sampson said:

"Speaking as a citizen, I would not change the government's obligation to provide maximum security. The death of a president is so traumatic."

ISLAND

Abplanalp's expenditures at Grand Cay, his privately owned 125-acre island, are in addition to nearly \$10 million spent by the government to secure residences used by the President and his family outside Washington and to maintain official communications systems.

While the GSA itself has spent \$16,000 for buildings and lighting on Grand Cay, a spokesman for Abplanalp said yesterday that the private outlay was more than \$1 million.

Abplanalp, who is part owner of about 19 acres of Mr. Nixon's 24.6-acre walled estate at San Clemente, paid for construction of a helicopter pad at Grand Cay, for road improvements and for major additions to a home the President uses when visiting the island retreat, Sampson said.

Washington Post