

Caretakers Named For Hughes Estate

By JAMES P. STERBA
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HOUSTON, April 14—Lawyers for Howard R. Hughes's closest associates moved in three states today to join with the late billionaire's relatives for an orderly disposition of his estate.

Admitting publicly for the first time that they cannot find a will, Hughes officials sent attorneys to state probate courts in Texas, California and Nevada to petition the courts to appoint three relatives and a bank as temporary administrators of the Hughes holdings in those states. The value of the estate is estimated at \$1.5 billion.

A probate judge in Houston named Annette R. Lummis, an aunt, and her son, William, a lawyer, as temporary co-

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administrators of Mr. Hughes's Texas assets. A Los Angeles court appointed Richard C. Gano, a first cousin, as special administrator in that state. A Las Vegas court named the First National Bank of Nevada as special administrator there. Mr. Hughes was not known to have assets in any other states.

The arrangement apparently leaves Mr. Hughes's three principal business associates — Frank W. Gay, Nadine Henley and Chester Davis — in charge of his business empire while the search for a will continues.

A Hughes spokesman said in Los Angeles that the industrialist's top aides and his relatives "believe that Mr. Hughes executed an effective will, but it has not yet been found." He added:

"Temporary court supervised administration was requested to facilitate the continued operation of all Hughes enterprises pending the location of the will. Search efforts since the death of Mr. Hughes on April 5 have not yet revealed the location of the will.

The petition filed in Los Angeles said: "Meaningful information as to the effective last will and testament, as well as to its location, may be found among personal effects which may be located in Los Angeles County."

Judge Neil A. Lake, who heard the petition in the Superior Court there, said that in approving it, he was giving court authorization to conduct a search for the will among Mr. Hughes's personal effects.

It is clear that Mr. Hughes's business associates have been working closely with his nearest known relatives — Mrs. Lummis and 12 first cousins on his mother's side of the family. If no will is found, it is not clear what role Hughes business officials would have in determining the disposition of the estate.

One Houston lawyer who is not connected with the Hughes estate, said he saw no reason why the relatives could not simply pay off the business

associates, then divide his fortune among themselves.

The legal moves in the three states were closely monitored by Hughes officials in Los Angeles.

William P. Miller, the lawyer in Houston, used a pay telephone to report exactly when he was about to enter the courtroom.

"Okay, I'm going in now," he told an unidentified listener.

Mr. Miller then paid a \$43.50 filing fee and walked into Harris County Probate Court and the Houston law firm of Andrews Kurth Campbell & Jones, as is Mr. Miller.

Mr. Miller said his firm was representing both business officials and relatives of Mr. Hughes. The firm has done legal work for Hughes enterprises in Houston and Las Vegas since Mr. Hughes' father set up the Sharp-Hughes Tool Company here in the early 1900's. Summa Corporation, which runs Hughes enterprises, in fact, uses office space here rented by the law firm in the Exxon Building in Houston. For years, mail addressed to Mr. Hughes had been delivered there.

Judge Gregory said the court agreed to allow posting of a \$200,000 bond and the turning over of assets to the Texas Commerce Bank for safekeeping. Neither the judge nor the attorney would say what assets were involved. A spokesman for the bank said that it had agreed to serve a "custodial function" for the temporary administrators, but had not yet received any assets.

Cooperation Is Noted

Mr. Hughes's known relatives appear to be united and cooperating fully with Hughes business officials. Most of them are in Houston and are relatively affluent.

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Over the years, several persons have claimed to be related to Mr. Hughes, though some of the known relatives here said they believed them to be impostors.

The closest relative here is Mrs. Lummis, who is the sister of Allene Gano Hughes, Howard Hughes's mother. Mrs. Lummis married a doctor and has four children. They are William, the lawyer and co-administrator, Dr. Frederick R. Lummis Jr., a physician; Mrs. George Neff, whose husband is a Houston banker, and Mrs. Paul Russell, whose husband is a physician in Boston.

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Mr. Hughes's mother had four other brothers and sisters, now dead. Two of them, however, had children, who are also Mr. Hughes's cousins. They are Howard Gano, a 47-year-old attorney and consultant, Doris Gano Wallace, a Houston school teacher; Annette Gragg, whose husband is an architect; William Gano, a retired engineer; Patrick Houston, an insurance man; Mrs. John Lindsay, whose husband is also in insurance, and Mrs. Platt Davis, whose husband operates a tool and die company. All of them live in Houston. Another cousin, Richard Gano, was the one appointed special administrator in California.

California Wine Growth

SAN FRANCISCO (UPI)—California wine increased its share of the American wine market by nearly 3 percent last year, says John De Luca, president of the Wine Institute. Mr. De Luca said it rose to 73.6 percent.

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