

22 Sep 74 ①

Nixon (jewelry, other foreign gifts) - Shipment to Nixon halted by White House "last week." Two-part article.

GSA, which "two weeks ago" was preparing to ship to San Clemente 1,100 packing crates and boxes containing foreign and domestic gifts to the Nixons, was told "last week" by Buchen not to ship any of the foreign gifts or the accompanying inventory records. These foreign gifts, according to "sources who have seen the inventory," could "run more than \$2 million." Buchen is quoted as saying (no date) that the GSA recognizes that foreign gifts are the property of the United States; however, author says GSA refuses to permit scrutiny of its list, even by members of House Government Operations Committee which has jurisdiction of the GSA. Reps. John Moss and Jack Brooks are members of this committee. GAO, which did succeed in obtaining a copy of GSA's inventory of foreign gifts, will not permit Moss' staff to see it but is willing to allow Brooks' staff a "20-minute scanning."

"The GSA list would not reflect any foreign gifts which the Nixons shipped to San Clemente and possibly to Key Biscayne over the past six years. It also would not include any gifts that may have been loaned by the Nixons to their children, might have been taken to California by the Nixons by plane on the day he resigned, or possibly were packed last month by Julie Nixon Eisenhower with her parents' personal belongings from the White House family quarters. According to a story and pictures of the Nixons' San Clemente estate which ran in the 1970 winter issue of the Architectural Digest, 'gifts from heads of state' are scattered 'throughout the house.'"

White House Gifts Unit - "Buchen said [no date] he has also taken steps to secure records maintained by a special White House Gifts Unit These are 'under lock and key,' Buchen said, until he can obtain a ruling from [Saxbe] on whether these files are considered a part of Nixon's confidential 'private papers' or government files open to public scrutiny. A decision is expected soon. [Story does not say whether these records are still in the possession of the Gifts Unit, "under lock and key," or are in Buchen's possession.]

"If White House Gift Unit records of these gifts should

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be permanently sealed as part of Nixon's papers, under the controversial agreement he signed with the GSA on Sept. 6, there would be no way that the public or anyone in the federal government could ever determine the nature, donor or value of all gifts received by the Nixons. [These records] were almost shipped to San Clemente [with the Nixons' personal effects] the week after President Ford took office ... when a reporter asked the-then press secretary, Jerry terHorst, to intervene. TerHorst had the [records] impounded and asked Buchen to determine their legal status as the government's only record of public property."

Jewelry - Story says the Ervin committee, before its mandate ran out 30 June, was tracing an estimated \$580,000 worth of jewelry which was appraised for insurance purposes at the White House; committee files are now in Jaworski's hands. The \$580,000 figure is only an estimate by the firm of Shaw & Dussinger, since its records were taken from it in Feb 74 by Edward O. Sullivan Jr., a cousin of Mrs. Nixon's; these records were taken over Shaw's protests because they were the property of the firm. "It is ... unclear how much, if any, of that \$580,000 worth of jewels is in storage with the GSA." Sullivan is described as an insurance broker.

Author reminds readers that Buzhardt said, of four gifts of jewelry from the Saudi Arabian royal family (see entry 14 May 74), that the Nixons "never for a minute" considered such jewels and other valuables received from foreign heads of state to be their own property and always intended to "turn them over when the President leaves office," but author says also that at least five of the packing cases held by the GSA "are known" to include 200 gifts of jewelry, and that "it is known" they contain the four Saudi Arabian gifts.

Second section of article deals in part with appraisals of the \$580,000 worth of jewelry. "It might or might not be a conflict of interest for the Nixons to accept valuable gifts of jewels from Americans. But to accept valuable foreign gifts and then seek to insure them as their private property would be another matter. One must assert an ownership interest in property to have it insured. To insure something that does not really belong to you is

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defrauding the insurance company. It is a violation of the U.S. Criminal Code to 'knowingly convert' public property to your own use. The federal government does not insure public property.

"According to records at Harry Winston's [one of the Saudi Arabian gifts, a \$54,400 set of emeralds and diamonds given to Mrs. Nixon in 1969] was appraised 'for insurance' purposes by them on Feb. 26, 1970. Buzhardt ... conceded [May 74] that it had been appraised. But he denied that it was for insurance purposes. 'I don't know why they were appraised,' he said, but the jewels were 'never insured,' Buzhardt said, noting that [it] would have been illegal for the Nixons to have done so since the jewels were not their property."

Story suggests the possibility, from description of a few pieces of jewelry, that some of that appraised may be the personal property of the Nixons'.

See both stories, which are too detailed to summarize. Second section, mainly on the appraisals, also deals with Rose Mary Woods' possible involvement in dealings with both Shaw & Dussinger and Harry Winston Inc. The only other firm named is Brock & Co. of Los Angeles, now no longer in business.

See also entry 14 May 74 based on article by the same author, who broke the story of the jewelry gifts from Saudi Arabia. All clippings on this are filed Nixon, under date of 14 May 74.

WXP, 22, 23 Sep 74, Maxine Cheshire - filed Nixon, under date of 14 May 74

- See entry 27 Mar 75, Nixon (foreign gifts), on GAO report, and its opinion that the Nixons may keep all foreign gifts.
- From story on deposition by Nixon, given 25 Jul 75, made public 20 Aug 75: "In the course of the questioning, Mr. Nixon also made the following remarks and comments: None of the gifts received by Mr. Nixon or his wife have been sold or 'appropriated.' He added, 'All stories to the effect of that are to the contrary and totally inaccurate.'"

NYT 21 Aug 75, Linda Charlton

- See entry 20 Aug 75, Nixon, foreign gifts.