

Higher San Clemente Costs Admitted

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Confirming figures 10 times higher than previously stated, the White House has said that federal expenditures through the General Services Administration on improvements at President Nixon's San Clemente home total \$413,246.

A Nixon press spokesman confirmed the substantial accuracy of a story that appeared Wednesday in The Register newspaper of Santa Ana, Calif., which reported federal expenses of \$414,093 to improve the property—a story which doubled the previous reports published elsewhere on the expenses.

On May 26, deputy White House press secretary Gerald L. Warren, responding to questions submitted by The New York Times, listed government-financed improvements at the San Clemente estate at \$39,525.

After letting that statement stand for 2½ weeks, Warren insisted through a colleague Wednesday night that he had never meant to indicate that the \$39,525 figure represented a total of all federal expenses at the Western White House.

[The White House last night said it was informed that the correct figure is \$469,312]

The White House says that all such expenses were undertaken on the advice of the Secret Service for security reasons.

Warren's \$39,525 statement of May 26 was challenged within two days by the Associated Press, which reported finding records of federal expenditures of \$109,385 at the estate. Other news sources later reported \$76,000 more was spent on landscaping.

Wednesday, The Register reported some additional expenditures, the major one being \$184,174 for interior and exterior electrical work at the Spanish-style home overlooking the Pacific.

Warren, informed of The Register's \$414,093 figure of known total federal expenditures at the property, first expressed disbelief. However, he promised to check with the GSA.

Several hours later, another White House spokesman challenged the exact accuracy of a number of the specifics cited by The Register, but the total GSA expenditure figure he came up with was only \$847 less than The Register had.

Warren told The Los Angeles Times that he had not "intended to tell The New York Times that the \$39,525 he had listed May 26 was a total figure, "because I don't know what the total figure was then and I don't know what it is now."

In listing federal expenditures May 26 Warren had spoken of \$13,500 for repairing a heating system, \$12,964 for erecting a glass screen between the beach and the pool, \$11,561 for erecting a fence between the railroad tracks and the house and \$1,500 for asphalt pavement between the house and White House offices.

All of these, he declared, were security-connected.

Wednesday night, the White House spokesman, dropping the \$1,500 asphalt expense, confirmed these GSA expenditures on the property:

- \$184,174 at the request of the Secret Service for exterior and interior electrical work, including installation of conduit wiring, low-level

- exterior lighting, high-intensity lighting, installation of intrusion and fire detector and alarm systems, elimination of electrical hazards, providing an emergency power system for the residence and separation of the normal house power from the government-installed power unit.

- \$3,200 for a 272-foot sewer line connection to the San Clemente sewer system. (The Spokesman said he presumed Mr. Nixon picked up the other \$5,800 bill for this \$9,000 project.)

- \$76,000 for landscaping, generally consisting of taking out shrubbery that the Secret Service wanted removed for security purposes, placing shrubbery for such purposes and replacing shrubs and trees that had to be removed due to subterranean security work. The spokesman noted that The Register had said that some of this money also went for installation of a lawn sprinkler system, but said he knew nothing about that.

- \$13,186 for access across the railroad tracks, a railroad signal and a security outpost on the beach. (The Register had listed only \$6,400 under this category and called the security outpost a "beach cabana.")

- \$3,090 for roof work on three guard booths and a gate house.

- \$15,989 for repair of damaged roadways, driveways and a parking area. The White House spokesman said the Secret Service had been seriously concerned about access for Nixon Limousines to certain areas and the condition of the road over which they travel. (The Register had listed only \$10,612 in expenses for this.)

- \$57,582 for a brick wall surrounding the grounds and a tile-and-block wall supplementing it. (Warren had not listed the wall May 26 because he said it was mostly on Coast Guard property and not on estate property.)

- \$22,000 for three guardhouses and a gate house (The Register called these gazebos.)

The White House spokesman said the GSA could find no record for some other expenditures alleged by The Register—\$2,400 for septic tank repairs, \$3,360 for a storage shed and \$2,800 for swimming pool work. He was particularly emphatic that no federal funds had been spent for doing work on Mr. Nixon's pool.