

G.S.A. Paid Nixon Home Bills Ordered by Lawyer

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WASHINGTON, Oct. 12—The General Services Administration repeatedly spent public funds for improvements and other projects at President Nixon's San Clemente home that were originally ordered by Mr. Nixon's personal attorney and private architect, according to evidence presented to a Congressional investigating committee today.

Questions asked and documents introduced by Democrats on the House Government Activities Subcommittee indicated that Herbert W. Kalmbach, the President's lawyer, and H. I. Lynch, the architect, had frequently ordered materials or labor for the President's home in California and that the bills, after first being sent to them, were later rebilled to the G.S.A., the Government's chief house-keeping agency.

In most of the instances cited, the orders had not been authorized by the Secret Service, which is responsible for Presidential security, the ostensible reason for spending public funds on the President's property.

Arthur F. Sampson, administrator of the G.S.A., and other officials of the agency strongly denied in their testimony that there had been anything improper in their expenditures at San Clemente.

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They said they had regarded Mr. Kalmbach as an agent of the President and that their expenditures at his property were legal under their authority to provide assistance to the executive office of the President.

However, one agency official testified today that he had asked to be relieved from a project at San Clemente because of pressure from Mr. Nixon's architect to make unauthorized changes that entailed higher costs to the Government.

William J. Robinson, a G.S.A. architect, told the subcommittee that he had been told to change the specification of a fence along the beach at the estate "without notification or approval" from proper authority.

The fence was in fact changed according to testimony by agency officials. The Secret Service had ordered a chain-link fence for security along the beach but the fence finally constructed was of redwood and cost \$11,561. This was at least twice the cost of a chain-link fence, officials of the General Services Administration conceded.

In the document reporting the modification of the fence, Mr. Robinson had filed in the space reserved for explaining why the work was done, "to avoid offending the resident architect."

Other expenditures that drew a close scrutiny by the Democrats on the subcommittee were a boundary survey of the San Clemente property costing \$3,050.60 and a structural sur-

vey of the house costing \$1,605.49, both conducted by the South Coast Engineering Service.

According to documents in the possession of the committee, Mr. Kalmbach ordered the surveys about April, 1969, and had been billed for them in May of that year. Subsequently, the bills were sent to and paid for by the G.S.A., which did not become involved in any of the San Clemente activities until June, 1969.

John F. Galuardi, deputy commissioner of the agency, who had been in charge of San Clemente projects, said that the surveys had been authorized by the Secret Service but he said he could not remember when or how the authorization was made. He said under oath that he did not know that Mr. Kalmbach had previously ordered the surveys.

However, the subcommittee chairman, Representative Jack Brooks, a Texas Democrat, challenged Mr. Galuardi's testimony.

"They billed Mr. Kalmbach," Mr. Brooks pointed out. "Kalmbach didn't want to pay it. Later you were billed. Later you paid it. I am afraid those are what the facts are, Mr. Galuardi."

The committee Democrats also asked skeptical questions about the agency's purchase of 13 brass lanterns, five of them used at the President's swimming pool, designed by Mr. Lynch and costing \$5,500.

The G.S.A. officials testified that the lamps met the Secret Service need for "medium level security lighting," although they conceded there was no specific Secret Service request for such lighting.

In response to a question, Mr. Sampson said that the lamps were not expensive for security lighting when their "esthetic values" are taken into consideration.

When asked why the lamps had not appeared in the published report of the agency's spending on the San Clemente place, Mr. Sampson replied, "Probably an omission."

Republicans on the committee concentrated on G.S.A. expenditures for the private home of former President Johnson. The report noted that public funds had been spent for flower beds and an ice chest for a Secret Service trailer, among other things.

The thrust of the Republican questioning was that past Presidents had also had their homes improved at public expense.