

Nixon Calls Rebozo 'Totally Honest'

Washington

Charles G. Rebozo, the Florida financier who is under investigation by the Justice Department in an alleged stock fraud case, was described last night by President Nixon, his close friend, as "a totally honest man."

Rebozo, he said, had not acted improperly in holding for three years and then returning a \$100,000 "political contribution." The President also dismissed reports that his friend had administered a \$1 million trust fund in Mr. Nixon's behalf.

Responding to questions at a news conference, Mr. Nixon said he based his opinion of Rebozo's honesty on his belief that the banker had "turned back in exactly the same form" \$100,000 that Rebozo received in 1969 and 1970 from Howard Hughes.

FREQUENT

The President accused the American Broadcasting Company of carrying a report earlier this week on the alleged trust fund, supposedly made up of illegal corporate political contributions, with the knowledge that "it

A Tapes Conference

Washington

White House officials will meet with U.S. District Court Judge John J. Sirica next Tuesday to make arrangements to turn over the Watergate tape recordings, President Nixon said last night.

Mr. Nixon did not say when the tapes will actually be delivered to Sirica.

Associated Press

was untrue."

Mr. Nixon sees Rebozo frequently on his trips to his home in Key Biscayne, Fla., and Rebozo purchased earlier this year an expensive home in suburban Maryland that he rents at an undisclosed "special rate" to the President's younger daughter, Julie Nixon Eisenhower, and her husband, David.

The President bristled last night when asked whether the White House's assertions

that he had had no knowledge of the contribution until after last November's Presidential election was "credible."

"It's obviously not credible to you," Mr. Nixon shot back at the inquiring newsmen. "And I suppose that I would sound incredible to many people who did not know how I operate."

POLICY

He had not known of the money's existence, he said, because of a standing policy at the White House that he not be told of contributions to his re-election campaign until after it was over, when he "would send notes of appreciation to those that contributed."

He argued that Rebozo had shown "very good judgment" in keeping the Hughes money in a safe deposit box for about three years, then returning it to the donor after one of his properties, the Hughes Tool Company, had become embroiled in "an internal fight of massive proportions."

The Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, a bank regulatory agency, said earlier yesterday that it would consider suspending Rebozo from his post as chairman of the Key Biscayne bank in the light of reports that the bank had accepted as security for a loan, 900 shares of stock that later proved to be stolen.

A sworn statement by George H. Riley Jr., an insurance investigator, that has been filed with court in Miami, alleges that he informed Rebozo before the stock was cashed that it had been stolen.

New York Times