

ANSWERS THAT RAISE FRESH QUESTIONS

He had pledged to get the full Watergate story out "once and for all," but in his Operation Candor appearance before newspaper editors at Disney World and in his meetings with Republican governors and Congressional leaders, President Nixon seemed to raise as many questions as he answered. In some cases, his statements were incomplete; in others, his comments conflicted directly with past testimony about Watergate and related scandals. Among the more provocative discrepancies:

Throughout his Watergate defense, Mr. Nixon has insisted that he had little control over his 1972 campaign organization—including the men he deems responsible for Watergate. "I didn't manage the campaign. I didn't run the campaign," he told the Associated Press Managing Editors Association a fortnight ago. "I was frankly too busy trying to do the nation's business to run the politics."

Mr. Nixon may not have had day-to-day control over the Committee for the Re-election of the President, but by most accounts he kept close tabs on its operation. Jeb Stuart Magruder, former deputy chairman of CRP, has said that Mr. Nixon played an active role in running the campaign until at least a month after the Watergate burglary. And John Mitchell, Mr. Nixon's onetime campaign chief, told the Senate Watergate committee of discussing politics with the President in a long series of meetings and telephone conversations both before and after Mitchell resigned his campaign post on July 1, 1972. Far from being just general chats, Mitchell said, his talks with Mr. Nixon covered everything from convention tactics to the Jewish vote. Mitchell's estranged wife, Martha, added last week that her husband and Mr. Nixon discussed "everything that was happening" aboard the Presidential yacht, Sequoia. "It was all carried out on orders from the White House," she said.

Mr. Nixon has said that Democrats as well as Republicans got illegal corporate campaign contributions in 1972. "Neither party was without fault," he told the editors. "They raised \$36 million and some of that, like some of ours, came from corporate sources and was illegal because the law had been changed and apparently people didn't know it."

Despite an intensive investigation, the GOP staff of the Senate Watergate Committee turned up no pattern of illegal giving to Sen. George McGovern's 1972 Democratic Presidential campaign; one

Democrat has admitted an illegal gift to Hubert Humphrey's primary drive. On the Republican side, six major corporations have pleaded guilty to giving some \$365,000 to the Nixon campaign, and insiders expect still more indictments. As for Mr. Nixon's contention that corporate donors were misled by changes in the laws, that seems highly unlikely; while there were changes in some technicalities, the law flatly banning corporate contributions has been in effect since 1907.

Mr. Nixon denied raising milk support prices in 1971 in return for substantial dairy-industry contributions to his re-

Nixon's defense ignored the question of what went on at a tense meeting with key White House aides two days before the supports were raised. The White House has refused to yield the tapes of that meeting to a Federal court hearing a challenge to the support increases.

While admitting that he paid only "nominal taxes in 1970 and 1971, the President insisted that his \$570,000 tax deduction for contributing his Vice Presidential papers to the National Archives was strictly aboveboard—and that he hadn't taken deductions for "a cattle ranch, or interest or all these gimmicks."

Although the President recently asserted that he had "disclosed my personal finances," he had in fact released only an abridged audit of his real-estate transactions. He said he first learned of the possibility of a deduction for Vice Presidential papers in a meeting with Lyndon Johnson early in 1969; but last week, former Internal Revenue Commissioner Sheldon S. Cohen said that two lawyers representing Mr. Nixon came to him before the Inauguration to talk about such gifts. Some tax experts also believed that the President didn't properly sign his papers over to the archives before such deductions were outlawed on July 25, 1969. If Mr. Nixon did not take deductions for interest paid on his real-estate investments, it is difficult to imagine how his tax bills could have been "nominal." And the President has contradicted himself on the value of his equity in his New York law firm (\$45,000 in 1968; \$100,000 in Orlando) and on the value of his Park Avenue apartment (\$166,860 in 1968; \$326,000, \$300,000 and \$321,000 in later statements).

Meeting with congressmen, Mr. Nixon said that his friend C.G. (Bebe) Rebozo had asked the FBI to take fingerprints and record serial numbers from the 1,000 \$100 bills given Rebozo by industrialist

Howard Hughes, supposedly as a Nixon campaign contribution. Mr. Nixon said Rebozo wanted to verify that the cash he was returning to Hughes this year was the same he had received in 1969.

In an interview with Senate investigators last week, Kenneth Whitaker, the FBI special agent in Miami and a friend of Rebozo's, said he had been unable to tell much about the money; he said the bills were not new, nor were their serial numbers sequential. Rebozo himself had said earlier that he had removed the original bank wrappings from the bills, replacing them with rubber bands. He did not say why.



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election campaign; he said that if he hadn't acted, Congress would have voted an even bigger increase. As he told it: "Congress put a gun to our head."

No one doubted that the White House was under some pressure from Congress to raise milk-price subsidies. But given Mr. Nixon's willingness to go to the mat with a balky Congress on other extravagances, his sudden cave-in on milk came as a surprise. At the time, less than one-third of the Senate and roughly one-quarter of the House openly favored raising the price supports—not enough to pass a bill, let alone override a Presidential veto. What's more, Mr.