

Hughes's Aides Begin Testifying on

By JAMES M. NAUGHTON
 WASHINGTON, Dec. 3 —
 Employees of Howard R. Hughes, faced with the threat of contempt citations, began testifying today to the staff of the Senate Watergate committee about a \$100,000 cash payment made to Charles G. Rebozo, President Nixon's close friend.

Senator Sam J. Ervin Jr. of North Carolina, the Democratic chairman of the committee, and senior members of his staff took testimony for several hours behind closed doors this afternoon from the first of a dozen Hughes employees under subpoena.

The aides to the billionaire industrialist, who previously had refused to honor the subpoenas and had filed a court challenge against private interrogation, apparently decided to testify after the committee made known its intention to seek contempt citations if the witnesses refused to appear.

'Pleasantly Surprised'
 "I'm pleasantly surprised they've started to testify," Samuel Dash, the committee's chief counsel, said late today. He refused to characterize the testimony or to say whether it was likely to advance the panel's investigation of the \$100,000 cash transaction. Mr.

Dash said only that the Hughes officials "have been responding to questions under oath."

Mr. Rebozo has said that he received the cash, in two lots of \$50,000 each, from a Hughes aide in 1969 and 1970. He has said that after an internal dispute in the Hughes organization took place he decided not to pass the money on to Mr. Nixon's 1972 campaign committee and instead kept it locked in a safe deposit box until returning it this year to Chester C. Davis, a lawyer for the Hughes organization.

Mr. Davis was among the Hughes employees who met with the committee officials today.

\$100,000 Given to Rebozo

in Senato Ervin's Capitol Hill office. He was said to have been acting as an attorney for the other witnesses.

Mr. Dash told newsmen that when it became apparent that the Hughes officials would testify, the committee staff began questioning them individually, a process he said would take some time. According to Mr. Dash, the full Senate committee will hear Mr. Davis's testimony in private tomorrow afternoon.

Earlier, Mr. Davis had refused on behalf of the Hughes assistants to honor the committee subpoenas. He contended in a lawsuit filed here last week that he and his clients were willing to testify in public but that they would not submit to further questioning in private because "incomplete, distorted and speculative accounts" of such testimony had been published.

The committee officials, who had expected Mr. Davis to reassert the refusal today, had made preparations for a meeting of the full committee later this week to consider seeking prosecution of the Hughes officials on the ground of contempt of the Senate.

Asked late today whether the contempt proceedings would no longer be necessary, Mr. Dash replied that he could not say. Presumably he will wait to determine if all of the Hughes officials continue to be responsive.

House Votes \$60-Million For Preventive Child Abuse

WASHINGTON, Dec. 3 (UPI) —The House approved today Federal aid to help eliminate child abuse. The measure would authorize \$60-million over three years to help states and private agencies finance research to prevent the estimated 60,000 cases a year in which children are "beaten, burned, poisoned or otherwise abused by adults."

The measure, passed on a 354-to-36 roll-call vote and sent to the Senate, authorizes the money to build, staff and maintain centers to collect information and investigate reported cases of child abuse. It would also create a national center on child abuse within the Department of Health Education and Welfare to administer the aid programs.