

A Lawyer Tells Role in Hughes Gift

Washington

Amid White House denials that such an arrangement ever took place, Senate Watergate Committee sources elaborated yesterday on their evidence that President Nixon indirectly solicited a campaign contribution from the Howard Hughes organization during his 1968 campaign for the Presidency.

The New York Times and reported that Richard C. Danner, an official of Mr. Nixon's 1968 campaign and now an employee of Hughes, told the committee in a secret session December 18 that the President had personally asked him to determine the willingness of the billionaire industrialist

"We have denied the whole thing," Gerald L. Warren, deputy White House press secretary, said yesterday. "We have denied that the President discussed (with Danner) a possible contribution of any amount from Hughes."

One Senate source, however, said that Danner's testimony referred to a meeting, probably in Washington, between himself, Mr. Nixon, and Charles G. Rebozo during the summer of 1968 at which the possibility of a Hughes donation was raised by both Mr. Nixon and Rebozo.

Neither man, the sources said, mentioned a specific amount that should be solicited from Hughes, according to Danner's account.

Danner denied last night that the President had ever solicited, through him, a donation from Hughes.

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Danner, who had taken a leave from his Washington law practice to work in the Nixon campaign, then got in touch with Edward P. Morgan, a lawyer who had represented some of Hughes' interests here.

Morgan recalled in a tele that Danner, with whom he had served in the FBI during World War II, approached him between August 8, 1968, when Mr. Nixon received the Republican party's presidential nomination,

Morgan said he was asked whether Hughes would be "interested" in contributing to the Nixon campaign, and told Danner that he would find out. He said he then spoke with a Hughes representative, whom other sources identified as Robert Maheu.

New York Times