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# Watergate Hearings to Resume

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The Senate select Watergate committee voted 4 to 3 along party lines yesterday to hold at least six more days of hearings after rebuffing a strong attempt by the committee's Republican minority to end the public sessions.

The committee voted to hold three days of hearings inquiring into the \$100,000 given by billionaire Howard Hughes to President Nixon's friend Charles G. (Bebe) Rebozo, in 1969 and 1970, and three more days of hearings to explore \$427,500 given to the Nixon campaign in 1971 by milk producers.

Sen. Howard H. Baker Jr. (R-Tenn.), committee vice chairman who unsuccessfully argued for an end to the hearings, said after the committee's 3½-hour meeting yesterday that the doubts the committee can adequately cover the evidence in six days. "I've got a hunch once we get into it, we're going to be here a long, long time," he said.

According to several persons attending the session yesterday, none of the committee members expressed any enthusiasm about resuming the hearings.

Following a staff summary of the evidence to be presented in the Hughes-Rebozo phase of the hearings, these sources said, Sen. Herman E. Talmadge (D-Ga.) said he has concluded that the country is tired of the hearings.

Talmadge reportedly told assistant chief counsel Terry F. Lenzner, who has been in charge of the Hughes-Rebozo investigation, that he failed to see what was being proven, that the staff had produced "mere suspicions."

"The whole tenor of his remarks was that we should not go forward," one source said of Talmadge. Talmadge, however, left before the committee voted, after giving committee chairman Sen. Sam J. Ervin Jr. (D-N.C.) a proxy.

According to several accounts, Lenzner said before the committee's vote in favor of three days of hearings on

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the Hughes-Rebozo transac-

tion that three days was insufficient.

This source said the Democratic majority voted to hold more hearings out of concern for chief committee counsel Samuel Dash, who has publicly guaranteed for two months that the hearings would resume. "You've got six days to save Mr. Dash's ego," the source said.

Another participant in the meeting, however, said the decision was influenced by the committee staff's presentation of the evidence that it has gathered for both phases of the resumed hearings.

The committee has come under increasing pressure from some of its own members, other congressmen and the public to stand aside for the House Judiciary Committee's investigation into whether impeachment proceedings against President Nixon are justified.

Speaking to reporters after today's closed committee session, Baker said his motion "in effect . . . said all things have to come to an end." Baker said the "center of focus" has shifted to the House Judiciary Committee and that the Watergate committee should certify the record of its hearings, evidence and other documents to the Judiciary Committee.

"It seems far more appropriate to me that we step aside and give center stage to the House Judiciary Committee," Baker said.

In addition to the Hughes-Rebozo matter and the milk contributions, Baker said, the committee could just as well inquire into a number of other areas, including the erasures of White House tapes involving discussions of the Watergate affair by President Nixon and the reported attempts by the Pentagon to spy on the National Security Council. Baker said, however, that the House Judiciary Committee was "equally qualified" to investigate these matters and should be allowed to do so.

Baker, who customarily has minimized in public any differences he has had with the committee's decisions, spoke in unusually strong terms of the need for the committee to help expedite the impeachment investigation. He said that the "realities of the situation" and the "political fever in the country, that is, getting on with the business at hand," dictated that the Senate committee now stand aside.

Asked if he thought further hearings by the Senate committee would impede the impeachment investigation, Baker responded, "I'm not sure it will impede the House inquiry, but I am sure it will not expedite the House inquiry."

At the same time, Baker rejected a suggestion that the decision to hold further hearings reflected partisanship by the four-member Democratic majority. "I do not believe that exists now," Baker said. "I think there's an honest difference of opinion in the committee."

Committee Chairman Sen. Sam J. Ervin Jr. (D-N.C.), who supported the staff recommendation for more hearings, told reporters, "I think it's essential, since the committee has been gathering information on these matters, for it to be presented."

Ervin offered no clear explanation as to why the committee had decided to hold only six days of hearings, although several Democratic

members are known to desire an early conclusion. According to one participant in the meeting, the six days of hearings were proposed by Ervin and Dash.

Ervin said the committee will hold hearings next week and the following week but no specific opening date has been set.

In the course of the meeting yesterday, Ervin reportedly ruled out any testimony dealing with the relationship between President Nixon's brother, F. Donald Nixon, and Hughes on the grounds that the committee would give the impression that it was picking on President Nixon through his family. Although Dash reportedly objected, Ervin overruled the chief counsel on this point.

Ervin also reportedly ruled out testimony dealing with an abortive plan to break into the safe of Las Vegas Sun publisher Hank Greenspun. Talmadge, sources said, objected to this testimony on the grounds that the burglary had not occurred and the committee had no clear evidence of what Greenspun's safe contained.

Following the defeat of Baker's motion to end the hearings, sources said, Ervin recommended that the committee hold three days of hearings on the Hughes-Rebozo transaction.

Ervin's recommendation was characterized by one source as a compromise reflecting Ervin's desire "to go forward with it just a little bit to show that the committee had not ducked out on it completely." Ervin was also said to feel that the circumstances of the Hughes payment to Rebozo were worth examining in public.

Ervin said nothing in the motion adopted by the committee prevented it from holding more than six days of hearings if the committee de-

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icides that an extension is necessary. Ervin said he did not think the hearings will impede the House's impeachment investigation. The Senate committee will "cooperate to the fullest extent" with the House Judiciary Committee, Ervin said.

The committee also voted to file "a report, not necessarily the final report," by Feb. 28, the deadline for the committee's final report and recommendations, Ervin said. But he added that the committee will ask the Senate for an indefinite extension of the deadline because the committee is awaiting the outcome of its suit against President Nixon to obtain five tape recordings of presidential conversations involving the Watergate affair.

Neither Ervin nor Dash would give reporters any idea whom the committee will call as witnesses, although Ervin said he hopes Rebozo will be called. Baker said the committee's staff had prepared a tentative witness list of 32 persons but that it was generally agreed by committee members that that was too many witnesses.

Before the defeat of Baker's motion to hold no further hearings, Sen. Lowell P. Weicker Jr. (R-Conn.) offered an amendment requiring the committee to meet publicly every Tuesday in January and February to review "such additional information as may come to the attention of the committee" and to give the committee a chance to reconsider a decision not to hold hearings.