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Nixon-Danner Talk
Probed by Panel

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President Nixon's close friend, Charles G. (Bebe) Rebozo, arranged a meeting in May, 1973, between Mr. Nixon and an emissary of the Howard Hughes organization who then was under investigation in connection with \$100,000 in Nixon campaign contributions from Hughes, according to accounts of secret testimony before the Senate select Watergate committee.

Senate investigators are attempting to determine the purpose of the meeting attended by Mr. Nixon, Rebozo, and Hughes aide Richard G. Danner, who had delivered the \$100,000 from Hughes to Rebozo in two installments in 1969 and 1970.

Danner, the manager of the Sands Hotel in Las Vegas, has testified that he rejected Rebozo's pleas last May to take back the \$100,000 cash and—at Rebozo's urging—agreed to meet with the President the next day.

In his testimony at a recent closed-door Senate Watergate Committee session, Danner added that he, Rebozo and the President

never discussed the \$100,000 contributions during their meeting at Camp David on or about May 20, according to reliable accounts of his testimony.

However, senior members of the (Senate) committee staff have said that they are skeptical of Danner's denial. "Here is Bebe leaning all over Danner to take the money back," one committee attorney said, "and then Danner talks to the President and Bebe for two hours the next day and they don't discuss it. Draw your own conclusions."

The President and the White House have said repeatedly that Mr. Nixon has never participated in any discussions of any political contributions and had nothing to do with either the solicitation or the return of the \$100,000 from Hughes.

Senate and federal investigators say they have uncovered evidence suggesting that the \$100,000 from Hughes was tied to a Justice Department antitrust ruling

favorable to the reclusive billionaire.

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WATERGATE, From A1

In pursuing that theory of the contribution's purpose, the Senate committee investigators recently learned that former Attorney General John N. Mitchell overruled lawyers in the Justice Department's antitrust division and approved Hughes' proposed acquisition of the Dunes Hotel in Vegas. Mitchell's action, according to Senate sources, occurred at about the same time as the \$100,000 contributions were made by the Hughes organization.

Both Rebozo and Danner have said, however, that the acquisition plans had fallen through because of other complications, and that the \$100,000 contributions were made after that.

These and other new details of complicated relationships between the Nixon administration, the Nixon family and the Hughes empire were outlined to the Senate Watergate committee members by their staff at a closed door meeting on Wednesday.

Following the presentation, the senators voted 4 to 3, along Democratic vs. Republican party lines, to reopen public hearings next week to inquire further into the Nixon-Hughes matters.

In addition to testimony about the May meeting between Mr. Nixon, Rebozo and Danner, new information presented to the committee by its staff included the following:

- Indications from secret testimony that the Watergate break-in and bugging might have been ordered to discover whether Lawrence O'Brien, then Democratic National Chairman, possessed information about Hughes' relationship with the White House and the Nixon family. (O'Brien had once handled public relations work for the Hughes organization).

- Suggestions in testi-



CHARLES (BEBE) REBOZO
 ... received cash

mony that Nixon administration figures considered breaking into the office of Las Vegas publisher Herman M. Greenspun because of fears that he too, knew about secret contributions from Hughes to President Nixon's campaigns.

- Allegations from records and secret testimony that the President's brother, F. Donald Nixon, received questionable cash payments, stock benefits and other favors from the Hughes organization and other business interests.

- Evidence that Donald Nixon failed to pay his federal income tax during several years in the 1960s and

was ordered by the Internal Revenue Service to make large back payments.

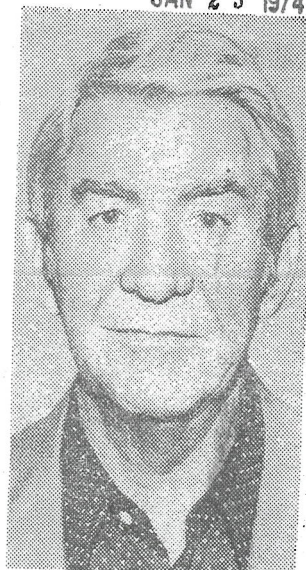
- A record that Mitchell had ordered a California lawyer to keep of Donald Nixon's business activities so that they could be monitored and controlled by the White House during the election campaign. This surveillance included the Secret Service wiretap of Donald Nixon ordered by the President.

- Testimony by one of Rebozo's lawyers, Thomas H. Wakefield, that Rebozo kept \$4,568 in contributions collected for the President's campaign in a special bank account for three years and then transferred the money to his personal account.

- Records showing that \$1,000 from that same ac-

count was made available to President Nixon's personal attorney, Herbert W. Kalmbach, who in turn paid the \$1,000 to White House special investigator Anthony T. Ulascewicz in 1969.

Although Senate investigators say they have ob-



RICHARD G. DANNER
 ... rejected Rebozo plea

tained a wealth of information concerning the Nixon-Hughes relationship, they appear to be most interested in the \$100,000 contribution and the meeting attended in May by the President, Danner and Rebozo.

At the time of the May, 1973, meeting, investigators from the Internal Revenue Service were intensely probing the circumstances of the contributions and their purpose.

According to Danner's secret testimony before the

committee, Rebozo asked him to come to Washington May 18 or May 19 to discuss returning the \$100,000.

At their meeting here, Danner testified, he told Rebozo he wanted nothing to do with handling the money, despite the fact that he initially transferred it to Rebozo.

Rebozo has said he had kept the money in a safe deposit box in his bank in Key Biscayne for three years — until another Hughes emissary agreed to take it back last June.

After repeatedly refusing Rebozo's pleas to accept the money, Danner testified, Rebozo urged him to see the President and set up a meeting for the next day at Camp David — the meeting at which Danner has testified that the three discussed other political matters.

According to White House sources, President Nixon has known Danner for many years. Two persons familiar with their long-time relationship — one a White House official and the other a source in the Hughes organization — said in interviews this week that the relationship is based on personal friendship and that it would be highly unusual for them to discuss politics.

According to accounts of Danner's secret testimony, he told Senate investigators the primary topic at Camp David was the "political mood" on the West Coast and that Mr. Nixon sought his advice on how to handle political problems there.