

# Senate Sources Say Rebozo Testimony Was Unclear

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Charles G. Rebozo was unable to recall with certainty for the Senate Watergate committee last week several details of his receipt of a \$100,000 cash payment he received from the Howard Hughes organization nearly four years ago, according to sources close to the panel's investigation.

One investigative source said that the Florida banker had been unclear during questioning in a two-day secret session of the committee about some points on which he had previously testified while not under oath.

The most crucial of these, the source said, was the inability

of President Nixon's close friend to remember attending a meeting, to which he had previously alluded, that he had with Mr. Nixon and a Hughes representative at the President's San Clemente Calif. estate in July 1970.

The meeting has assumed importance in the eyes of Watergate committee investigators because of Mr. Nixon's public declarations that he had no knowledge of the purported \$100,000 campaign contribution until after the Presidential election in November, 1972.

William Frates, Mr. Rebozo's lawyer, said by telephone today from Miami that neither he nor his client would have any comment on Mr. Rebozo's testimony until it was made public by the committee.

Richard G. Danner, the Hughes employe who delivered the \$100,000 in cash to Mr. Rebozo in \$50,000 payments, is understood to have told the committee that Mr. Rebozo took him to see the President at San Clemente just after he had handed the first installment to Mr. Rebozo.

Gerald L. Warren, the deputy White House press secretary, said that logs in the President's appointments for the day in question showed no meeting with Mr. Rebozo or Mr. Danner. He conceded that Mr. Rebozo was so well known to the White House staff that his visits to the President's office were not always noted.

Mr. Danner reportedly testified that he and the President

did not discuss the transaction that had just occurred, but talked instead of the growing difficulty in attracting stage shows suitable for family audiences at Las Vegas hotels.

Mr. Danner, friend of both the President and Mr. Rebozo, is the general manager of the Hughes-owned Sands Hotel in that Nevada resort town.

One committee source, asked several weeks ago whether Mr. Rebozo had supported Mr. Danner's account of his San Clemente meeting with the President, asserted that Mr. Rebozo had confirmed it. He was referring, however, to Mr. Rebozo's remarks in an informal discussion with committee investigators.

The same source said last week that during his sworn,

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formal testimony on Wednesday and Thursday, Mr. Rebozo had failed to remember any such meeting, although another source who was present said that Mr. Rebozo had not completely ruled out the possibility that it might have taken place.

Mr. Rebozo has maintained that Rose Mary Woods, the President's personal secretary who was interviewed by the committee on Friday, was the only person he kept advised in the White House of his receipt and handling of the Hughes money. She has told the Internal Revenue Service that she said nothing to the President about the matter.

As the Senate select committee nears the May 28 deadline for issuing a report on its year-long investigation of the Water-

gate scandals, its staff is apparently not much closer to resolving many of the questions surrounding the Hughes affair.

Mr. Danner is understood to have told Senate investigators of two other meetings with the President, including one in the summer of 1968 when, as a Republican campaign worker, he reportedly took part in a discussion in Mr. Nixon's presence of the possibility of obtaining a campaign contribution from Mr. Hughes.

The White House, citing Mr. Nixon's denial of any foreknowledge of the purported campaign contribution, has said that the President took part in no such discussion.

The White House has confirmed the second meeting, however, which took place last May

Md.; retreat, the day, Mr. Danner has said after he declined Mr. Rebozo's request to take back the \$100,000.

On this occasion, Mr. Danner has reportedly testified, he and the President talked only of the mood of the country and, as at San Clemente, did not mention the \$100,000 in cash.

Committee aides are reportedly skeptical of Mr. Danner's account of the "Camp David conversation," because it was Mr. Rebozo, according to Mr. Danner, who extended the Presidential invitation to visit Camp David shortly after the impasse had been reached over the return of the money.

It was also in May, 1973 that agents of the Internal Revenue after a one-year delay, first

asked Mr. Rebozo about the tax status and ownership of the \$100,000. Both he and the President have said the money remained untouched for three years in a safe deposit box in the Key Biscayne Bank and Trust Company headed by Mr. Rebozo.