

U. S. Aid to Nixon Estates Put at \$17-Million

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WASHINGTON, March 21— Government spending on President Nixon's private estates in California and Florida is now put at \$17-million, with \$7-million representing personnel costs, according to a confidential report approved today by the House Government Operations Subcommittee.

The \$17-million figure is substantially higher than the \$10-million that the Administration has been saying was spent on the security and support of the President in and around his private retreats at San Clemente and Key Biscayne and at the home of his friend Robert H. Ablaalp on Grand Cay in the Bahamas.

Representative Jack Brooks, the Texas Democrat who is chairman of the subcommittee, disclosed the \$17-million figure in a statement issued before the vote sending the report to the full Government Operations Committee.

Clawson Assails Report

The report apparently does not allege that any of the additional money was used for permanent improvements on the president's private property.

Kenneth W. Clawson, the White House communications director, attacked the report and said that "either deliberately or unwittingly, Brooks has become a member of an

unprincipled gang of Democratic Congressmen bent on destroying the President without regard to the national interest."

"Congressman Brooks is trying to deceive the American people by deliberately creating a report based on runaway partisanship and not facts," Mr. Clawson said. "The Brooks report, constructed to unjustly malign the President, flies in the face of a 1973 General Accounting Office report which revealed that less than 10 percent of the amount mentioned by Brooks was actually expended on President's homes and properties."

Vote on Party Lines

The subcommittee voted along straight party lines in approving the report, with six Democrats voting to submit the report to the full committee and four Republicans voting against it.

The ranking Republican on the subcommittee, Representative John Buchanan of Alabama, charged that Mr. Brooks had broken his own rules of confidentiality by disclosing some of the contents of the report.

Mr. Buchanan also complained that the Republicans on the subcommittee had not had enough time to study the report. He also charged that the report did not contain sufficient information on past Pre-

sidents, particularly President Johnson, to put the government spending on personnel at President Nixon's private homes in proper perspective.

The \$7-million over and above the original \$10-million figure acknowledged by the Government reflects largely the pay and maintenance of permanently assigned personnel at the three sites, including Secret Service, Coast Guard and other military, and the General Services Administration, the report is said to point out.

In his statement, Mr. Brooks said that the report's findings concerned "the loose arrangements by which the General Services Administration paid for items not requested by the Secret Service, the manner in which the Secret Service submitted after-the-fact requests, the procurement of items far in excess of security needs, the obligation of Federal funds by nongovernmental personnel and other such practices..."

Need for Law Raised

Mr. Brooks said that all of these practices were demonstrated in the subcommittee's findings five months ago and thoroughly documented since then. He continued:

"Since the agencies involved have exhibited an inability to exercise reasonable discretion in carrying out their duties in providing protection at privately owned residences, Con-

gress may be compelled to adopt legislation that explicitly sets forth guidelines under which the Secret Service can expend funds to private property and the terms under which it can seek the assistance of other Federal agencies."

The current statute, adopted shortly after the assassination of Senator Robert F. Kennedy in 1968, simply requires Government agencies to provide the Secret Service with any assistance it requires in protecting the President. There are no limitations on spending on private property.

Mr. Brooks indicated that the report contained a number of recommendations for new legislation to control spending on private homes of Presidents, including the following:

¶ A limitation on public spending to one "principal property."

¶ Written requests for specific projects would be required by the Secret Service before it could spend Government funds on private property.

¶ The Secret Service would be required to keep records of its expenditures.

¶ A report on spending on a President's private property would be submitted to Congress every six months.

¶ No limits would be placed on borrowing personnel or equipment from other agencies, but such borrowing could last for no more than two weeks.

Investigation Cited

The figure of \$10-million — or, to be precise, \$10.2-million — for spending on the President's estates was reported by the G.S.A. and other Government agencies last year after months of intense investigation and questioning by Congress and the news media.

Of this amount, the House subcommittee found that about \$2-million represented spending on the residences themselves and the rest on the office complex adjoining the San Clemente estate and other support and communications facilities.

A report by the General Accounting Office, an agency that makes audits and investigations at the request of Congress, put spending at President Nixon's residences at \$1.4-million and found that most of that amount was in fact spent for the protection of the President.

The G.A.O. also found, however, that a number of the expenditures were questionable and perhaps should have been paid by Mr. Nixon personally.

Among the items for which public funds were paid were a \$13,000 electric heating system at the San Clemente home and a reproduction of the White House fence around the Key Biscayne residence.