

Spending for Nixon Is Upset, So G.S.A. Shifts to Ford Fund

NYTimes SEP 14 1974

WASHINGTON, Sept. 13 (AP)—Government auditors have ruled that the General Services Administration had no authority to spend money for former President Richard M. Nixon's transition to private life without first getting an appropriation from Congress.

As a result, the G.S.A. obtained approval today to use money from a special fund appropriated by Congress for President Ford.

Government documents show that the new Administration authorized spending up to \$450,000 for Mr. Nixon a week before it asked Congress to appropriate funds for the transition.

The G.S.A. has already committed about \$6,000 of that money, but Controller General Elmer B. Staats said it was not authorized to do so.

President Ford's request for \$850,000 to help Mr. Nixon's transition ran into stiff Congressional opposition when the G.S.A. tried to defend the

amount in Senate and House hearings this week.

Advance expenditures were approved by Roy L. Ash, director of the White House Office of Management and Budget, in a letter to the General Services Administrator, Arthur F. Sampson, dated Aug. 21.

Mr. Ash told Mr. Sampson that he was granting the authority "in anticipation of reimbursement from a supplemental appropriation under the Presidential Transition Act."

The next day, G.S.A. headquarters in Washington sent a "priority" message to its regional director in San Francisco.

"This message constitutes your authority to proceed to obligate and disburse" up to \$450,000 to cover obligations related to the Nixon transition, the message said.

It was disclosed today that in addition to 13 White House staff members still on the payroll but working exclusively for the former President there are at least eight and perhaps as many as 17 other Government employees still in Mr. Nixon's service.

They include Mr. Nixon's personal maid and valet, a military aide, three drivers, a medical corpsman and one or more G.S.A. secretaries.