

Move in House to Slash Nixon Fund by \$452,000

Washington

A House appropriations subcommittee yesterday slashed \$452,000 from a \$850,000 request to pay for former President Nixon's return to private life.

The subcommittee voted 7 to 6 to make the massive reduction after defeating proposals to give Mr. Nixon only a flat \$200,000.

President Ford had requested the special supplemental appropriation to provide \$450,000 for Mr. Nixon's transitional expenses — to sort his presidential papers and answer more than 350,000 letters — and \$400,000 to provide an office, a staff and an annual \$60,000 pension.

Subcommittee chairman Tom Steed (Dem-Okla.) said the 13-member panel voted to provide Mr. Nixon with a total of \$398,000, most of which — \$245,000 — will pay for transitional expenses. The balance, \$153,000, will be provided under the Former Presidents Act to set up an office and full time staff and provide Mr. Nixon his pension.

The biggest sum knocked out of the financing request was \$110,000 sought by the General Services Administration to construct a vault and security system to store and protect Mr. Nixon's Watergate tapes and other materials.

Steed said the subcommittee was unanimous in its opposition to this amount and will write into its report accompanying the bill a provision prohibiting use of any funds to transfer the tapes to San Clemente until the Watergate special prosecutor and the courts can work out any remaining disagree-

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ment over their future.

Steed said any future cost of storing and protecting the tapes could be worked out later in a new supplemental appropriation.

"We want some additional assurance of how these tapes will be used and protected," Steed said.

Representative Tom Bevill (Dem-Ala.) said he and other members wanted to appropriate no funds for Mr. Nixon with the single exception of his pension, which this year would amount to \$55,000 since it covered only 11 months of the fiscal year.

"I'd cut it back to \$55,000 and stop right there," Bevill said.

Steed said opposition to giving Mr. Nixon any money was so strong in the closed session that he expressed surprise "that I got as much out of the committee as I did."

The full Appropriations Committee is expected to act on the request next week. Meanwhile, Senator Joseph Montoya (Dem-N.M.) plans to reopen hearings before his appropriations subcommittee next week on the financing request.

Montoya has called the \$850,000 request "too high by miles" and said GSA officials were given "a snow job" by Mr. Nixon's aides in drawing up the budget request.

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