

Morris K. Udall -- Selected Articles:

The High Cost of Being a Congressman

Getting elected and staying in office, a distinguished legislator asserts, is a bank roll-breaking ordeal -- but there is a remedy

Article by U.S. Representative Morris K. Udall

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What does it take today to succeed in politics? Speaking ability, personality, a willingness to work long and hard, certainly. Leadership ability, a quick mind, television showmanship -- these qualities still count, too. But as one who has been down that political road, I must sadly report that there is something rapidly becoming more important than all of them: The name of the game is money and the ability to raise it.

In case you don't know it already, the subject of campaign money, who gives it, who gets it and the preposterous bundle of laws that "control" it is approaching a national outrage. These laws and practices, in the judgment of one who has to live with them, are shot full of hypocrisy, threatening to corrupt many good men in public life, giving unnecessary influence and power to special-interest groups and lobbies and posing a serious threat to the integrity of American political institutions.

Hardly a newspaper of recent years has been without headlines about Senator Thomas Dodd and his financial problems, Representative Adam Clayton Powell and his use of taxpayers' money, ex-Senate Majority Secretary Bobby Baker and his reported fund-raising exploits, the \$1000 President's Club, testimonial dinners, corporate ads in political program books, etc. As I see them, these are all symptoms of a basic illness -- our dismal and archaic system of financing and conducting elections. It's a mess that no amount of patchwork will correct. Your lawmakers -- state and Federal -- are partly to blame for this deplorable situation, but the public shares a heavy responsibility, too. All of us should join in insisting that fundamental changes are made, and made *now*.

One might counter that we've always had unsavory things in political finance -- so what's new? Well, escalation is new, for one thing. It's not news that campaigns cost money, but the explosion in costs over the past 15 years is dramatic and dangerous. It adds a whole new dimension to the problem. Jackson, Lincoln or even Grover Cleveland could campaign on a small budget and stand a good chance of success. Lincoln was elected President without leaving Springfield, and the major parties spent less than \$200,000 *total*. But by 1960, John F. Kennedy had to travel 44,000 miles and the two parties had to spend more than \$40,000,000. And just four years later, Johnson and Goldwater found themselves pouring more than \$55,000,000 into their pursuit of the same office.

My brother, Secretary of the Interior Stewart L. Udall, was elected to Congress in 1960 from the Congressional district I now represent -- with an expenditure of under \$13,000. His partisans charged his Republican opponent, who reportedly spent \$35,000, with a "blatant attempt to buy the election." just four years later, when I ran for re-election in the same district, I was opposed by an able and well-financed candidate -- and I had to step up my spending, too. I can imagine that 1960 loser laughing when I reported spending \$35,000 and my opponent \$5000 more than that. Even these figures, however, pale beside those of the hard-fought race in Virginia's Tenth District last year-between Congressman Joel T. Broyhill and his unsuccessful challenger, Clive DuVal. Total spending: \$220,000. Or the 1964 race in New York where Representative Richard L. Ottinger spent \$193,000 *all by himself!* Such examples are becoming more common every year and threaten to become the general rule.

Take the case of Milton Shapp. In 1966, this wealthy but obscure Pennsylvanian decided to run for governor. Into a successful primary against the "organization" candidate, he poured \$1,400,000 (all but \$3000 of it his own). He reported spending another \$2,400,000 *of his money* in his losing effort in November. (With all due respect to a fellow Democrat who may have made a good governor, I find his *losing* the one ray of hope in an

otherwise forlorn picture. However, Shapp's campaign manager says the Republicans spent \$5,400,000, and that hardly lightens my gloom.) Nelson Rockefeller spent at least this much in his successful 1966 re-election effort. More and more men of great wealth are going into politics, and this is not all bad; the Rockefellers, Harrimans, Kennedys and Scrantons have given distinguished public service, just as I suspect Shapp might have. But we are approaching the point where *only* the wealthy, or those financed by special interests, will be able to serve.

From these case histories, it can be seen that a candidate's decision on his campaign finance arrangements may be the most important one he makes -- unless it's the selection of his public relations firm. For the era of the political PR man has dawned with a vengeance. The best-known invention of this new breed of political expert is the "packaged candidate," sold with the same Madison Avenue expertise that works so well for a new laxative or detergent. And, as you can imagine, this new political technology has no place for a Lincoln with principles, strong views and a desire to talk tough issues. ("Oppose slavery? Hell, man, there goes half the electorate.") Today's PR man would laugh Honest Abe all the way to the elevator.

The new technique eliminates risk taking. Before a single thing is done, the PR firm conducts a market survey to find out not what the country *needs* but what a majority of voters at this fleeting moment think they *want*. Then the candidate is presented with a carefully selected list of positions he is supposed to take. Thereafter, an appropriate "image" is sold to the public with slogans, jingles, billboards and all the rest. As one commentator said, this is like polling high school students to find out which courses are easiest and most fun, then drafting the curriculum accordingly.

An important part of this package technique is to avoid all debates and all but the blandest speeches. Hal Evry, a highly successful Los Angeles PR man, says: "Clients who campaign least win the most votes." Last year, he boasted about one client, a political unknown with no organized support, who was elected without making a single speech or shaking a single hand. His entire campaign consisted of billboard posters, newspaper ads, telegrams and handbills proclaiming, THREE CHEERS FOR PAT MILLIGAN. He had enough money, and he won.

The major Federal law governing elections, the Corrupt Practices Act of 1925, is a farce. Despite regular violations of its letter and spirit, there has never been a candidate or a political committee prosecuted under its provisions. The Justice Department isn't about to start, either. This law limits spending in Congressional elections to \$5000 for each candidate. As my able colleague Representative Jim Wright of Texas wrote recently: "If I told you I had never spent more than \$5000 in a House race, I'd be a hypocrite. And if I actually had spent so little in my first race, I'd never have been elected."

The ineffectiveness of this law is apparent by noting three gigantic loopholes: First, it doesn't cover primaries -- the real fights in many states. In primaries, the sky is the limit. Second, the \$5000 limit doesn't apply to expenditures for such "extraneous" items as printing, postage, telephone and telegraph expenses, travel or speechwriting. This is like telling your wife that her use of the department-store charge account is limited to \$100 per month except for hats, dresses, fur coats and shoes -- on which there is no limit. As if these loopholes weren't big enough, there is an even bigger one. It relieves me of any duty to report -- or to have anyone else report -- expenditures of a Udall for Congress Campaign Committee. The phony explanation, of course, is that I don't really know what my committee is up to. And there is no Federal law limiting what it may spend.

Congressmen, aspirants to unseat them, lobbyists, businessmen, ordinary citizens -- all of us are caught up in a financial web. Suppose you are a freshman member of Congress. It's 1968. You have worked hard at your job, studied issues, tried in every way to represent your district fairly and diligently. You've learned the ropes and you would like to continue. What must you do? If your district is anything like mine (and not beset with even higher costs), you've got to lay your hands on something like \$25,000 to \$40,000. Either that or your new political career will go down the drain.

Or suppose a young lawyer or businessman, equally sincere and honest, decides to run against you. He's a prisoner, too. He may believe he can do a better job. He may think your policies are bad for the country. What must he do? For him, money is even more important. He needs "name identification," because he's a newcomer. But he might as well save his money, shoes and breath unless he can raise \$30,000 to \$50,000. My question to you is: Where would *you* go to get this kind of money? Seriously.

Of course, even these amounts are small potatoes in some Congressional districts. And if you want to be a Senator from New York or the governor of California, the cause is almost hopeless without a kitty of literally millions. Which brings us to the great new phenomenon in American politics -- the superstar candidate. Because it costs so much to create name identification, particularly in the big races with large constituencies, someone figured out that there would be inherent advantages to fielding candidates who had already achieved fame in other activities -- especially show business and sports. Already we have elected several such men to high office.

Some people are inclined to pass off the election of actors George Murphy (to the United States Senate) and Ronald Reagan (to the California governorship) as aberrations of a zany state that has produced both Disneyland and *Gold Diggers of 1933*. I don't think the phenomenon can be dismissed that easily. This is surely the wave of the future in an increasingly large and mobile electorate.

Other examples come to mind. Except for the Goldwater debacle, Oklahoma might well have sent football coach Bud Wilkinson to the Senate. And except for a bathroom accident, Ohio might have done the same for astronaut John Glenn. Congressman Bob Mathias of California, the great Olympic decathlon champion, won with a big majority in his first try last year. "It's not that people voted for me because I was an athlete," he told a reporter, "but what did help was that people knew my name. Look what other candidates spend just to get their names publicized. The two Olympic gold medals were the most important contributions to my campaign fund."

I don't contend that we must elect only lawyers or those with prior political experience to high office, but as long as it costs millions to get name identification, I'm afraid there will be a tendency to pass over able but lesser-known candidates who offer nothing but a capacity for effective public service. The famous names of show business and sports will get the nod.

Although neither side wants it -- in any race -- escalation is the order of the day. I would be happy, for example, to limit my spending in the 1968 campaign to \$10,000. I would even stay at this figure and let my challenger spend \$15,000, if I knew we were both *tightly limited* to these amounts. He might be willing, too, but it never works out that way. Things quickly get out of hand.

My advisors will call me in Washington: "You'd better adjourn and get out here. Your opponent is campaigning like crazy." They tell me he has put up 60 billboards, each averaging about \$80 to \$100 per month. They insist we get billboards, too, and \$5000 is gone. They tell me he has contracted for \$6000 worth of television time and \$3000 in radio spots. We buy TV and radio time. Taking the initiative, we run two full-page newspaper ads in Tucson (at \$1200 each) and in three smaller out-of-town dailies (about \$200 each). He answers. I learn of the opposition's direct-mail campaign to reach every voter (up to \$18,000 for a single mailing). Do we meet this? Probably -- if we can. As the election nears, my opponent, sensing victory, raises the ante -- two more full-page ads and ten extra television spots. We think we're ahead, but we can't be sure. Another \$3000 down the drain.

Thus it ever goes. Few candidates can make a budget and stick to it. Each candidate's budget is made by his opponent, and by the fears of what might be coming next. In most of the 434 other Congressional districts, the story will be repeated. Candidates need money; in most cases, they don't have it. It must come from friends, relatives, supporters and the party faithful. And by virtue of this sick and dangerous system, much of it inevitably will come from special-interest groups with an ax to grind.

An ax to grind, yes -- and yet I suppose I would not be giving you a complete or a fair picture if I left it at that. Even special-interest groups are a part of our American system. The Constitution guarantees the people the right to petition their Government, and this right doesn't belong only to Aunt Mary in Spokane or to the lonely pensioner in Arizona. It belongs to labor unions, the American Medical Association, the American Beekeeping Federation, the Sierra Club and thousands of other organizations composed of citizens directly affected by the taxes the Government levies, the money it spends, the laws it passes or defeats. As government grows, so do the stakes in influencing public policy; how and where the Federal Government spends more than 100 billion dollars this year can mean jobs and prosperity -- or unemployment and depression -- for whole communities and occupational groups.

It's the honorable lobbyist's job to influence, by legal means, the decisions of the Government. And it's a lot easier to have favorable decisions made for your group if candidates are elected who believe in your legislative program. The problem is with the candidate who -- perhaps against his better judgment but out of financial pressure -- wakes up on election morning in bed with one of these special-interest groups.

But back to our hypothetical campaign. Suppose you're the lucky winner. Even more luckily, you find that your campaign donations equaled your expenditures. You assume you are going to Washington with that fat \$30,000 salary and all those huge expense accounts the press likes to write about. Your money troubles -- you think -- are over.

This is a cruel joke. Your troubles have just begun. You're not joining the jet set -- it's more like the debt set. Now, don't get me wrong. I'm proud to be in Congress in these troubled times. I knew the salary when I ran and I have managed to get by reasonably well. Most of my fellow citizens earn far less. It's kind of laughable to "poor-mouth" with a \$30,000 salary, and I'm not asking for sympathy. But I do ask for understanding.

What does it cost to be a Congressman? In the first place, you find that your \$30,000 salary doesn't go as far as you thought it would. With two homes to maintain, more clothes to buy and higher prices than you paid back home, you discover it's really the equivalent, in standard-of-living terms, of about \$20,000 in Topeka, Tulsa or Tucson. As for those fat allowances you read about, you suddenly realize they cover only such things as electric typewriters, dictating machines, stamps, stationery, long-distance calls and staff salaries. You never even get to feel the money, and yet people back home imagine you're rolling in it.

These allowances are regular operating costs, which a third vice-president of a dog-food company would take for granted. None of them puts any money in your pocket or any food on your table. Yet at least one newspaper chain regularly "exposes" the fact that published laws provide Congressmen with these "bonus" gratuities from an unknowing and hapless public.

A Congressman has three kinds of expenses. Like every other citizen, he has to pay for food, clothing, the education of his children, life insurance, transportation and all the rest. Also, in common with all political candidates, he has campaign expenses. And unlike ordinary citizens, and unlike *losing* candidates, he has a whole range of semiofficial expenses. He has these only because he is a public official and, contrary to popular belief, almost none of them are paid by the taxpayers.

Let's look at some of these semiofficial expenses. Every month, certain things are expected and demanded of you if you are to represent the people of your district adequately and establish a record you can be proud of. They come from your pocketbook and they add up to \$10,000 or \$15,000 every year:

Trips home. Until three months ago, I was entitled to five Government-paid round trips to Arizona each year, but my constituents expected to see me a lot more often than that. Thus, to do my job adequately, I had to pay out about \$2000 a year in additional air fare. Under a new law, I'll be able to make one Government-paid trip for each month Congress is in session, but I'll continue to pay my own car-rental bills, hotel and restaurant expenses on those trips. I estimate my trips home will still cost me about \$1000 a year.

Local office. In the Tucson Federal Building, as a service to my constituents, I maintain a two-room office. It gives me a base of operations when I'm in Arizona and it provides the people I represent with ready access to their Congressman. I get the rooms and a part-time staff courtesy of Uncle Sam; but part of the telephone expense, answering service, equipment and supplies are on me. Another \$1500 a year down the drain.

Public information. Every month or so, I try to write and publish an informational newsletter. It goes to 22,000 people who have asked to be on my mailing list. The exchange of views that it prompts enables me to do a better job. While Uncle Sam pays the postage, I pay the printer about \$250 per issue. Each year, I send a questionnaire to every one of the 175,000 addresses in my district and, again, I pay for the printing. Also the computerized tabulation. Debit M.K.U. \$3000. Still another part of this informational function covers regular public-service radio and TV reports to stations in Arizona. Congressmen get a cheap price from the "plush" House recording studios; but even so, the bills run another \$2500 per year.

Miscellaneous expenses. On top of these items, a Senator or a Congressman has constituents to entertain, within-the-state travel to be paid for, official dinners to attend and a duty to contribute to most of the organized (and some of the most unorganized) charities you've ever heard of. More money gone.

All these things are semiofficial, because you don't legally have to do any of them. And let's face the fact that if they are done right, they may help you get reelected; they have a political aspect, too.

Remember the famous \$18,000 Nixon Fund of 1952? These are the things it was established to cover. I frankly never quite understood all the fuss about the California businessmen who gave \$250 each to make up this fund for Senator Richard Nixon. Each of them could have given Nixon more than this -- and probably did -- for his regular campaign expenses. At that time, a Senator made \$15,000 a year; and out of his salary, he was expected to do the kinds of things I have listed above. Although such funds are now out of style, the expenditures they were intended to cover are still with us. And they've escalated, too.

If you are the winner in your race and you're lucky, you may have a modest surplus of campaign funds for these purposes. Wealthy ancestors and the laws of inheritance can also turn the trick. If you have neither of these, you may have to go into your salary and savings -- and perhaps resort to one of the quaint rites and ceremonies that have evolved to meet the financial needs of our political system.

On his way to jail, the notorious robber Willie Sutton was asked by a reporter why he robbed banks. "Because that's where the money is," he answered. Where is the money for all the political campaigns in this country -- and for all of the semiofficial expenses I have talked about? Because of the inflated costs of campaigning and serving in public office, an elaborate system of raising money has grown up.

Heading the list of these rites is the testimonial dinner. From John F. Kennedy to Barry Goldwater, nearly every political candidate in modern times (including this writer, on a single occasion) has used this device. Its time-honored features include a famous speaker to draw a crowd, bunting and partisan oratory, rubber chicken or drab roast beef and a price tag of \$25 to \$500 per plate. It's a dangerous diet in more ways than one; but given the present state of affairs, it's a proper, legitimate and usually effective fund-raising device -- if the proceeds are used (as I have used them) strictly for campaign or semiofficial expenses. Former Senator Paul Douglas, one of the most honest and frugal men ever to serve in Congress, has called this kind of testimonial the "most effective and decent device that has yet been developed." But the testimonial dinner is a deplorable device if used (as I understand Senator Dodd has acknowledged doing) to raise money for a new house, suit, car, wedding or family vacation.

Another variation of this game is the party gala held each year or so in Washington by the Democratic and Republican national committees. Tickets are usually \$100 to \$500, and as many as 5000 businessmen, lobbyists, ambitious upper-level bureaucrats and party faithful crowd the hall to see, hear and touch the party greats. A successful night will bring in \$500,000, or maybe two or three times that.

There are other popular rituals. For example, there are the President's Club (for Democrats) and the Booster's Club (for Republicans). A \$1000 to \$10,000 donation will get you an autographed picture of Johnson or Eisenhower and perhaps an invitation to the White House or Gettysburg. I think the American people ought to be outraged at a system that requires our Presidents, ex-Presidents and Presidential candidates to resort to such demeaning devices.

Yet another popular ritual is the Washington cocktail party. A fund-raising event in one's home state is at least aimed at local money. But the \$25-to-\$100 Washington cocktail party levels its guns at the Capitol Hill lobbyists, and it's always "R.S.V.P." As I've noted, the invitees are mostly legitimate representatives of trade associations, unions and business groups. They have constituents, too, and their constituents expect them to know the lawmakers and have their ear. The system traps them just as much as it does the politicians for failure to attend a function for the chairman of an important committee may not go unnoticed. Some of these trade representatives receive up to 100 such invitations a year.

Then there is the local finance committee. The candidate and his finance chairman compile a list of a few hundred local businessmen, friends and others who might contribute in the \$25-to-\$200 range. These names are placed on cards, in the best Community Chest tradition. A group of 40 to 50 solicitors comes to lunch or breakfast with the candidate. Hopefully, each will take on the job of contacting five to ten prospects. In my case, this drive generally nets \$10,000 to \$15,000. I must say, I have always been proud of the caliber and diversity of the Arizonans who come to my aid -- business and professional people, fellow lawyers, Democrats and a surprising number of Republicans. There are few of these people who give from other than decent, honorable motives or who ask more than that I do a conscientious job as their Congressman. I would say 98 percent -- at least -- of my donors never ask for help of any kind. These are the people who keep both parties in business, but the burdens on all of us grow heavier each year.

Finally, there are small-donor solicitations. Nearly everyone agrees that big contributors tend to obligate candidates, and that therefore a large number of small contributors is preferable. However, this is easier to preach than to practice. Few such efforts succeed. Of every 100 Americans, 95 have never contributed to any political candidate.

Early in my Congressional career, I had the optimistic belief that I could gradually build a base of one-to-ten-dollar contributors who eventually would provide all the financial support I needed. I even designed a return envelope with a little hole into which contributors could fit "George Washington's picture." The idea has been widely copied by other Congressmen and it has succeeded far beyond most other mail campaigns. I'm proud that 1500 people thought enough of me last year to send back my envelopes with green bills enclosed, but the \$5200 they gave (\$4000 after expenses) is far short of the \$22,000 I spent.

How did the American people allow themselves to become mired in this ruinously expensive and dangerous financial swamp? There are many answers, but two are especially important: population and television.

Congressman Abe Lincoln served perhaps 40,000 people -- a smaller number than the constituency of an Arizona state senator today. Personal contacts were important; money was not. False images were hard to create. Today, I represent nearly 550,000 people, and I couldn't shake every voter's hand if I did nothing else until the next election. Thus, along with my opponent, I must spend money for mail, radio, television, newspaper ads and all the rest.

Television, of course, is the big new factor showing campaign costs out of sight. The Federal Communications Commission reports that \$35,000,000 was spent in the 1964 campaign just for radio and TV. By 1968, the PR boys will demand ads in "living color," and costs will rise even more. If you're running for governor of Arizona and want to buy just one 20-second spot (now you see it, now you don't) in prime time on each of the state's ten commercial TV stations, you shell out \$1000. In New York, the same quickie commercial would cost you \$2500 -- on just one station. I shudder to think what a package of such spots would cost.

All of this might be worth it if we were using TV's great potential for political education and debate. When TV became common, political scientists predicted a national political revival -- with Lincoln-Douglas debates in every living room. But this great potential has been perverted. Lincoln and Douglas would be lucky today to get on after *Monday Night at the Movies*, and even then, they would have to compete with Johnny Carson or Joey Bishop -- or both. In truth, TV has drastically lowered the intellectual quality of our campaigns. One Congressional candidate's chief TV commercial revealed him in an apron taking cookies out of the oven. Election year 1966 was, more than anything else, the year of the 20-second spot and the singing political jingle. Sadly, 86 percent of all political radio and TV money last year went for spots -- so brief they precluded any discussion of issues.

Every two years, when I meet with my television experts, I regularly insist that some of my money go for half-hour segments to talk issues or to answer questions. We've tried it my way once or twice, but usually I lose out to the pros, who claim (rightly) that these programs don't make votes. Viewers will submit to a spot inserted in a favorite program; but if a 30-minute show is preempted, most folks will complain bitterly and then tune you out for *The Beverly Hillbillies*.

The end result of this thinking can be found in the text of one of my own 20-second spots from the 1966 campaign. Here it is, in its intellectual entirety:

ANNOUNCER: This man has become one of the most dynamic leaders in Congress. He's won the respect of both parties. He's led the fight for the things Arizona must have for today and for the future. Arizona can be proud of him. Mo Udall, our man in Washington -- let's keep him there. Paid for by the Udall Campaign Committee.

That little gem cost my supporters about \$65 every time it went on the air. It isn't very enlightening, but it works and this is what we've come to. By now you may understand why, if I had my way, I would pass drastic laws junking this whole system. Here, in a nutshell, is what I think we need:

1. Rigid, enforceable, reasonable limits on the costs of all campaigns, including primaries. If committees are allowed, their expenditures should be included in the totals allowed. One man, designated by the candidate, would be responsible for reporting all receipts and expenditures. All spending for a candidate, except that authorized and reported by this fiscal agent, would be a criminal offense.
2. Federal financing of some campaign costs.
3. Complete public disclosure of all campaign expenditures and contributors.
4. Free radio and TV time for candidates to present their views and to debate issues.
5. Shorter general election campaigns.
6. Tax credits and deductions to encourage and legitimize broad-based, private financial support of elections.
7. A meaningful, enforceable code of ethics for members of Congress -- to include guidelines determining the propriety of gifts, testimonial dinners, special funds and the like.
8. Periodic financial statements required of all Representatives and Senators covering all outside income, gifts, legal fees and business interests. Senator Dirksen says that such a law would make Congressmen "second-class citizens." I've voluntarily printed these things and a summary of my assets and investments in the *Congressional Record*. It's not particularly pleasant to lay your personal affairs before the public, but I feel better having done it -- first-class, in fact.

I have also introduced legislation aimed at achieving most of these objectives. Because my suggestions are sharply different from present practices, they deserve some discussion.

I don't anticipate much argument -- outside of Congress -- on several of my proposals. I suppose nearly everyone would be in favor of reducing the waste of political campaigns. But Federal financing? I can hear some of the reactions now. "After all the money you extract from us for Federal pork-barrel projects, now you're going to have us pay for your campaigns, too." I would answer that the public already pays -- and it's a staggering price, in terms of legislative and administrative actions that serve the interests of big contributors and lobbyists.

President Theodore Roosevelt, more than 50 years ago, advocated financing Federal elections out of the Federal treasury, and his arguments make even more sense in the days of color TV. In a Congressional contest, my plan would work like this: The Government would deposit with the Treasurer of the United States to my credit and to that of my opponent or opponents a drawing account equal to ten cents for each registered voter in the district. In present terms, this would amount to perhaps \$18,000. The candidates would never see or touch this money, but companies that provide printing, broadcasting, mailing and similar services could submit sworn vouchers to the U.S. Treasurer for payment. Coupled with this would be a limit of \$10,000 that each candidate could spend from his own or contributed funds, thereby reducing drastically the dependence on big contributors. To qualify, a candidate would have had to be nominated by a bona fide party polling an aggregate of at least 15 percent of the total votes in a primary election.

As additional public support for the candidates, I would permit each of them to submit to the Government Printing Office a pamphlet outlining his qualifications and views. These pamphlets would be printed at public

expense and would be delivered free by the Post Office Department to every voter. This proposal is similar to Arizona law, which provides for public printing and distribution of pro and con arguments on referendums and initiative propositions appearing on the ballot.

Also, I would put the great potential of television and radio to work for cleaner, better and more enlightening campaigns. The airwaves belong to the public. Every two years I would require stations, which use these airwaves for profit, to grant a reasonable amount of free prime time to candidates for debate and discussion, in segments of not less than 15 minutes. Candidates desiring spot announcements or additional program time could buy more within the financial limitations above.

In the U. S. Senate races, the same procedures would apply. The public money spent would be ten cents for each voter in the state, or \$250,000, whichever is less. The limits on private contributions would be \$5000 times the number of Congressional districts in the state. While these figures may seem small compared with the huge sums now spent, I believe the introduction of partial public financing would provide the essential element of control previously lacking.

Many of the present evils in our system result from secrecy -- about who is giving money, where it is spent and whether it ends up in the Congressman's pocket. Contrary to popular belief, hidden gifts don't buy many votes -- but many citizens think otherwise. Doctors, oilmen, labor leaders, lobbyists of all kinds ought to have the right to help candidates whose policies they approve. But the public at large has a right to know where the campaign money is coming from and where it goes.

Thus, my proposals would bring the spotlight of publicity to bear on all aspects of political finance: who gave contributions, or things of value, how the money was spent, which Senator used campaign or testimonial-dinner funds for personal purposes, and all the rest. With this information, unconfused by saturation "image" campaigns, the public could vote more intelligently.

A three-week vacation costs more than a one-week vacation. One of the basic reasons for the escalating costs of campaigns is their interminable length. In some states, John Q. Public is now harassed from April to November every election year. The British do a better job in three or four weeks. While we can't outlaw handshaking or free speech, there are two things we *can* do. A bill I have introduced would prohibit the national parties from holding their Presidential nominating conventions before September first. This would shorten the campaigns substantially. I would also like to see a 90-percent tax on any general election advertising appearing before October first of an election year. If the voter can't be convinced in five weeks, it seems to me he can't be persuaded in 10 or 20.

Federal tax laws now permit deductions for gifts to churches, educational institutions, research foundations, fraternal and charitable organizations. But campaign donations by private citizens have no dignity under our laws. This contributes to the prevailing attitude that there is something wrong or corrupt about politics and contributing to political campaigns. I think establishing clean, broadly supported political campaigns is just as important to the future of this country as conquering cancer, supporting our churches and colleges or financing our Elks and Moose.

In 1966, Senator Russell Long succeeded in attaching to an unrelated tax bill a rider allowing for "tax credit" financing of Presidential campaign expenses. This year, the Senate reversed itself and apparently wiped out any hope of including such a feature on 1967 income-tax forms. Had this reversal not occurred, each taxpayer would have been granted a one-dollar tax credit (reduction in his tax) provided he checked a square indicating he was earmarking that dollar for a national campaign fund to be divided between or among major parties in the Presidential race.

While this plan had many flaws (it gave too much advantage to candidates of the Republican and Democratic parties, as compared with new parties that might come along) and perhaps deserved its fate, the basic idea was good. It would have freed Presidential elections from many existing evils. I hope further thought will be given to making it workable. One refinement I might suggest would be for the taxpayer, having checked the square, to receive one dollar in scrip that then could be given to the party or candidate of his choice. This would put all present and possible parties on air equal footing.

A bill I have introduced would give a direct tax credit up to ten dollars for small contributors and, beyond that, would permit taxpayers to deduct from their total income up to \$1000 paid out in political donations. I believe such an incentive is necessary if we are going to have a chance of broadening the base of political fund raising to include more ordinary citizens of ordinary means.

I am modestly hopeful that the House of Representatives will take some action this year to establish meaningful guidelines for members, a code of ethics and mandatory disclosure of income and assets. These steps would be the product of labors by a new Committee on Standards of Official Conduct. Something like this committee could also serve as a watchdog over national elections.

For many years, we have had the bipartisan National Fair Campaign Practices Committee. This unofficial organization has done much to encourage clean campaigns. Enlarging on this idea, I would create a permanent National Commission on Campaign Finance and Procedure, composed of prominent persons from both parties. It would watch the new system, see how it works and prevent abuses, investigate charges of election misconduct by candidates and national parties, recommend new legislation as needed and encourage and police voluntary agreements between candidates who want to avoid escalation of the kind I have described.

There you have it -- a set of drastic changes that could breathe new life into American politics and recapture our political system from the money-changers. I frankly doubt that any less drastic changes will do the job. And, as a political realist, I know that changes of this kind won't come easily. We'll soon discover, I'm sure, that the present system has some pretty strong defenders among groups enjoying its benefits.

But gloom and doom are not my meat. I have always been one who believed that the needs of our nation can be met if we face up to them. And I truly believe we must face up to them if we are to continue to have a Government even remotely responsible to the public it serves. I don't suppose Bobby Baker, Adam Powell and Thomas Dodd will go down in history as great heroes. But the storms they generated by their actions just might awaken the public to the need for sweeping changes in our archaic system of financing and conducting elections. If this happens, these unfortunate men, unwittingly, will have performed an important public service.

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