

(Petersen who was in charge of enforcing the election laws, saw to it that they were not enforced and that the FBI did not investigate the open and publicized violations of them. Financial irregularities and crimes were in his ~~department~~ area of responsibility as Criminal Division chief. One would never know this from an interview with Margaret Gentry the Associated Press provided its member papers for use on Sunday, December 2, 1973. In it Petersen condemned the Congress for his failures as well as those of Nixon and his gang, who were to have lived and campaigned within the law. He urged elimination of criminal penalties for violation of the existing laws, "replacing criminal penalties with a civil liability," in the words of the reporter - which meant nobody would go to jail but might pay financial penalties instead. ^{He} and inveighed against Congress:

"They're ~~xx~~ all so goddamned pious up there [Capitol Hill] about these things. If they weren't so goddamned hypocritical they would have passed statutes a long time ago that could be enforced. They make me sick! This hypocrisy makes me ill! That pious attitude by the politicians with respect to campaign contributions just makes me apoplectic!" (WP42/2)

(Everything except enforce the law that was enforceable and was enforced despite Petersen and his directives to federal attorneys. Beginning with Stans and Mitchell in the Vesco case, there were a series of indictments. In Washington, the General Accounting Office did find and punish repeated Republican violations. Petersen had the authority and the power and the obligation. If he did not use them, that is not the fault of the Congress. Whether paying cash fines would ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ be more conducive to electoral honesty than going to jail is an argument he has the right to make, but ~~ix~~ arguing the seemingly illogical was not a proper substitute for enforcing the existing law and that he did not do, "apoplectic", "sick," and "ill" as he professed to be over it all.)