

## *Dead Letter* Page 10/18/65

The Republican plan for a 1966 campaign book, with ads sold to corporations at \$15,000 a page, is an inevitable sequel to the Democrats' *Toward an Age of Greatness*. If it is legitimate for one party to tap corporate funds through advertisements in a partisan publication, all parties will be doing it. And it is naive to suppose that so handy a device will be reserved for the two national parties. State and local groups can do the same thing. What, then, becomes of the important principle that corporations may not finance political campaigns?

Representative Bob Wilson says that the Republican campaign book will deal with the operations of Congress and that the funds will be used for Republican educational and research task forces. But the political nature of the operation is not changed by calling party workers educational and research squads. The unvarnished fact is that both major parties are shaking down big corporations for funds that will serve partisan purposes. And this is undertaken in the face of a law which forbids the purchase of advertising if the proceeds even indirectly inure to the benefit of a candidate for Federal office.

If there is to be no effort to enforce this law, any corporation would seem to be free to spend a million dollars or more for advertising in party books. The supposed ban upon corporate influence in politics will be a dead letter. Indeed, it is very close to that status now. Instead of shattering the weakened bastion of the Corrupt Practices Act, Congress ought to be modernizing and rejuvenating it.