

DEMOCRATS' DEBT TO A.T.&T. SCORED

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G.O.P. Chief Says Company
Overlooks Convention Bill
—Charges Law Violation

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WASHINGTON, March 10—

The Republicans, under fire for financing arrangements for their 1972 nominating convention, counter-charged today that the Democrats were "in violation of the law" in the financing of their convention.

Senator Robert Dole of Kansas, the Republican National Chairman, charged that although the Democratic National Committee still owed the American Telephone and Telegraph Company \$1.5-million in unpaid bills for telephone service during its 1968 nominating convention and election campaign—a debt that has been known and discussed in Congress and by the press for several years—the company nonetheless was "extending credit, or a gift, or whatever it may be" to the Democrats again this year "in violation of the law."

Both the Federal Corrupt Practices Act, which expires on April 7, and the new and stricter Federal Election Campaign Act, which replaces it then, make it a violation for a corporation to give a contribution, service or "thing of value" to any political party or candidate. It is also a violation for the recipient.

Senator Dole's reasoning today was that although the Democrats and A.T.&T. might

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be guilty of a violation, the Republicans were not because corporate donations to their convention costs had gone not to the Republican party but to "a private committee" in San Diego, commissioned to make convention arrangements.

The counter-attack, scoffed at by Democratic spokesmen as "a pitiful attempt at a diversion," came at a news conference called in the new Senate Office Building at noon by Senator Dole.

Senator Dole says the Democratic National Committee's agreement with A.T.&T. for telephone service at the party's convention in Miami Beach from July 10 to July 13 was to require the Democrats to "put up 20 per cent of the estimated \$100,000" for convention phone service.

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"That means that the Democrat National Committee is being advanced some \$80,000 by the A.T.&T., added to the \$1.5-million that A.T.&T. is forgetting, or maybe forgiving," Senator Dole asserted.

"This is a very substantial contribution to the Democrat committee from one single corporation—substantially more than the \$100,000 guarantee to the City of San Diego—not the Republican party—which has been falsely alleged to have been given to the Republican Convention," the Senator asserted.

Both the Democratic National Committee and A.T.&T. immediately challenged Senator Dole's facts in separate statements they said that, because of the Democrats' \$1.5-million in outstanding bills—part of a total 1968 debt of more than \$9-million—the party had agreed to pay 20 per cent of the estimated Miami Beach convention telephone cost of perhaps \$100,000 on March 15 and the balance in full before the convention opens.

Moreover, the Democratic National Committee said that the \$1.5-million owed to A.T.&T. was "still open billing that will be paid." Several months ago the company threatened to deny the Democrats convention telephone service without such a prepayment.

Senator Dole was asked to explain the distinction between some Republican campaign debts and his charge of an A.T.&T. "gift" to the Democrats. Some Republican public financial statements, required by law, have disclosed that various Republican committees carried unpaid A.T.&T. bills amounting to nearly \$190,000 from November, 1968, to November, 1971, when they were finally paid.

Senator Dole said he had no knowledge of the Republican late payments.

The net effect of the state-

ment force to the growing impression here—although Senator Dole denied it today—that the Nixon Administration and the Republican apparatus to re-elect the President may be embarrassed enough by the continuing controversy surrounding their own dealings with corporate contributors in financing their convention in San Diego next August to strike back quickly.

The San Diego dispute involves a pledge or guarantee of at least \$100,000 toward underwriting Republican Convention expenses by a subsidiary of the International Telephone and Telegraph Corporation.

Jack Anderson, the syndicated Washington columnist, and his staff have charged that the pledge was in return for an out-of-court settlement of a government antitrust suit against I.T.T., ordered by President Nixon and carried out by former Attorney General John N. Mitchell and Acting Attorney General Richard G. Kleindienst, among others.

Mr. Mitchell and Mr. Kleindienst, who is seeking Senate confirmation as Attorney General, both have denied the charge.

In a statement this afternoon, Richard J. Murphy, manager of the Democratic National Convention, challenged Senator Dole to "lay before the public all the facts and figures" pertaining to the Republican Convention.

"All financial arrangements pertaining to the 1972 Democratic Convention are open to the public scrutiny by the press and public," Mr. Murphy said.

Senator Dole urged separate investigations of the Democrats' financing arrangements with A.T.&T. by the Justice Department, the Federal Commission and the Senate Judiciary Committee.

The Republican chairman insisted that the money arrangements in San Diego were being made by a local civic committee, not by the Republican National Committee, and that thus he could not discuss them.

If the San Diego Convention Committee received corporate gifts, Senator Dole said, "we don't specify who it [contributions] comes from—that's their problem."

"I don't think we can control what may happen with some private committee," he said. "There's been no arrangement with the San Diego committee and the Republican National Committee."

Accordingly, he said, it was "news to me" that there were reports in San Diego that top Republican officials here were urging the abrogation and refund of the I.T.T. convention pledge.

"I am not making any recommendations," the Senator said, adding, "Money is hard