

A Call for Federal Election Financing

Washington

Senator Alan Cranston (Dem-Calif), called yesterday for federal funds to finance presidential and congressional political campaigns and "end the pervasively insidious influence big money" has on elections.

More than a dozen senate liberals, Democrats and Republicans, joined Cranston in calling for federal financing of political campaigns as the Senate began debating a comprehensive campaign reform bill.

Cranston called the Watergate scandal a "gross perversion of our democracy" but added "it was not an improbable consequence of the way campaign contributions in the huge sums we have

seen in recent campaigns inevitably corrupt the political environment."

He added that there was a "central and absolute necessity that we end the pervasively insidious influence big money has on the democratic process.

"That's the problem, and other concerns like convenience, cost, and enforcement of various reform proposals are of secondary importance.

"If the role of the big contribution continues to escalate in politics, Watergate will be only the first chapter in the deterioration of democratic government in the United States," said Cranston.

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