

NYTimes MAR 9 1974
**PRESIDENT URGES
CAMPAIGN REFORM
WITH GIFT LIMITS**

**Asks Financial Disclosures,
Curbs on Cash and Rules
Against 'Dirty Tricks'**

AN ADDRESS TO NATION

**Nixon Opposes Financing by
Public and Also Ceiling on
Spending by Candidates**

By **CHRISTOPHER LYDON**
Special to The New York Times
WASHINGTON, March 8—
President Nixon proposed today to lead the cleanup of political campaigns.

In a message to Congress and in a radio speech to the nation, he recommended more detailed financial disclosures, some limits on what individual contributors could give, a severe curb on the flow of cash in campaigns and some rules against "dirty tricks."

He seemed to imply, however, that he would veto public campaign financing or over-

*Excerpts from Nixon speech
will be found on Page 11.*

all ceilings on campaign spending, two of the favored reforms among Republicans and Democrats in Congress.

Republican leaders from the House and Senate indicated at a White House briefing that they disagreed fundamentally

with the President's plan.

Many of the problems that Mr. Nixon's program addressed resulted from his re-election campaign of 1972. Donald H. Segretti, who worked for the Republican campaign that year, is in jail for so-called dirty tricks against Democratic Presidential candidates. Two of Mr. Nixon's former Cabinet members are on trial in New York on charges of accepting \$200,000 in secret contributions from a financier who is now a fugitive.

Charges Not Mentioned

Mr. Nixon, who did not mention the charges that grew out of the 1972 campaign, appealed for "reforms that perform instead of preach, reforms that will work," and he warned against "reform that will sugarcoat our problems with the appearance of change or rob our people of their basic freedoms."

Mr. Nixon's legislative message included a variety of controversial items, including a sketch of a bill that he mentioned at his news conference Wednesday to give candidates more recourse than the Supreme Court now allows against political libel.

He proposed to shorten Presidential campaigns to two months or less by legislating that party nominating conventions be held in September of each election year. He also proposed to encourage television coverage of major candidates, and TV debates between them, by repealing the requirement of "equal time" for fringe candidates. That is a "reform" that he discouraged when he was running for re-election.

Mr. Nixon urged a \$3,000 limit on individual contributions to House and Senate campaigns and a \$15,000 limit—

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\$10,000 lower than that in a pending Senate bill—on contributions to Presidential candidates. He proposed to ban loans, foreign contributions, gifts of appreciated stock and contributions "in kind"—like the use of corporate aircraft—in all campaigns for Federal office.

And he suggested that he would like to drain the major pools of special-interest campaign money—the political treasuries of the big unions, which go most often to Democrats, and such things as the milk producers' fund that fueled his own campaign in 1972. Specifically, he proposed to identify publicly the personal source and political recipient of every contribution, thereby ending the anonymity and flexibility of traditional war chests.

Underlying his specific proposals, Mr. Nixon's message contained two controversial main themes.

First, he argued, full disclosure of private political contributions is the most valuable of all reforms, since in presenting a detailed guide to a politician's supporters it gives a clear outline of what a candidate stands for. Complete disclosure, Mr. Nixon said, gives voters "the necessary information to assess the philosophy, the personal associations, the political and economic allegiances of the candidates."

To simplify disclosure, Mr. Nixon recommended that candidates be required to use only one fund-raising committee and a single bank account for their money. Cash could not be used for any contribution larger than \$50.

The second major theme was

Mr. Nixon's hostility to public financing of campaigns. A number of variations of the public financing idea—including expansion of the \$1-tax check-off for Presidential campaigns, Federal grants to match private campaign funds and a complete public takeover of the cost of campaigns for Federal office—have gained support following the Watergate scandals. But today, Mr. Nixon attacked the idea bluntly.

"One thing we don't need in this country is to add politicians to the Federal dole," he said. Public financing is "a raid on the public treasury," he added and "taxation without representation" in that taxpayers would be supporting the campaigns of candidates they would not vote for.

In his message to Congress and on the radio, Mr. Nixon adopted an argument that Thomas Jefferson used against public support of religious institutions. "To compel a man to furnish contributions of money for the propagation of opinions which he disbelieves and abhors is sinful and tyrannical," Mr. Nixon said, quoting Jefferson's Statute of Religious Freedom.

Message Is Criticized

Common Cause, the citizens' lobby, and Senator Edward M. Kennedy, Democrat of Massachusetts, both interpreted the President's message as an attempt to blunt the public financing movement that they have helped to lead.

"The message," Mr. Kennedy said in a statement, "is no more than a thinly veiled attempt by the President to obstruct or even kill the most effective response Congress has yet made to Watergate."

At a White House briefing

today, Bryce Harlow, counselor to the President, said that the Justice Department would try to draft a constitutional bill specifying penalties for maliciously false attacks. He said that he was not certain that such legislation would ever be sent to Congress.

"The object of this is not to shaft the press," Mr. Harlow said. He acknowledged that under the Supreme Court's reading of the First Amendment, public figures can be libeled with impunity unless they show a "reckless disregard" for the truth.

"The Court did not say what it takes to prove reckless disregard," Mr. Harlow said. "The Department of Justice believes it can specify that."

Asked if he were making a serious proposal or launching a trial balloon, Mr. Harlow said, "It's serious—if it can be done without great damage."

Reaction of Networks

The National Broadcasting Company and the Columbia Broadcasting System's networks praised yesterday President Nixon's recommendation to repeal the so-called equal-time law.

Julian Goodman, president of N.B.C., said that Mr. Nixon's proposals "contain a provision that N.B.C. heartily endorses—repeal of the Federal Communication Commission's equal time requirement."

Arthur R. Taylor, president of C.B.S. said that Mr. Nixon "has made some far-reaching and very constructive proposals."

A spokesman for the American Broadcasting Company said that the proposal was under study.