

Post 1/6/74

... The Senators' Oil Money

While some senators inveighed against President Nixon for repaying campaign contributors with government benefits, other senators blithely adopted his Watergate ways last month to save the oil industry from an excess profits tax.

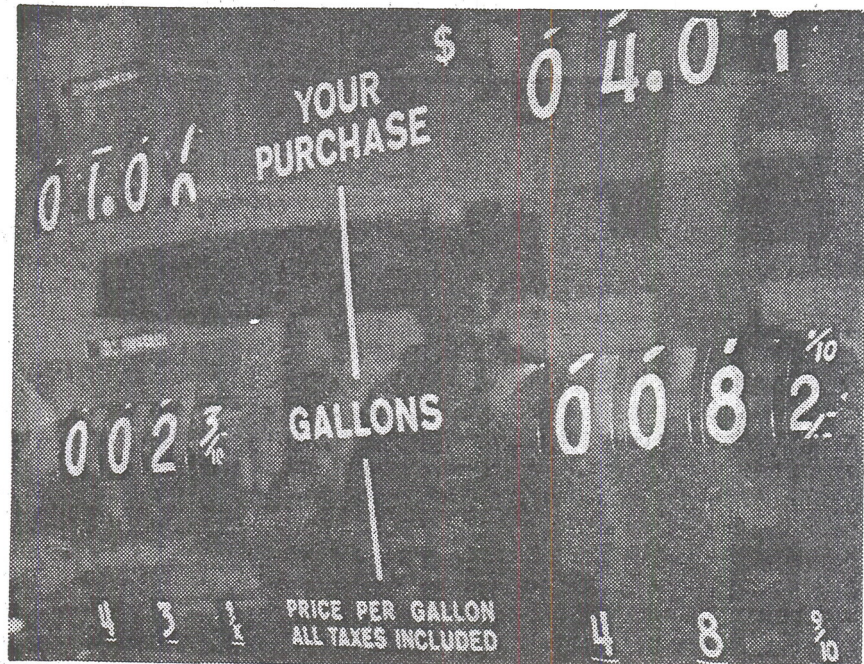
The senators who fought hardest to protect the windfall profits of the oil companies, according to our investigation, had been showered with oil contributions.

The balance sheets of most oil companies show their profits have shot up since the oil shortage. Only their customers have been hurt. To stop the profiteering and to raise revenue for developing other sources of energy, the Senate tried to slap an excess profits tax on the oil companies. But a few senators talked the measure to death during the session's final hours. Their filibuster dragged on late into the night, not only killing the excess profits tax but stalling the emergency energy legislation in the process.

The filibuster was led by freshman Sen. Dewey Bartlett (R-Okla.), who held the Senate floor tenaciously. He was as blatant if not as blunt as the late Sen. Bob Kerr, also from Oklahoma, who used to champion the oil interests in the Senate with the finesse of a bulldozer. Still a newcomer, Bartlett doesn't loom as massively in the Senate as did Kerr. But, apparently, Bartlett has been selected by the oil barons to try on Kerr's shoes.

On the eve of adjournment, after the Senate corridors had emptied and the visitors had gone home and the reporters had become too bleary to pay attention, Bartlett stayed on the Senate floor faithfully tending the oil companies' cash registers.

The oil barons, it now develops, in-



vested heavily in his 1972 campaign. We have traced contributions from 72 oil men, whose names read like Who's Who in the oil industry. He collected \$3,000 donations each from W. Crocker Pew, a director of Sun Oil; W. W. Keeler, former chairman of Phillips Petroleum; and Richard Mellon Scaife, an heir to the Gulf Oil fortune. Independent oil producer Peter McMahon gave Bartlett \$2,000. Ashland Oil vice president Robert Gordon donated \$1,500. Oilmen Arthur Olson and Herman Kaiser put up \$1,000 each. Bartlett also raked in \$1,000 apiece from two Skelly Oil officials, a Beard Oil executive and a Basin Petroleum representative. Executives of the Trigg Drilling Company raised a total of \$1,250 for his campaign.

The list of oil contributions goes on and on. We counted almost \$50,000, which could be traced to oilmen. Bartlett collected an additional \$71,615.74 in unlisted funds before the April 7 disclosure deadline. We have been told—and a spokesman for Bartlett has admitted—that some of this money also came from oil sources.

Bartlett's efforts to tie up the Senate, thereby preventing a vote on the excess profits tax, was supported by a handful of senators. Probably the most helpful was Sen. Clifford Hansen (R-Wyo.), who droned on when Bartlett ran out of wind.

"There are no cheaper ways in which we could shore up our flagging energy supply," filibustered Hansen,

took in before the disclosure law went into effect.

Sen. James McClure (R-Idaho) also joined in the filibuster. He didn't openly oppose an excess profits tax but merely argued for a delay. His participation in the talkathon, however, effectively helped to kill the tax.

Like the others, McClure received generous oil contributions. His benefactors included Gulf heir Richard Mellon Scaife, \$6,000; Gulf vice president Claude Wild, \$2,500; and Mary Pew of Sun Oil, \$500.

Sen. Pete Domenici (R-N.M.) had little to say during the filibuster, but on all the critical votes, he sided with the oil industry. We traced more than \$17,000 in oil money that was funneled into his campaign. This included \$6,000 from ARCO Chairman Robert O. Anderson and \$5,500 from Grant Oil Tool Company stockholder Henry Salvatori, plus lesser amounts from executives of Exxon and Sunoco.

Another powerful senator on the side of the oil interests was Minority Whip Robert Griffin (R-Mich.), who collected at least \$16,000 from top officials of Gulf, Exxon, ARCO and Standard of Indiana. Still another was Sen. Ted Stevens (R-Alaska), who received at least \$8,000 from the oil men, with \$5,000 coming from Sun Oil representatives.

Two senators with family oil and gas holdings spoke out in behalf of their own interests. Senator Bartlett sold his share of the family-run Keener Oil Company back to other members of his family after he entered the Senate. His brother David contributed or loaned the senator's campaign \$24,550.

Sen. Russett Long (D-La.), who has large oil investments, unabashedly opposed the excess profits tax. He has always been a heroic defender of oil privileges, contending that his personal interests coincide with the interests of his state. "Any friend of oil," he has said, "is a friend of ours."

Down through the years, the oil industry has kept a quiet vigil on Capitol Hill. There are few members of Congress who have not been tempted to go along with the oil industry's interests. For their favors, the oil barons have offered them campaign contributions, law fees, stock tips, even cash under the table.

"than to give the industry encouragement an increased price position would cause." The oil lobbyists, who maintained an active vigil outside the Senate chamber, nodded approvingly.

Hansen's campaign was also heavily financed by the oil crowd. Among those who contributed were Sun Oil's W. Crocker Pew, \$2,000; ARCO Chairman Robert O. Anderson, \$1,000; J. M. Bunce of a Casper, Wyo., oil servicing firm, \$700; Jane Harper, operator of a Denver oil well supply firm, \$500; C. A. Finley, affiliated with a Long Beach, Calif., oil well servicing company, \$500; Harry Hech, a Phillips employee, \$500; Arthur Belfer, a Belco Petroleum executive, \$300; and the Dallas-base Association of Oilwell Contractors, \$264.

Hansen received a lot of unlisted oil money, too, as part of the \$96,772.14 he