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Campaign Contributions for Legal Fees?

Shocked by payment of legal fees of more than \$80,000 in the second quarter alone, highly irritated Republican fat cats are sending this angry message to national party officials with rising intensity: don't use the money we contributed to re-elect President Nixon to help campaign aides stuck in the Watergate scandal.

They have a partial though silent ally in Republican National Chairman George Bush. While Bush makes no public comment, he is known to feel that the Committee for the re-election of the President (CREEP) should have closed shop last Nov. 8 with its \$4.8 million surplus turned over to the party. Spurred on by the angry fat cats, Bush now is stepping up efforts to belatedly close down CREEP—which reported \$680,000 in expenditures for the second quarter of 1973.

But Bush sees some merit in using the 1972 campaign surplus to pay legal fees for CREEP officials named as defendants in civil suits and appearing before congressional committees. Many party leaders and contributors disagree. "Hell, no!" one state chairman exploded to us. "Why should our money bail out perjurers? They ought to swim for themselves."

CREEP's second-quarter report shows \$80,256 in legal fees. Attorneys

for Maurice Stans, CREEP's chief fund-raiser under indictment for perjury in the Vesco case, received \$37,000. Another \$15,000 went to attorneys for ex-CREEP deputy director Jeb Magruder, an admitted perjurer, and \$10,000 to attorneys for CREEP scheduler Herbert Porter, who also has admitted perjury.

CREEP ground rules prohibit payment of legal fees for defense of criminal charges. But CREEP paid \$15,700 in fees to the firm defending Stans in the Vesco case on May 11, the day after he was indicted. Stans' lawyer, Walter J. Bonner, told us he did not know whether any of this covered pre-indictment legal help in the Vesco case. Stans relayed word to us through a CREEP spokesman that it did not.

What bothers Bush much more than legal fees is the continued employment of CREEP public relations specialist Devan Shumway at \$36,000 a year. Millionaire Stans also continues on the payroll at \$30,000 a year. The residual CREEP staff includes a deputy to Stans, a lawyer and six secretaries and clerks.