

'Influence Peddling'

Muskie Rips Nixon 'Deals'

By Patrick J. Sloyan
Examiner Washington Bureau

MADISON (Wis.)—In one of the most slashing attacks of his campaign, Sen. Edmund Muskie accused President Nixon yesterday of following "a pattern of influence peddling and closed-door deals," that have made the nation's voters suspicious of the Administration's integrity.

The Maine Democrat, stumping near the University of Wisconsin stronghold of Sen. George McGovern, attacked Nixon's role in dealing with pollution problems in a speech before the Wisconsin Resources Conversation Council.

According to Muskie, "Richard Nixon has forgotten that he is the President of a country, not the president of a corporation."

Nixon has ignored the plight of inner-city children suffering from polluted air while calling for a \$14 billion space shuttle program and a \$6 billion increase in the Pentagon budget, Muskie said.

'The Wrong Course'

"The Nixon Administration has chosen the wrong course almost from the day it took office," he added.

"Again and again, President Nixon has sacrificed environmental protection in the wake of pressure from corporate lobbyists. Again and again, he has allowed those who make a profit

from pollution to dictate his policy on pollution control."

Muskie cited the controversial RECAT report issued by the White House last week that questioned whether tough pollution and safety controls on new cars would be worth the costs of the devices to the auto industry.

Bogus Figures

According to Muskie, the White House report could cause severe damage to the environment and bring windfall profits for the auto industry if Nixon adopts it as policy.

Muskie accused Nixon of using bogus figures supplied by corporate polluters in making cases against tough controls on clear cutting by the timber industry and other forms of air and water pollution by other major industries.

Muskie noted that White House aide Peter Flanigan, Nixon's liaison man with big business, has interceded on behalf of several corporations charged with pollution.

Muskie charged that the White House was protecting auto and steel industry polluters who had made substantial political contributions to his 1968 presidential campaign.

Influence Peddling

"It is all part of a pattern — a pattern of influence peddling and closed-door deals that have led millions of Americans to believe that

this administration is willing to trade their future for a campaign contribution," Muskie said.

"What we face is not just a failure to fund the fight against pollution. The President has also failed to enforce conservation bills he himself signed into law."

Muskie said voters must choose between a "space shuttle or a clean Lake Michigan; an ABM or clear skies, or a loan to an incompetent corporation like Lockheed or grants for sewage treatment and reforestation."

Most polls show Muskie trailing Sen. Hubert H. Humphrey in the crucial Wisconsin primary on April 4.