

# Campaign Reform Bill Loses Momentum in Senate

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WASHINGTON, July 27—A post-Watergate drive in the Senate to add new and tougher reform provisions to the 18-month-old Federal campaign finance law lost momentum today.

There were bipartisan charges that sponsors of the reform vehicle—a bill sent to the floor by the Senate Committee on Rules and Administration—had written “new loopholes” into their proposals.

As the Senate rushed to meet its deadline for a summer recess a week from today, backers of campaign finance reform discovered that so far they may have accomplished a good deal less than met the eye.

The reformers planned to recoup tomorrow, when there will be an unusually long Saturday session.

The charges that the committee's reform amendments to the Federal Election Campaign Act contained loopholes “big enough for a truck” were leveled by Senators Adlai E. Stevenson 3d, Democrat of Illinois, and Charles McC. Mathias Jr., Republican of Maryland. They and others told the Senate that the supposed limits voted yesterday

on contributor gifts to Federal candidates were, as Mr. Mathias put it, “an invitation to have it [campaign-giving] go on the way it is.”

## Plan Derided

Senator John O. Pastore, Democrat of Rhode Island, joined them in terming “ridiculous” yesterday's apparent move to limit individual contributors to a \$3,000 per candidate.

The \$3,000 limit turned out today to be at least \$6,000 because it would apply apparently to both primary and general election contests. In states that employ the primary runoff system to settle inconclusive races for a nomination, the limit could be \$9,000—\$3,000 for each stage of the process.

After many Senators had left the floor last night, Senator Russell P. Long, Democrat of Louisiana, obtained approval of an amendment doubling the amounts originally proposed for ceilings on the use of a candidate's personal funds in his own race to \$50,000 for a House seat, \$70,000 for a Senate seat and \$100,000 for the Presidency.

In a mood of compliance with what reportedly has been fierce lobbying by both corporate and labor union groups,

the Senate today also revived a provision of the old, widely discredited, campaign law. Senators voted, 52 to 37, to permit so-called political action funds formed by companies and unions that hold Government contracts to resume legal political contributions.

## Gifts Had Been Barred

In adopting the new law last year, such contributions had been barred on the ground that Government contractors whose financial welfare might depend heavily on a Congressional or Presidential decision should not be allowed to make campaign contributions.

Common Cause, the public interest group that had led an effort to block the reinstatement of this provision, called today's action “a pure special interest triumph” that would “continue the campaign finance evils of the past”. The vote made clear “that money talks loudest in the United States Senate,” a Common Cause statement said.

But the sharpest charges of accommodation to proponents of the old system came on the floor during two hours of confused debate on an amendment offered by Senator Stevenson to reduce the dollar

ceilings tentatively imposed yesterday on individual and political committee donors.

The \$3,000—or \$6,000, or \$9,000—limit on gifts to one candidate voted yesterday, Mr. Stevenson complained today, would not apply to a gift to a national or state political committee, which could be given up to \$100,000 by a single donor in combination with members of his immediate family.

Thus, Senator Stevenson said, a person could give \$100,000 to an exempt political committee and let the committee pass it on to the candidate.

## Plan Is Revised

Senator Stevenson's proposal to limit gifts to political committees, as well as to individual candidates, to \$3,000 was frantically and nearly totally revised in a huddle by a score of Senators on the floor. He finally withdrew it. An amendment making few apparent changes in the loophole of which he complained was quickly adopted on a voice vote.

When the Illinois Senator said that he would be back tomorrow with further amendments attacking the “\$100,000 loophole,” Senator Pastore commented, “We're confused over where the loophole is.”