

A Mammoth Report on '72 Campaign Donations

Washington

The government published yesterday a monumental, computerized compilation of the names of 70,000 persons who contributed or loaned a total of \$79.1 million to all candidates in the 1972 presidential campaign.

The mammoth report issued by the General Accounting Office was a statistical tour de force, composed of 1906 closely packed tabular pages of data that list 84,337 names — committees as well as individuals. In four telephone-book-size volumes the total document costs \$190 and is unlikely to become a best seller.

But it was nonetheless a historic first — the most detailed, comprehensive and best organized public disclosure of campaign contributions — who gave them and who received them — ever assembled in this country.

LAW

Despite defects conceded by the GAO — incomplete data because the public disclosure law which yielded the contributor information did not take effect until 1972 was three months old, and data processing errors in compiling it — the report shed more light on the traditionally secretive business of campaign finance than any previous document.

The report tended to confirm preliminary estimates that presidential campaign receipts in 1972 had exceeded

He Staked His All

Tucson, Ariz.

A pawn shop here reported a man pawned three T-bone steaks.

Donald Vingino, co-owner of the pawn shop, said yesterday he gave the man \$5 for the USDA choice steaks and promised to hold them for 30 days in a freezer at the shop.

"We'll take most anything of value," Vingino said.

United Press

ed those of any past election year. The GAO's total for all candidates of \$63.6 million in direct contributions and \$15.5 million in loans — a sum of \$79.1 million — was roughly 80 per cent of the \$100 million believed to have been spent during the 1968 campaign. But the new report covered only about three-quarters of the 1972 campaign year.

A theory has been espoused that full public disclosure of contributors' gifts and candidates' expenditures would foreclose political corruption. And although the report published yesterday was far from complete, it tended to serve the reformers' purpose because the omissions themselves

raised questions.

For example, although president Nixon's chief 1972 fund-raiser, former secretary of commerce Maurice H. Stans, has said that the Nixon campaign last year raised \$52 million, the Nixon finance data submitted to the GAO for the period from April 7 to Dec. 31, 1972, acknowledged receipts of only \$37.5 million.

DONATIONS

An additional \$6.5 million — a portion of the pre-April 7 Nixon contributions, gathered before the effective date of the new federal election campaign act and thus not included in the report — was made public by Stans' national campaign finance committee last October under a lawsuit filed by Common Cause, the public interest group. That would run the Nixon total to \$44 million, with only \$8 million still to be accounted for, according to Stans' statement of the republican receipts.

But the still-undisclosed Nixon gifts, including some secret contributions made illegally from corporate funds, are reported to be \$19.6 million. The balance is due to be made public by September 28 under a federal court order stemming from the Common Cause suit. And if the reported total of still-secret contributions is correct, the real Nixon receipts for the 1972 campaign could come to more than \$63 million.

The GAO report said that Nixon finance committees had borrowed \$1.7 million.

The \$13 million in 1972 receipts listed in the GAO report for Senator George McGovern of South Dakota, Mr. Nixon's Democratic opponent, was also believed to be misleadingly low.

McGovern spent heavily to win Democratic primary contests held for the most part before the disclosure provisions of the new law became effective, and his total receipts including funds he voluntarily disclosed before April — were nearer to \$28 million.

The Federal Election Campaign Act required the GAO's Office of Federal Election to compile detailed data only on contributions of more than \$100. Many of McGovern's donors — 80 per cent of them, by his count — were in the \$100-or-less category.

The accounting office report also showed that McGovern borrowed \$8.3 million, much of it in large individual amounts. Many of the loans were repaid before election day. *New York Times*