

The Worst Is Yet to Come

I WISH TO make it perfectly clear that at this point in time the worst of Watergate still lies ahead. Even if no new excesses of the Nixon Administration come to light.

The launching of the New Nixon is only part of what we face. Humanization has set in. I am sure that the recent picture of Mr. Nixon's bare feet is just the beginning. He must have visions of Bobby Kennedy at the beach with his trousers rolled half way up his calves and, perhaps, even of President Ford in swimming trunks.



In this permissive age, who knows what else? Still, Mr. Nixon aside, there are more important pangs of Watergate. Laws have been passed at every level of government limiting political activity and crying honesty with sickening fervor. Little Old Ladies hesitate to mail out a hundred postcards. Other citizens, with a little more sophistication, fear the knock of the Grand Jury at the door.

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HERE IN SAN FRANCISCO downtown merchants in droves are staying clear of even \$100 donations because of possible repercussions. It may be legal but who can be sure without clearing it with a lawyer? And if legal, there is nothing to stop picketing by self-appointed guardians of the public weal. No operator of a cloak and suit emporium wants pickets.

San Francisco's own purity-in-election law allows each side to spend \$51,000 on a proposition. Downtown is especially interested in L and M — the street artist problem — and

with homeowners and renters in the neighborhoods, has concern also in B, O, P, Q, R and S, the city employee issues.

So, legally downtown could spend a total of \$408,000. They could spend it if they had it. But at last check, had been able to raise only about \$40,000. One banker was called 15 times. "I'm just going to take a pass this year," has become the standard response.

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MEANWHILE ORGANIZED LABOR, organized cops, and organized firemen are going along their merry and successful way. A spokesman for the anti-B campaign says he has and will spend the limit—\$51,000 on that one issue.

Secret slush funds are of course immoral and subversive but ever since democracy grew out of smoke-filled town meetings in New England, money and politics have been as American as ham and eggs. Hell, even President Lincoln needed money to get elected.

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THE SUPREME COURT is working on the money-in-politics issue but before it gets around to a decision, a lot of good men and a lot of good issues may go down the post-Watergate drain.

Some day as I contemplate this loss, I can hardly wait until a self-proclaimed historian writes his own definitive history of the Nixon Administration proving that he was one of the five greatest Presidents.

The author will send his manuscript to the Book of the Month Club and become stinking rich. Then hopefully Watergate will be gone and buried.