

Ford Wants Election Unit Reorganized

Washington

President Ford said yesterday he will ask congressional leaders to join him in reorganizing the Federal Election Commission in view of the Supreme Court's action yesterday.

Mr. Ford said "Today's decision by the Supreme Court calls for quick action by political leaders of this country, as well as by candidates for high office, to insure that our elections remain free from the undue influence of excessive spending."

He said "I have asked the attorney general to review the (Supreme Court) opinion and to advise me on what steps, if any, should be taken to ensure that our elections remain free from any abuses."

The court found that many of the powers and duties the new law gave to the commission could be exercised constitutionally only by federal officers appointed by the President. The majority of the commission members now are chosen by Congress.

The President's hope of reorganizing the commission may be doomed, however. Representative Wayne L. Hays (Dem-Ohio), a longtime and formidable enemy of the commission, said yesterday that he will introduce a bill to abolish it.

A commission spokesman said the body will continue disbursing funds to 12 presidential candidates during the 30 days of life it has left under the decision.

Commission counsel John G. Murphy Jr. said the court had "at least temporarily stripped the commission of its enforcement powers," but that it could continue, during the grace period, to provide matching funds to the two Republicans and ten Democrats seeking their parties' presidential nominations.

To date, the commission has given the announced and qualified candidates just under \$5 million. As the candidates raise additional money privately, the law provides federal matching funds up to a maximum of \$250 for each contributor and \$5 million for each candidate.

"Where we go from here is less a matter for the commission than for Congress," Murphy said.

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