

Campaign finance bill near Macbeth plays Watergate

By ALAN EHRENHALT Congressional Quarterly

WASHINGTON — After letting the nation's campaign finance laws go pretty much unregulated for 46 years, Congress is about to pass a major reform bill for the second time in 18 months. The motivation is Watergate, the common belief that there is still something scandalous about the way we use money in our elections.

On July 11, the Senate Rules Committee approved the most comprehensive bill on campaign finance ever to reach the floor of either house. It would limit the amount candidates could spend in their campaigns and the amount contributors could give. It would create a Federal Elections Commission to enforce the law and punish violators. It would repeal the law that has restricted appearances by major candidates over radio and television.

It would replace the more modest 1971 act, which required candidates to file detailed reports on the money they raised and spent and limited the amounts that could be used for advertising. That act has received mixed reviews. It didn't prevent Watergate, but it did help to make Watergate public.

"I STILL THINK the act had a lot of good in it," said Rep. Morris K. Udall, D Ariz., who helped write it. "No act is going to help a bit if people decide on a wholesale basis to violate it, or pass out money to their burglars." Udall told Congressional Quarterly the problem will not be completely solved until elections are publicly financed.

The idea of limiting what a candidate can spend grew to respectability in the late 1960s, as the expenditures themselves grew to what seemed like absurdity. In 1964, the total spent on all campaigns in the country was an estimated \$200-million. In 1968, it was \$300-million. By last year, it was up to \$400-million.

These enormous sums worry anyone who believes that people of ordinary means ought to be able to run for office. But more than that, the amounts worry incumbent members of Congress, who are concerned that a wealthy candidate might come along one day in their state or district — challenge them, outspend them and retire them to private life.

The new bill limits most candidates for the Senate and the White House to spending 35 cents for every constituent of voting age. Fifteen cents per voter could be used for the primary; the other 20 would be for the general election. House candidates would be allowed to spend a maximum of \$50,000 in the primary and another \$50,000 in the general election.

Most of the reform groups working in campaign finance, such as Common Cause and the National Committee for an Effective Congress, are lukewarm about the spending ceiling. The problem, they say, is not too much money spent on politics. It is too many large gifts designed to influence the actions of the candidate once he is in office.

PRESIDENT NIXON'S 1972 re-election campaign received \$6-million from just 27 individuals. None of them gave \$250,000 or more apiece. About \$50-million was raised in all for the Nixon campaign.

The Senate bill would prevent anyone from giving more than \$100,000 to all political candidates in a given year. It would be illegal to give more than \$5,000 to a congressional candidate before a primary and another \$5,000 afterward. It would be against the law to give a presidential candidate more than \$15,000 in the primary and \$15,000 in the general election.

These limits might make it difficult for the unknown and underfinanced to get started. Sen. Joe Biden, Democrat of Delaware, came from nowhere in 1972 to upset a Republican incumbent, J. Caleb Boggs.

Two major factors were the \$13,000 he received from the Council for a Livable World and \$22,000 from the National Committee for an Effective Congress. That was about 15 per cent of what his campaign received all year. It may have made the difference between Joe Biden's 29-year-old upstart and Joe Biden the serious threat. Neither of those contributions would have been legal under the new Senate bill.

Nevertheless, even some of the groups giving the money believe in tight limits on contributions. "I'm for putting us out of business," said Susan Bennett King of the Committee for an Effective Congress. "I think it's the only answer. Public interest groups know they can never match the amount vested interests can give. Why preserve the right to give when you know you will be at a disadvantage?"

IN ENFORCEMENT, the Senate bill would change things a lot. The existing act is policed by three offices, with the clerk of the House checking on the reports of House candidates, the secretary of the Senate handling Senate cases and the General Accounting Office (GAO), the investigative agency of Congress, taking care of the presidential campaigns.

The new Senate bill would replace the three-way policing with a bipartisan commission, whose seven members would be appointed by the President. Congressional leaders would have a say in who most of them were. And the commission would have the power to levy civil fines of up to \$10,000 on its own, without having to report cases to the Justice Department, as is required now.

The bill would repeal Section 315 of the Federal Communications Act, which says that any broadcast station offering time to one candidate for a federal office also must offer it to his opponents. The goal of that section is fair treatment for all. But in practice, the rule has meant that fringe and nuisance candidates must be given more time than that deserve. Faced with that prospect, most stations have decided simply not to make very much time available to anyone.

This proposed change has strong support from many Senate Republicans, who believe that repeal of Section 315 would give Republican challengers increased public recognition. But if it reaches the House, it is likely to run into serious opposition from Democrats who feel a change would hurt incumbents. There are more Democratic than Republican incumbents in the House — 243 to 191.

By TOM NOLAND
Star Staff Writer

Fair was foul and foul was fair when the bloody Macbeth set his sights on the Scottish throne.

There were no primaries, no convention and no election. He conquered his country not with middle-of-the-road political strategy but with quick sword-thrusts through his rivals' hearts.

King Duncan, his predecessor; Banquo, a trusted friend; Lady Macduff, a trusted friend's wife — all fell before the "vaulting ambition" of Shakespeare's 11th-century villain-hero.

Actors from around the United States are gathered in Anniston to play out the drama of the Scot who did more than just list his enemies. Meanwhile, other actors from all over the country are gathered in Washington, D.C., to play out a different story — Watergate — and to decide if Richard Nixon followed Macbeth's "game plan."

Not that the parallel is exact. But will Senate investigators find the King of Scotland's unrepentantness reflected in the election tactics of the President of the United States?

"Tyrant! Show thy face!" shouted David Krasner, who challenged the performance as Macbeth, with the same phrase Saturday night. Krasner plays Macduff, slayer of the guilt-ridden king in the tumultuous final act.

"Macduff is Sam Ervin. Martha Mitchell is the drunken porter. And Dean, Haldeman and Ehrlichman are the three witches," said Marcia Johnson, herself one of the witches who predicts foul doings at the play's opening. "I'm Ehrlichman."

The cast picked up the scenario.

"No, George McGovern is Macduff," said William Grange, a lanky King Duncan, "only he didn't get to destroy Nixon. It was the other way around."

"Macbeth had to go it alone, he didn't have a secret campaign fund."

"The question is," said Steve Wise, rising above the sound and fury in a deep baritone, "who is the Malcolm of America?"

An answer would be too contrived. No identifications between the central tragedy of "Macbeth" and the drama of Watergate can be made unless the President's guilt is firmly established. And even then, wide circumstantial differences should inhibit the odious comparison from making correlations between contemporary America and Shakespeare's Scotland.

Watergate, it appears, was masterminded by a small group of conspirators acting on behalf of Richard Nixon. Macbeth acted alone (though he was prodded by his wife).

While Nixon claims to have been victimized by a few "highly motivated" advisors, Macbeth is both the victim and the instrument of an entire dark, murky world.

Witches stir boiling cauldrons and ghosts appear at dinner to set the prevailing mood in "Macbeth." The Scot, while acting partially under his own free will, is also at the mercy of fate.

He is destined from Act I to fulfill the witches' prophecy — to become king, then lose his blood-stained throne (and his life) at the hands of one — "from his mother's womb untimely ripped." Macduff, avenging his wife's death by slaying Macbeth, fits the description.

But while Watergate may not have been foreordained by "weird sisters," its secrecy is reminiscent of Macbeth's midnight murders. The "atmosphere of corruption" cited by many as extant since Nixon took office may be likened to Shakespeare's mysterious setting.

Less fanciful are comparisons between Macbeth and Richard Nixon. Both men are ambitious, both actively cultivate personal power and both go to great lengths to achieve positions of importance.

"Nixon, like Macbeth, is standing by his mistake, trying by force of will to make it acceptable," said Wayne Wofford. "Nixon's result will probably be easier to 'live with.'"

Autry Pinson, an old man in the play, said, "Nixon is so steeped in ambition, and Watergate that it is too late for him to turn back. Macbeth was so steeped, as he says, in blood, that going back were as tedious as going on."

The comparison of Richard Nixon and Macbeth lies in the unfortunate abuse of power," said New York's Patrick Watkins and the play's Ross.

"Ross says, speaking of Scotland, 'Alas, poor country, almost afraid to know itself' — I apply that to the present condition of American political life."

Most members of the company feel Nixon was guilty of some kind of wrongdoing in the Watergate affair. Charles Antolsky pointed out that such an assumption is yet to be proven.

And William Kelley brought up another issue.

"Was Macbeth a Republican or a Democrat?" he said.

Another barrage.

"He's a whig. ... A Bull Moose. ... A Girondist."

From the shouted answers came a final, self-spoken question: "How do you spell 'Watergate?'"

"It's like 'Macbeth,'" Antolsky said. "You spell it just like it sounds."



'Nixon, like Macbeth, is standing by his mistake . . . says Wayne Wofford, left, in festival title role

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Congress exceeds Nixon's budget

By THOMAS J. ARRANDEALE
Congressional Quarterly

WASHINGTON — After six months of skirmishing with President Nixon over federal spending, Congress by its own estimates is running about \$1-billion over the President's fiscal 1974 budget.

As the fiscal year began on July 1, congressional actions mandating additional federal outlays had increased projections of total spending for the year to \$269.7-billion, according to estimates by the Joint Committee on Reduction of Federal Expenditures. In submitting his budget last Jan. 29, the President proposed a total of \$267.7-billion in fiscal 1974 outlays by the Federal government.

That \$1-billion increase, reported before Congress had completed action on a single fiscal 1974 appropriations bill, was attributable to extra outlays dictated by Congress through various backdoor and mandatory spending authorizations.

Through such backdoor spending mechanisms, Congress bypasses the regular appropriations process to commit the federal government to meet certain obligations. Once those obligations are made, Congress has no choice but to provide the funds to fulfill them.

In each of the past five fiscal years, in fact, Congress has trimmed the President's appropriations requests in action on regular appropriations measures. In three of those five

years, however, the over-all funding requests were raised by increases approved through backdoor and mandatory authorizations.

"The culprit with respect to better control of spending is not the Appropriations Committee," House Committee Chairman George Mahon of Texas maintained in hearings earlier this year on the fiscal 1974 budget.

In acting on the 13 upcoming fiscal 1974 appropriations measures, Congress will have a chance to cut back on spending. In passing nine bills for which the administration asked appropriations of \$77.3-billion, for instance, the House before July 1 approved appropriations of slightly more than \$76 billion. In considering the bills, however, the House refused to act on requests of \$2.5-billion for programs for which authorization legislation had not been cleared — funds that could later be added to supplemental appropriations measures.

THE SENATE, AFTER PASSING ONLY TWO appropriations bills, had increased by nearly \$1.2-billion the appropriations available to agencies under the fiscal 1974 budget.

As Congress returned from its July 4 recess, four appropriations measures, including the President's \$77.1-billion Defense Department request, were awaiting initial House action.

With the budget outlook still clouded, Congress may resort

to other weapons to keep fiscal 1974 outlays at acceptable levels. In submitting his budget, the President urged Congress "to join me in a concerted effort to control federal spending by enacting a firm \$268.7-billion ceiling on fiscal 1974 spending."

In jockeying with the administration over executive and legislative control of federal finances, Congress has made moves toward putting such a ceiling on spending. The Senate three times has passed legislation including a \$268-billion ceiling — carefully spelling out, however, how the President should make the cuts required to stay under the limit. In the House, however, no ceiling proposal has yet reached the floor, although the Rules Committee in late June approved a variant of the Senate — approved ceiling.

Both the Senate and the House Rules Committee linked the fiscal 1974 ceiling with impoundment control legislation limiting the President's practice of withholding from spending funds that Congress had appropriated.

Moving toward more fundamental constraints on spending, a special House — Senate study committee in April submitted a glowing conclusion that the United States' congressional appropriations procedures. The joint committee's proposals, now under study by the Rules Committee, would create special budget committees in both the House and the Senate to take an over-all look at each fiscal year's budget.

Soviet Union: How much change?

By CHALMERS M. ROBERTS
Star — The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — It has now been more than 19 years since I spent a month in frigid Berlin watching the verbal duel between John Foster Dulles and Vyacheslav M. Molotov at the first post-World War II and post-Stalin high level encounter of East and West. To understand where we are today, in the wake of Leonid I. Brezhnev's visit to the United States, it is necessary to draw a long mental bow. To do so may not tell us where we will end up, but it will show how far we have come.

When he came home from Berlin, Secretary Dulles said in a radio-TV address that Molotov had "told Germany that the price of unification was total sovietization. He told Austria she was to be occupied until France and the Soviet price." He told Germany that the western frontier of communism was to be the Rhine and not the Elbe. He told all Western Europe, including the United Kingdom, that the price of momentary respite was for the Americans to go home.

The 1954 conference ended in stalemate save for the peripheral accomplishment of arranging the Geneva meeting later that year that would end the first Indo-China war.

Yet we now know that Molotov's hard posture, and it was very hard, created fears within the Kremlin of nuclear war at a time of overwhelming American superiority in the new weapons. Four weeks after the Berlin meeting ended, Premier Malenkov declared that a new world war with the existence of the modern means of destruction would mean the destruction of world civilization.

Three weeks later Malenkov was ousted and Molotov threw Napoleon repudiated his statement by declaring that "not . . . world civilization but only the capitalist world perish in such a conflict."

BUT THE NUCLEAR FACTS of life had made their impression in the Kremlin — no longer was possible to access Lenin's dogma of the inevitability of a "frightful conflict" between communism and capitalism. By 1956 Nikita Khrushchev was saying that "there is no fatal inevitability of war, and by 1960 he was saying that nuclear weapons would not distinguish between Communist and non-Communists, between atheists and believers, between Catholics and Protestants." The year after the 1962 Cuban missile crisis the Soviet Communist party adopted the Khrushchevian line by formally declaring, in an attempt to differentiate between Soviet and Chinese policies, that "the atomic bomb does not adhere to the class principle — it destroys everybody within the range of its devastating force."

All these Soviet comments were widely viewed with suspicion in the United States. But President Eisenhower, who knew the horror of war, sought to break the impasse despite Dulles, in part by inviting Khrushchev to this country. President Kennedy after he and Khrushchev had peered into the nuclear inferno over Cuba, pushed through the limited nuclear test ban treaty and called on Americans to reconsider their view of the Cold War. The second Indo-China war inhibited President Johnson's efforts. A 1958 Soviet-American summit, which would have launched the strategic arms (SALT) talks, was aborted by the Hed Army's invasion of Czechoslovakia. President Nixon's twin overtures to the Soviet Union and China followed, as the Indo-China war was slowly wound down.

IT IS THIS IDEOLOGICAL difference, from the time of Lenin and the anti-bolshevikism induced in America, that makes it so difficult for the two superpowers to deal with each other, nation to nation. Both President Nixon and General Secretary Brezhnev know this well. Some of the Soviet newsmen accompanying Brezhnev, when questioned about the ideological gulf, professed that the technological age has changed all that and that, in time it will work itself out in the manner of the religious differences of old between Christianity and Islam. Perhaps so. But more likely these differences will be highlighted in the Helsinki talks, as is already evident, on the agenda item known as "Human Contacts." Here East and West now are pledged to draw up proposals for facilitating freer movement and contacts on an individual or cultural, private or official basis; for "improvement of tourism"; for "improving the dissemination of and access to art, printed, filmed and broadcast information," and for "more com-

prehensive mutual knowledge of achievements" in the arts and "the improvement of access to these achievements."

These will be arduous negotiations, for the life histories and political styles of Russia and America are vastly different. Brezhnev told American correspondents in Moscow before coming here that "journalists always ask too many questions" — and thus press conferences were not for him. (Khrushchev sparred with the press while here while Brezhnev avoided any such confrontation.) But it is not the form of life or style of politics that causes the gulf. It is the fervor of belief, both Moscow's Communist ideology and the less formulated but still important American form of ideology.

IN HIS RECENTLY PUBLISHED memoirs, Charles F. Bohlen concluded that "it is my glowing conclusion that the United States faces decades of uneasy relations with the Soviet Union" chiefly because "ideology is just as important in Moscow today as it was in 1954, when I first stepped on Russian soil." Bohlen declared that "The only hope, and this is a fairly thin one, is that at some point the Soviet Union will begin to act like a country instead of a cause."

I am at least somewhat less gloomy. The Soviet Union today, for its own reasons which combine the nuclear, economic and political facts of life, is acting more like a country and less like a cause than in past decades. In part, at least, this is because the United States, especially in the Nixon years, also is acting more like a country and less like a cause. However, diplomats, foreign correspondents and commentators on foreign affairs are not likely to be out of a job because of technological unemployment. Soviet-American relations are likely to dominate the rest of this century. But they are at a far different, and far better, state today than back in that cold Berlin of 1954.

WRITING FROM HELSINKI on the eve of the new ongoing Conference on Security and Cooperation, the 34-nation gathering of European nations and the United States and Canada, Washington Post