

■ This article describes conditions existing about 20 years ago in the U.S.A. Today the cost of a presidential campaign is unnaturally larger.

WHAT IT COST TO ELECT A PRESIDENT

Nowadays, it costs money to elect a candidate. No matter how sincere the aspirant's purposes, no matter how silver his voice, it matters very little if the voting public never hears about him. When the nation was young, a busy candidate could cover the country by stage coach; a few meetings in selected places would guarantee that nearly everybody would hear what he had to say. Today, the candidate must rely on the great mass mediums of publicity, all of which are expensive.

With more than 60 million eligible voters, the cost of mailing a single piece of campaign propaganda, at one and a half cents per person, amounts to some \$900,000 for postage alone. Printing, paper and handling costs would run the figure up to around \$3,000,000!

The Hatch Act, a legislative attempt to control corrupt election practices, has set a figure of \$3,000,000 which any "political committee" may spend in a single year. In practice, the Act is evaded by setting up extra national committees, affiliated organizations, or by greater use of state committees.

In the 1944 election, both parties stayed well under the \$3,000,000 limitation — theoretically. The Democratic national committee spent \$2,169,077. The Republican, \$2,828,652. But Dr. Louise Overacker, professor of political science at Wellesley College, says in her book, *Presidential Campaign Funds*:

"If we stopped here we would have a very erroneous impression of the effect of the Hatch Act. The real story is evident when we study the expenditures of organizations

other than the national committee. But over \$7,440,000 was spent by a variety of national and state party and independent agencies supporting the Roosevelt-Truman ticket. The total expenditures of all committees backing Dewey and Bricker soared to over \$13,000,000. The expenditures of the two parties exceeded \$20,000,000."

Even this tells only part of the story. No record is kept of free editorial, news, and advertising space donated by newspapers and magazines in support of their favorites. Radio commentators, and their sponsors, also say pleasant words for their chosen candidates — which would cost big money if they had to be paid for directly.

Then there are the organizations, companies, and individuals who spend their own money directly on the campaign, through direct mail, radio and press advertising although this never shows in the records.

The Hatch Act, which limited individual or corporate gifts to any national political committee to \$5,000, was not much of a stumbling

block to those who earnestly wanted to help. Says Dr. Overacker:

"As soon as one digs below the surface, it is clear that this limitation changed the situation little if at all. Gifts were hung on more branches of the family tree routed through a variety of committees, but they came from the same old Santa Claus. Contributions from husbands and wives were conspicuous in both parties, and the family solidarity represented in some gifts to the Republican side is truly impressive.

"More than 60 members of the Du Pont clan contributed over \$200,000 to various Republican committees. The \$164,500 contributed by members of the Pew family was listed under a dozen names; contributions from the Rockefellers exceeded \$100,000. Three Queenys (identified with the Monsanto Chemical Company) gave over \$55,000. These are only the more conspicuous cases of family giving.

"Lammot Du Pont's gift of \$49,000 was divided among three Republican finance committees and state com-

mittees as widely scattered as New Jersey, Tennessee, West Virginia, Maryland, Wyoming, South Dakota, Missouri and Indiana. Only \$4000 of this money passed through the books of the Republican National Committee.

"Edgar Monsanto Queeny, resident of Missouri, contributed to committees in Connecticut, New York, Pennsylvania, and Wyoming. Was this happenstance or did a guiding genius route these contributions where they were needed?"

Back in 1928, half the Democratic campaign fund came from 135 people who gave \$5,000 or more. Three contributions exceeded \$100,000. Into the Republican treasury that year went gifts of more than \$5000 a piece from more than 300 people. In 1928, more than half the total GOP war chest came from bankers and manufacturers; the Democrats got 40 per cent of their funds from the same source.

The year 1936 marked the first formal bow of a new contributor to the campaign funds: the labor union. In that year, while bankers and

manufacturers shied away from the Democrat banner, the unions helped make up the deficit by contributing 10 per cent of the party's total war chest. By 1940, the union stake in Democratic victory had risen to 15.9 per cent.

In 1944, President Roosevelt originated the One Thousand Club, which won support from many businessmen of medium wealth. Jackson Day dinners, at \$100 a plate, have become another standby bringing in more than \$750,000.

Both parties also sought greater support among the lower income groups, through various subsidiary organizations.

While the Republicans were leaning more heavily on gifts from the "60 families" and from big business, and the Democrats were relying on aid from the unions, both parties were making vigorous attempts to tap the smaller man directly. The GOP inaugurated this idea in 1936, sending out appeals to 17 million voters asking for \$1.00 contributions. They took in \$400,000, but each dollar bill cost 38 cents to

collect. The Democrats did better, collecting \$1,000,000 in contributions in dollar bills, or slightly larger amounts, at a cost of \$200,000.

Public participation, at long last, in footing the campaign bills is a healthy sign. But the average citizen still

puts up only a small fraction of the campaign war chest. Until he is prepared to pay the price, he will continue to see government managed in the interests of those who do pay the piper. — *Louise Overacker, Presidential campaign Funds, Boston U.*

FORGET YOURSELF

Simplicity is an uprightness of soul that has no reference to self; it is different from sincerity, and it is a still higher virtue.

We see many people who are sincere, without being simple; they only wish to pass for what they are, and are willing to appear what they are not. They are always thinking of themselves; measuring their words recalling their thoughts, and reviewing their actions, from the fear that they have done too much or too little.

These persons are sincere, but they are not at ease with others, and others are not at ease with them. They are not free, ingenuous natural.

We prefer people who are less correct, less perfect, and who are less artificial. This is the decision of man, and it is the judgment of God, who would not have us so occupied with ourselves, and thus, as it were, always arranging our features in a mirror. — *By Francois Fenelon.*