



Listen Up

Laundry Committee tries

Editor:
I read Scott "Threadbare" Sarine's letter in Tuesday's Listen Up with much interest, and it was accurate with two exceptions.

The first exception is that there is a mistake in the original replacement estimation that was given to the Laundry Committee and the one Sarine quoted in his letter. Sarine quoted a price of \$80 in his letter, while the estimation given to the Laundry Committee was approximately \$72.

The other exception is that Sarine states that the Laundry Committee is implying that he is 25 per cent at fault for turning in his laundry to begin with. Sarine raised this objection at the committee meeting, and it was explained to him explicitly that we did not doubt his honesty but that since his ticket showed that not all the clothes reached the laundry, and neither side could prove where the clothes were, the responsibility must be shared between both parties. The 75 per cent rebate figure was set because of the magnitude of his loss and because of his apparent honesty and sincerity.

The depreciation factor men-

tioned by Sarine is what some rational insurance companies use to depreciate clothing. This policy is followed to give consistency and fairness in committee decisions. Sarina failed to mention that at least three items of clothing which he claimed were new were not depreciated at all, which is a departure from normal procedures.

Sarine should reconsider his closing remarks as they are obviously rash and irresponsible. By the flip-pant style of his letter, he apparently does not appreciate or understand the position and responsibilities of the Laundry Committee. I challenge him and others to join a university committee and find out what it is like. All decisions are made by the students with the staff members acting as advisors.

I am sorry Sarine was not happy with the decision made by the committee, but he did not make his displeasure known at the time.

One more thing, if Sarine thinks this whole affair is funny, I want to let him know something—it's not.

Thomas B. Meadows III
Member, Laundry Committee

Changing things

Editor:
Another April 15 has come and gone, and once more some 40 million Americans were hit with an income tax penalty of up to 20 per cent because they happen to be single. To end this tax rip-off, Rep. Edward Koch (D-NY) has introduced HR 850 in the House Ways and Means Committee, to establish the tax table currently used by married persons filing joint returns as the tax table to be used by all taxpayers. This bill would also remove tax inequities from married couples who both work.

More information about HR 850 may be obtained by sending a stamped, 10 envelope to CO\$T-Committee of Single Taxpayers, 1628 21st St., Washington, D.C. 20009.

All who would benefit from this bill are urged to write to their representative in Congress and to members of the House Ways and Means Committee, pressing for prompt, favorable action.

Lee Spencer



David S. Broder

Withdrawing federal campaign funds hurts challengers, helps incumbents

WASHINGTON — Back in the bad old days of Watergate, when the reformers in this city were busy prescribing solutions for the evils revealed in that scandal, nothing was more obvious — or so it seemed — than the case for public financing of election campaigns.

If secret, dirty, private money in large cash chunks was at the root of Watergate, as many believed, then the cure was to give presidential candidates an alternative source of supply — good, clean Treasury money, contributed by the taxpayers.

A few people raised some questions about that solution: Suppose, they said, the presidential candidates are made dependent on a system of public finance and then Congress cuts off their funds? What greater power could one give to a set of incumbent politicians than to let them determine the schedule and scale of funds flowing to those seeking the presidency? What safeguard will there be against abuse of that power?

This reporter remembers a conference on campaign finance where exactly those questions were put to the lobbyist for a famous reform group and that gentleman assured the questioner that he was conjuring up hypothetical evils which could never occur.

Any interruption in public financing by members of Congress would stir such a public outcry, the reformer said, that the incumbents would be signing their political death warrants.

That assurance, friends, is cold comfort to the presidential candidates who find themselves this week with empty treasuries, because

Congress has gone home for the Easter holiday without renewing the legislation that gives the contenders the federal matching funds they counted on to sustain their efforts in the coming crucial weeks.

The campaigns of Republican presidential challenger Ronald Reagan and of all three active Democratic contenders — Jimmy Carter, Henry Jackson and Morris Udall — are hurting. The beneficiaries of Congress' lassitude are President Ford, who has plenty of opportunities for free publicity, and Sen. Hubert Humphrey of Minnesota, who has no current campaign expenses and whose chances of winning the Democratic nomination depend on a stalemate among the active contenders. The less Carter, Jackson, Udall and Reagan can campaign in the next six weeks, the better off Mr. Ford and Humphrey are.

Now, it so happens that the candidate most congressional Republicans would like to see nominated is their old friend Jerry Ford. And the favorite of most congressional Democrats is their old pal Hubert. Anyone who believes that it's coincidence that Congress left the other candidates financially stranded is likely to be someone who is probably still waiting for the Easter Bunny to deliver a brand-new canary-yellow convertible.

It will be argued that Congress alone is not responsible for the interruption in the flow of federal matching funds to the presidential candidates. The Supreme Court on January 30 ruled that the composition of the Federal Elections Commission — the agency that certifies the matching payments — was un-

constitutional. It was found unconstitutional because Congress — bowing, as usual, to the demands of Rep. Wayne Hays (D-Ohio) — had insisted on appointing the majority of the commission members.

President Ford, to his credit, promptly suggested that Congress deal with the problem by the simple device of transferring the appointive power to him, with the understanding that he would name the same six commission members already sitting.

But Congress would have none of it. Its members wanted to write a variety of new provisions into the law and to circumscribe the power of the commission to supervise their own campaign finance practices. And until those changes were made, they were quite willing to hold the presidential candidates hostage. Especially since they didn't want those fellows to win anyhow.

The Supreme Court stayed its order for 30 days, then extended the stay for another 21 days — and still Congress would not act. Since March 22, the commission has been without authority to continue paying matching funds to the presidential hopefuls.

By another of those peculiar coincidences that are so conspicuous in this whole affair, the House-Senate

conference committee handling legislation completed work last night — just a few hours before Congress to act before beginning vacation.

One reason for the delay, it is out, was the insistence by Mr. Ford on relief from the provision that would pay \$1,000 a year in honorariums. Only \$25,000 a year did the bill let the bill emerge.

But the legislation passed until Congress reconvenes week of April 28, and by Mr. Ford can sign the law, the commissioners and weeks will elapse. Meaning candidates will be starved through the glut of May without the federal funds they are entitled.

This is exactly the kind of power of which the reformers warned. And it is clear now the experiment in public financing to be continued after this year, a formula must be made and taken totally out of the hands of those incumbent congressional politicians who have proven unwillingness to divorce the social concerns from their responsibilities.

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