

\$10 million for a governorship or seat in the Senate is a bargain in many states. The President, even with all the advantages of the White House at his command, appears to have spent more than \$250 million on television ads promoting his reelection in 1996. \$250 million!

The problem of so-called "issue advocacy" is only fueling the amount of money going into television ads and further distorting our electoral system. On February 10, 1998, Tim Russert delivered the fifth annual Marver H. Bernstein Symposium on Governmental Reform at Georgetown University. In his address, he asserted that "television ads paid for by the candidates themselves are (not) going to be the problem in future election cycles. That distinction will be earned by so-called 'issue advocacy' advertising by ideological and single issue groups." He made the point that, unlike candidates, these groups are not subject to campaign contribution limits or disclosure requirements.

In *Buckley v. Valeo* the Supreme court held that these ads are protected speech under the First Amendment. We are told that requiring such groups to disclose their list of contributors might be a violation of the First Amendment under *NAACP v. Alabama*. Mr. Russert contends that "unless the Fourth Estate is able to identify these groups and ferret out their funding, and explain their agenda, many elections could very well be taken hostage by a select band of anonymous donors and political hit men." There must be a better way.

Might I suggest that the way to reduce the influence of these "select band of anonymous donors and political hit men" and to reduce the ungodly amount of money being used in campaigns is free television time for candidates. Frankel writes:

It would be cheaper by far if Federal and State treasuries paid directly for the television time that candidates need to define themselves to the public—provided they purchased no commercial time of their own. Democracy would be further enhanced if television stations that sold time to special interest groups in election years were required, in return for the use of the public spectrum, to give equal time to opposing views. But so long as expensive television commercials are our society's main campaign weapons, politicians will not abandon the demeaning and often corrupt quest for ever more money from ever more suspect sources.

The version of the McCain-Feingold bill we have been considering restricts so-called "soft money"—contributions that national, state, county, and local party organizations may collect and spend freely provided only that the television messages they produce with the funds are disguised to appear "uncoordinated" with any candidate's campaign. This is a good first step. But it is not enough. Even if soft money and slimy variants were prohibited, polit-

ical money would reappear in liquid or vaporous form. If we want to make significant changes with regard to how we conduct campaigns, we must—to repeat Frankel—look beyond limiting the flow of money into politics and rather look to limiting the candidates' need for money to pay for television time. Frankel concludes his piece on campaign finance reform by stating that "there is no point dreaming of a law that says 'you may not' so long as the political system daily teaches the participants 'you must.' Until candidates for office in America are relieved of the costly burden of buying television time, the scandals will grow." He could not be more right.

DEPARTMENTS OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT APPROPRIATIONS

VERMONT RURAL FIRE PROTECTION TASK FORCE

Mr. JEFFORDS. Mr. President, I first thank Senator BOND for all of his hard work on the FY 2000 Departments of Veterans Affairs and Housing and Urban Development Appropriations bill, and the attention he paid to priorities in my home State of Vermont. I would like to briefly discuss with the Senator from Missouri the \$600,000 provided in the Conference Report for the Vermont Rural Fire Protection Task Force.

It is my understanding that the funds provided are for the purchase of personal safety equipment that includes, but is not limited to the following: self-contained breathing apparatus, fire resistant turn out gear (helmets, coats pants, boots, hoods, gloves, and the like), personal pagers, personal accountability system to fulfill requirements of OSHA's two in two out rule, portable radios and personal hand lights. The need for new firefighting equipment is great in Vermont, because of the new OSHA regulations. I hope that the funds provided in this bill will be matched 50 percent with non-federal funds.

Further, it is my understanding that the funds will be administered by the Vermont Rural Fire Protection Task Force supported by the George D. Aiken and the Northern Vermont Resource Conservation and Development Council.

Mr. BOND. The Senator from Vermont has accurately described the intentions of the Conference Report accompanying the FY 2000 Departments of Veterans Affairs and Housing and Urban Development Appropriations bill.

THE VERY BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, at the close of business yesterday, Tuesday, October 19, 1999, the Federal debt stood at \$5,670,293,241,725.48 (Five trillion, six hundred seventy billion, two hundred

ninety-three million, two hundred forty-one thousand, seven hundred twenty-five dollars and forty-eight cents).

One year ago, October 19, 1998, the Federal debt stood at \$5,541,765,000,000 (Five trillion, five hundred forty-one billion, seven hundred sixty-five million).

Five years ago, October 19, 1994, the Federal debt stood at \$4,705,195,000,000 (Four trillion, seven hundred five billion, one hundred ninety-five million).

Ten years ago, October 19, 1989, the Federal debt stood at \$2,876,712,000,000 (Two trillion, eight hundred seventy-six billion, seven hundred twelve million).

Fifteen years ago, October 19, 1984, the Federal debt stood at \$1,592,001,000,000 (One trillion, five hundred ninety-two billion, one million) which reflects a debt increase of more than \$4 trillion—\$4,078,292,241,725.48 (Four trillion, seventy-eight billion, two hundred ninety-two million, two hundred forty-one thousand, seven hundred twenty-five dollars and forty-eight cents) during the past 15 years.

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Williams, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The nominations received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

REPORT ON NATIONAL EMERGENCY WITH RESPECT TO NARCOTICS TRAFFICKERS IN COLOMBIA—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT—PM 67

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

To the Congress of the United States:

As required by section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1641(c), and section 204(c) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA), 50 U.S.C. 1703(c), I transmit herewith a 6-month periodic report on the national emergency with respect to significant narcotics traffickers centered in Colombia that was declared in Executive Order 12978 of October 21, 1995.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON.

The White House, October 20, 1999.