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# Rift Over Fund Letter Costs GOP \$2 Million

By Bill Peterson  
Washington Post Staff Writer

A rift with the White House over a controversial fund-raising letter has cost Republicans \$2 million and forced a major cutback in money and services available to GOP senators, Senate aides were told yesterday.

The National Republican Senatorial Committee destroyed 8 million copies of the letter, produced at a cost of \$2 million, after the White House objected to the prominent use of the name and photograph of Sen. Bob Packwood (R-Ore.), chairman of the committee.

The White House was upset with Packwood for telling an interviewer that Reagan was weakening the Republican Party by ignoring women and blacks and other minorities. He later apologized for the remarks.

This week, however, the outspoken Packwood was at it again, accusing Reagan of dividing the party by abandoning his campaign goal of balancing the federal budget. "He's removed the glue that held everyone together in the Republican Party," Packwood said in a Wednesday speech in Astoria, Ore.

GOP Senate aides said they were told yesterday that the campaign committee will have a cashflow problem for two or three months as a new letter is prepared and mailed out.

As a result, the committee has cut in half funds to individual senators for support services such as taping television spots and photographs of visiting constituents, according to spokesmen. It also has put a moratorium on hiring campaign consultants and drastically cut back on travel expenditures.

GOP aides were told about the cutbacks by Craig Smith, deputy director of the committee, in a meeting early yesterday. But there was already an undercurrent of unrest over the letter episode.

Phil Kent, press secretary to Sen. Strom Thurmond (R.S.C.), had circulated a letter to other GOP press secretaries urging them to mount a lobbying effort against the cutback in support services funds, which are allocated to each senator in proportion to his state's population.

"I don't have to point out to you how critical these funds are to our communications with our bosses' constituents," he said.

The meeting with Smith caused more uncertainty among top Senate aides, who came away with differing accounts of how much the controversy over the letter would cost.

Bob Pipkin, spokesman for the committee, said the only direct cost will be the \$2 million lost from the letters because of White House objections.

Although it will delay fund-raising efforts to from six to eight weeks, he said the committee hopes to eventually recoup its losses. The committee, he added, still hopes to funnel more than \$10 million into the campaigns of Republican senatorial candidates this year.

"Fortunately, we were in such dramatically better shape than the Democrats that this won't hurt our candidates," Pipkin said. "This isn't something we take lightly, but we can deal with it."

The letter—promising medallions and American flags to big contributors—were written over a facsimile of President Reagan's signature. "As your president, I am calling upon you to make a most unusual sacrifice—a sacrifice for your country—in order to keep our Republican majority status in the Senate," the letter said.

Reagan, however, didn't write the letter or authorize the use of his signature, according to White House spokesmen. Packwood and other committee members agreed to withdraw the letter in a hastily called meeting two weeks ago. About 2 million letters already had been mailed.

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Washington Post

Republican  
Senatorial  
Campaign  
Committee

A4

Tuesday, March 2, 1982

## Senator Finds President on 'Different Track'

Associated Press

A senior Republican senator says he and other GOP leaders sometimes are dismayed in their meetings with President Reagan because he responds to their concerns "on a totally different track" from the issue at hand.

For example, when the Senate budget chairman recently expressed consternation with a deficit exceeding \$100 billion, Reagan told an anecdote about someone buying vodka with food stamps, according to Bob Packwood, who heads the Senate Republican Campaign Committee.

Reagan concluded the story with "That's what's wrong," said Packwood. "And we just shake our heads," the senator added.

Packwood attributed the problem to what he termed Reagan's "idealized concept of America," that is basically white, male and Protestant. And that view, the Oregon senator said, is destroying the GOP's appeal among blacks, Hispanics and Jews.

He said he feared that Reagan's positions on abortion, the equal rights amendment and the handling of tax exemptions for schools that discriminate by race will cause lasting damage to the party.

"The Republican Party has just about written off those women who work for wages in the marketplace," Packwood said. "We are losing them in droves. You cannot write them off and the blacks off and the Hispanics off and the Jews off and assume you're going to build a party on white Anglo-Saxon males over 40."

"There aren't enough of us left," he said.

"Pete Domenici [chairman of the Senate Budget Committee] says we've got a \$120 billion deficit coming and the president says, 'You know a person yesterday, a young man went into a grocery store and he had an orange in one hand and a bottle of vodka in the other, and he paid for the orange with food stamps and he took the change and paid for the vodka. That's what's wrong.'

"And we just shake our heads," said Packwood.

Nonetheless, Packwood said he thinks Reagan "still has an amazing popular appeal" and can win reelection overwhelmingly. But that's different from building a majority Republican party, he said.

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