Some have objected to my plan because it requires individuals to check a box on their tax return. What are the alternatives that we most frequently hear? The suggestions most usually made are for a tax deduction or tax credit. These involve not merely a checkmark on the tax return but also the recording of specific contributions made, and still leaves us with the auditing problem of determining whether, in fact, the contributions were made. The tax problems in these alternative solutions are much more complex and difficult than the simple checkmark on the tax return which the amendment provides. Moreover, a tax deduction or credit to be verified must be checked with the party to whom the contribution was given. Who wants the internal revenue agents in examining his return to obtain information on his political affiliation?

In the absence of finding any other basis for objection to the Long Act, it is sometimes claimed that this is undesirable because individuals under this system are, in effect, designating how governmental funds are to be spent. To me the interesting thing about this argument is that those who make this charge fail to recognize that deduction or tax credit for political contributions just as effectively takes money which would otherwise go into the Public Treasury and diverts it to another purpose. The only difference I can see in this regard is that the tax deduction or tax credit schemes divert the money just before it reaches the Treasury. Moreover, instead of diverting the money to the political campaigns, these deductions or credits merely recompense the taxpayer for part of the contribution he has already made. Moreover, frequently they repay the taxpayer needlessly for contributions he would have made in any case. There is no such waste under the amendment in this bill.

I have explained the mechanics of the Long Act previously, so I see no need to repeat it here. However, there are a few points that I would like to emphasize:

First. This amendment treats equally all parties receiving 15 million votes or more. As a result, this will not favor the party in power.

Second. Provision is made for minority parties under this bill. Any party receiving 5 million votes or more—a 5 million deduction is provided not only for minority parties but for major parties as well—receives political campaign funds based upon its vote over 5 million, and if it reaches the 15 million vote level, it is treated equally with the major parties. This is an honest attempt to give proper recognition to minority parties in this area of political contributions but not at the same time be unrealistic and treat fragment parties on the same basis as major parties. I believe that this represents a fair solution to this problem, but I am certainly willing to consider modifications in the future should the need to do so be established.

Third. This amendment is limited in several respects. Major parties cannot receive more than an equal share of the funds based upon the vote in the last presidential election. Therefore, even if taxpayers should check their tax returns freely in this regard, only limited funds would be available for expenditure. The funds are available only for presidential campaigns, and the Comptroller General is specifically authorized to examine the statements presented to him and to audit the books of the poltical parties to be sure that the contributions are spent for presidential campaigns and not for congressional or gubernatorial campaigns, and not for personal use, distinct from political purposes.

Fourth. It has been said that this provision runs contrary to the limitation in present law limiting contributions to political committees to $3 million in any year. Those who say this cannot have examined the bill or present law very closely. Present law refers to contributions to political committees. The bill actually has nothing to do with contributions. The term "contribute" means to give or supply in common with others; to share in a joint effort. The financing by the Government after the passage of this bill is not a voluntary, joint effort to give funds. Rather, it is an appropriation of funds. Rather, it is an appropriation of funds to which the parties have a right. Moreover, it is not part of a joint effort. As a result, it is not a contribution and, therefore, does not come under the limitation of present law. Moreover, it involves a payment to political "parties" not payments to political "committees." As a result, it should be clear the present $3 million limitation does not apply.

Fifth. Some have objected to the fact that the contribution in this case is divided between, or among, the major parties. Some have indicated that they would prefer making all of their contribution to one party or the other. This, of course, is not the way to assure good government. It may be a way of electing one party over another—by supplying it with a better financial base—but it does not assure good government. The way to assure good government is to be sure that sufficient campaign funds are available to both, or all, major parties, so that their positions can be fully understood by the electorate. It is only a well-informed electorate that can assure the continuation of our representative form of government.

Sixth. It has been suggested that there are no safeguards to prevent misuse of the funds made available to the political parties by this provision. Actually, present law provides about as strict a fraud statute as can be imagined. Section 1001 of title 18 of the code specifies:

> Whoever, in any matter within the jurisdiction of any department or agency of the United States knowingly and willfully falsifies, conceals or covers up by any trick, scheme, or device a material fact, or makes any false, fictitious or fraudulent statements or representations, or makes or uses any false writing or documents knowing the same to contain any false, fictitious or fraudulent statement or entry shall be fined not more than $10,000 or imprisoned not more than five years, or both.