

News Release

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HARRY BROWNE
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Harry Browne asks: Want to end political corruption? Deprive politicians of their 'jackpot' of federal favors

WASHINGTON, DC — There is only one way to eliminate the massive political corruption that swirls around this year's presidential election, said Libertarian challenger Harry Browne — strip politicians of their ability to hand out lucrative "jackpots" of government benefits.

"Lobbyists, special interest groups, and tainted money are drawn to political power like flies to garbage," said Browne. "The only way to get rid of the flies is to clean up the garbage — by cleaning up Washington, DC."

Browne's comments came as charges and countercharges flew between President Bill Clinton and Bob Dole about the tidal wave of special interest money that has washed over Republicans and Democrats in 1996.

The latest round of influence buying involves \$720,000 in contributions from the Indonesian corporation Lippo, Ltd. to the Democratic National Committee; \$38,000 in illegal contributions from Aqua-Leisure Industries to the Dole campaign; and \$140,000 in contributions from the Hsi Lai Temple to the Clinton campaign. Attorney General Janet Reno is deciding whether to appoint an independent counsel to investigate the allegations.

"Want to solve this problem?" asked Browne. "Recognize that lobbyists and money are merely *symptoms* of the problem. The *real* problem is that politicians have created a treasure chest for the special interests to fight over. The government has become an enormous jackpot — with unlimited power to bestow favors. Naturally, everyone wants a share of that jackpot.

"That's why American and foreign corporations contribute millions of dollars to Republicans and Democrats. It's so politicians will then dole out *billions* of dollars worth of government contracts and corporate subsidies — not to mention favorable legislation, government-mandated monopolies, price support systems, and beneficial trade laws."

Until the power of government is strictly limited, said Browne, the problem of political corruption will get worse — despite any possible reforms that politicians might pass.

"Republicans and Democrats wrote all the current campaign finance laws," said Browne. "Are we surprised, then, when those laws enrich Republicans and Democrats? Of course not. The only surprising aspect of this scandal is that voters are surprised. The federal government has spent the last 60 years baiting the mousetrap of government power with bigger and more expensive cheese. We shouldn't be surprised when it attracts bigger rats."