Richard M. Nixon

***from the "Checkers" speech***

delivered and broadcast live on television 23 September 1952

Now, what have I earned since I went into politics? Well, here it is. I've jotted it down. Let me read the notes. First of all, I've had my salary as a Congressman and as a Senator. Second, I have received a total in this past six years of $1,600 from estates managed by my law firm before the time that I severed my connection with it. And, incidentally, as I said previously, I have not engaged in any legal practice and have not accepted any fees from businesses that came into the firm after I went in politics. I have made an average of approximately $1,500 dollars a year from nonpolitical speaking engagements.

And then, fortunately, we've inherited a little money. Pat sold her interest in her father's estate for $3,000 and I inherited $1,500 from my grandfather. We have lived rather modestly. For four years we lived in an apartment in Parkfairfax, in Alexandria, Virginia. The rent was $80 a month. And we saved for the time that we could buy a house.

Now, that was what we took in. What did we do with this money, and what do we have today to show for it? This will surprise you because it is so little, I suppose, as standards generally go for people in public life.

First of all, we've got a house in Washington, which cost $41,000 and on which we owe $20,000. We have a house in Whittier, California, which cost $13,000 and on which we owe $3,000. My folks are living there at the present time. I have just purchased $4,000 in life insurance, plus my GI policy which I've never been able to convert, and which will run out in two years. I have no life insurance whatever on Pat. I have no life insurance on our two youngsters, Tricia and Julie. I own a 1950 Oldsmobile car. We have our furniture. We have no stocks and bonds of any type. We have no interest of any kind, direct or indirect, in any business. Now, that's what we have. What do we owe?

Well in addition to the mortgage, the $20,000 mortgage on the house in Washington, the 10,000 dollar one on the house in Whittier, I owe $4,500 to the Riggs Bank in Washington, D.C., with interest 4 and 1/2 percent. I owe $3,500 to my parents, and the interest on that loan, which I pay regularly, because it's the part of the savings they made through the years when they were working so hard -- I pay regularly 4 percent interest. And then I have a $500 loan, which I have on my life insurance.

Well, that's about it. That's what we have. And that's what we owe. It isn't very much. But Pat and I have the satisfaction that every dime that we've got is ours honestly. I should say this, that Pat doesn't have a mink coat. But she does have a respectable Republican cloth coat, and I always tell her she'd look good in anything.



One other thing I probably should tell you, because if I don't they'll probably be saying this about me, too. We did get something, a gift, after the election. A man down in Texas heard Pat on the radio mention the fact that our two youngsters would like to have a dog. And believe it or not, the day before we left on this campaign trip for the vice presidency we got a message from Union Station in Baltimore, saying they had a package for us. We went down to get it. You know what it was? It was a little cocker spaniel dog in a crate that he'd sent all the way from Texas, black and white, spotted. And our little girl Tricia, the six year old, named it "Checkers." And you know, the kids, like all kids, love the dog, and I just want to say this, right now, that regardless of what they say about it, we're gonna keep it.