

PRINCETON, N.J., February 4.—A majority of Americans believes Representative Adam Clayton Powell, Democrat, New York, should not be permitted to keep his seat in the House of Representatives, according to a Gallup survey completed within the last few days. The survey also showed that almost the same number think that misuse of Government funds, one of the charges made against Powell, is fairly common among Congressmen—

And then the last question propounded in that Gallup inquiry is the following:

Representative Powell is charged with misuse of Government funds for personal reasons. Just your own feeling or impression, do you think the misuse of Government funds by Congressmen is fairly common or not?

The results based on the total sample: Yes, fairly common, 60 percent; no, 21 percent; no opinion, 19 percent.

Now, having sat on the Powell committee and heard the testimony, I think I can say and I think when the report of this committee is disclosed, that there has been no instance in the history of this country where there has been such shocking misconduct, officially, as there has been on the part of Mr. Powell. I hope the House next week will deal either very severely with Mr. Powell or expel him from the body.

However, I don't think it is fair to say that any other Member of Congress has been guilty of comparable conduct. At least I have not heard of it or read about it. However, this is this opinion among the people and I think that the only way that we can dispel that opinion is to have a standing committee where there will be some sort of a generally accepted code of ethics and propriety to be observed on the part of the Members of this House and we all have our opinions about the propriety of such a thing for the other House. In fact, there is a Rules Committee or a specially set up ethics committee that is functioning in the other House, which is informed and conducting inquiries.

That standing committee would be in constant existence, so if anybody had any complaints that he presented to the committee, I think there should be safeguards. It should be under oath if it is submitted by a citizen, but if a Member of the Congress or a Member of the House had any complaint or any question or any matter of suspicion on that he thought should be given consideration by a standing committee, that material could be properly brought to the attention of such a committee and proper inquiry.

No doubt most of the cases would be disposed of without there ever being public hearings and just the very fact that there was such a committee would tend to discourage indiscretions or in many instances carelessness on the part of Members which may well be construed as acts of impropriety by the public.

Frankly, I think we have waited too long in order to set up such a committee and that it is imperative that we do so as soon as we can.

Now, I personally subscribe to the resolution offered by my distinguished colleague, Mr. Bennett. I did last session and had the honor to report that resolution from this committee to the floor. I think we have a better understanding of the whole subject now than we had last year when the matter came to the attention of the House.

Mr. Bennett has been offering this resolution or one of similar character, I think perhaps 14 years. So far as I have observed I believe he is senior in the number of Representatives who are now