

be squelched right there by proper, tactful cooperation between maybe the leadership and such a committee as that.

Mr. ANDERSON. As a watchdog committee?

Mr. PEPPER. That's right. It would have a deterrent effect and also an ameliorative effect.

Mr. O'NEILL. Senator, there is one thing that bothers me. A man could be brought before a committee because of innuendoes and whispers. The mere fact that a Member of Congress has been brought before that committee could leak out to the press and get home; it would ruin him. I agree with your statement. I think we ought to be careful on those we are going to bring before the committee. You should not bring a man before a committee because of a whisper.

Mr. PEPPER. I'm glad my able friend from Massachusetts gave me an opportunity to correct a wrong impression.

What I meant was that there not be any public hearing. I meant if reports kept coming to the committee, that such things as Mr. Powell was doing, for example, were occurring, that it might well be that the chairman of that committee, or the committee, in some informal way could just sit down in his office and have a talk with him and say, "I think you ought to know that these reports have been coming and we have investigated sufficiently to find apparently there is some basis for them," and give the man an opportunity to save himself and to correct the practices.

But I agree with you that the utmost of circumspection and discretion should be exercised not to embarrass a member and not to let rampant hearsay or evil people who want to destroy a Member come in with reports unless they are properly authenticated by oath.

All these safeguards will undoubtedly have to be worked out, but that is a problem in administration. We must, of course, protect the innocent. We are not going to allow the innocent to be pilloried here by that, but that will all have to be worked out, I think, in the details of the administration of the committee, and I am glad you gave me an opportunity.

I did not mean upon every whisper that a man should be brought before the committee. I thought maybe when they were well enough substantiated, that they should become a part of the official concern of the committee, then it might well be that the chairman or somebody, or the chairman and the Speaker, in the utmost of secrecy should just have a talk with the chairman and tell him, "We want you to know these reports have come in which we have found to be prima facie, creditable, and we thought you ought to know about."

Mr. ANDERSON. I knew you would want to correct that statement.

Mr. PEPPER. It is for the innocent as well as upon the guilty.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Latta.

Mr. LATTI. It is not often that we get a chance to quiz a member of this committee.

Let me just say that I have agreed with what you had to say up to the point when you mentioned that had we had this committee in existence for these 23 years, maybe Mr. Powell would not be in the "embarrassing end" position that he finds himself today.

How do you come to that conclusion? Do you mean it would have been such a deterrent to this man that he would not have done all these things he is charged with doing?