

proved by the full committee); and I am reading from the minutes of the committee of October 20, 1966, what I said:

I do not think a man's private life is detrimental to the House. No one is perfect; and if he privately has weaknesses, it should not be something that should be before this committee, as it would not reflect upon the House.

Inaccurate press reports, only as far as I know, and opponents of the committee, have alarmed some members; but the record of actual statements and actions of the committee and its chairman give no grounds for any fear of "witch hunts" or snooping of any kind.

In fact, two complaints were received by the committee during the adjournment (based on the committee's ability to look into violations of criminal law); and in both, the chairman refused jurisdiction because the complaints were not in writing and under oath, as the statutory history of the act required. Moreover, the full committee would have to decide such matters, within the statute which empowers it; and clearly the legislative history as well as the terms of the statute rule out any abuses of the committee in such matters.

Such an investigation could be made only upon receipt by the select committee of a complaint based on competent evidence in writing and under oath, made by or submitted to a Member of the House and transmitted to the select committee by a Member. Even when so formally presented, the committee would have discretionary power not to act on the matter if it appeared to be trivial or otherwise improper. No such resolution would be effective unless approved by the House.

I would think there would be very few complaints about the conduct of Members of the House, but if a serious case, reflecting publicly on the House, were substantiated by competent evidence, it is my opinion that 90 percent, or perhaps all Members, would be willing to submit it for consideration.

The committee would not be a snooping committee looking into the private lives of Members. But serious charges, fully substantiated, reflecting on the U.S. House of Representatives, would or should be looked into. Moreover, the committee would devote its efforts to preventing, rather than penalizing and publicity.

The main purpose of this committee is to help improve the standards of the House of Representatives and also the public confidence therein.

The public image of Congress demands that the House establish a full, working, thoughtful committee working solely in the field of standards and conduct. Sixty percent of those answering a recent Gallup poll said they believe the misuse of Government funds by Congressmen is fairly common. Of course, we know that such abuses are, in fact, not common, but we have seen a number of such damaging polls showing the people's lack of faith in the integrity of Congress.

There is a need for a vehicle in the House to achieve and maintain the highest possible standards by statute and enforcement thereof. This can only be done after thorough study by a committee whose primary interests are in the field of ethics.

The House Select Committee on Standards and Conduct has wide support and adequate precedent for its reestablishment in the 90th Congress. It was the Rules Committee which brought the resolution