

our colleagues. It was advocated as a means to reaffirm public confidence in our elected officials and in the Congress of the United States.

Within the last several months, serious allegations concerning ethical misconduct have been voiced against a member of this House, and a member of the other body.

In the ensuing publicity, much concern has been voiced in the press and among the public over the conduct of all our Members and of the salaried employees of the Congress, of the ethical foundation and moral commitment of the Congress as a whole. The public, hearing the charges and weighing them against our reluctance to act on them for so long, has not been entirely without justification in voicing those anxieties and doubts.

There is no question that the great majority of us who are honored and privileged to serve in this great body, do so under the strictest self-imposed moral code. We do so quietly and without notoriety, because that is, as it should be, the normal and accepted standard. That is the rule rather than the exception.

When exceptions do occur and they reach the public eye, as indeed they all will sooner or later, the shock and dismay is such as to create a major national issue, a virtual crisis of confidence.

It behooves us in this body therefore, as duly elected representatives of the citizens of this country and as solemnly charged Members of Congress, to take every feasible step to remove the unjust stigma that attaches as a result of the misconduct of a single colleague or employee. In short, it is high time we established principles which will serve as a guide for all members of this body and its staff and employees and upon which swift and fair action can be based in answer to formally presented charges.

Establishment of a bipartisan committee, acting on an accepted code of ethics, and having full investigative powers, will serve not only to uphold the integrity and prestige of the House of Representatives, but will also provide the means to confirm or, most importantly, immediately deny the veracity of any charge or allegation brought any Member or employee.

In this sense, such a Select Committee, functioning within the guidelines suggested in House Resolution 43, would serve primarily as a safeguard against unjust and unfounded allegations that might be suggested from time to time and which, through character assassination, misinterpretation, and untruth, can wreck the career of the most gifted and distinguished public servant.

If a Member or employee is accused of wrongdoing, either by the press or by his political enemy, he need only rely on the Select Committee to give the lie to the accusation. If the charge prove true, then the Committee is empowered to act accordingly, for the good of the House and the good of the country.

I respectfully urge the distinguished Committee on Rules to consider favorably House Resolution 43 for the establishment of a Select Committee on Standards and Conduct and to report favorably thereon to the House so that it might be approved and such a Select Committee be established as soon as possible.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

STATEMENT OF CONGRESSMAN DANIEL E. BUTTON, ON HOUSE RESOLUTION 18

The much and overly publicized case of a single Congressman whose conduct has been so overt as to attract public scrutiny and to obligate his Colleagues to inquire into it, naturally has raised innumerable questions in the minds of almost all Americans. These questions, and their implications, are reflected in many letters from my own constituents, who have been asking about the Congressional basis for disciplining Mr. Powell and also about the suspicions and rumors of misbehavior elsewhere, perhaps widespread.

I believe that the public deserves reasonable answers to such inquiries. I believe that the time has come when further delays in enacting a realistic and workable code of ethics will have several adverse and undesirable effects.

First, to discipline Representative Powell (in fact, even to consider the question of disciplining him) without providing the rationale for doing so, and prospectively doing so in the case of allegations against any other Member, will unmistakably leave many people of goodwill with the distinct impression that he was improperly and unfairly singled out for punishment, perhaps because of his race. To permit this thought to take shape would be to do a grave disservice to the credibility and honor of the Congress. I cannot believe that it is the will of