

duced the flood of mail as has the Powell incident. With rare exception, the tone of the mail has indicated that the Congress is on trial.

Had we been willing to face the issue of House conduct and ethics in the past the Powell issue possibly would not have been raised in the context in which we must consider it today. Adam Powell would long ago have been punished for his blatant misconduct.

The Committee has the chance to take that all important first step forward insuring that Powells of the future will not put the institution of Congress on trial everytime we consider a Member's conduct. We are on trial today. We have been judging a man on arbitrary one-time standards. Because we have been lax in the past, there are no precedents or rules to proceed on, and how we account for ourselves will be carefully and closely scrutinized by the public.

While I cannot condone the actions of Powell, neither can I condone Congress' past unwillingness to create standards and subject itself to periodic review. Ironically, Adam Powell may well be the spark that produces a Congressional code of standards and ethics.

If we are to expect and merit our constituents' confidence, it is absolutely necessary that they have faith in our integrity. We hold an important public trust. We have been chosen by our respective communities to make the decisions on the public affairs of the day. If this trust is only offered in a cynical acceptance of expected corruption, the fabric of the institution can only deteriorate.

Mr. Chairman, I am asking the Committee and the Congress to take a step toward closing the present confidence gap. I am asking that in your deliberations you consider recommending a Select Committee that will have both the support and respect of the American people as well as the Congress. I am asking that you produce a mechanism that will have meaning and teeth. I am asking that Congress show the Nation that it has enough faith in itself to command the faith and confidence of the Nation it serves.

To fail to act during this Congress on the question of conduct and ethics would to this great institution represent a most damaging setback.

STATEMENT OF HON. CHARLOTTE T. REID, 15TH DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS, IN SUPPORT
OF HOUSE RESOLUTION 162

I appreciate this opportunity to submit a statement in behalf of House Resolution 162, which I introduced in the House of Representatives on January 19, 1967, to establish a Select Committee on Standards and Conduct.

As provided in my bill, such a Select Committee would have a bipartisan membership, consisting of six Majority and six Minority members to be appointed by the speaker. It shall be the duty of the Committee to recommend to the House appropriate rules and regulations to insure proper standards of conduct by Members of the House, and by officers or employees of the House, in the performance of their duties and the discharge of their responsibilities. Furthermore, the Committee would have the authority to report violations, by a majority vote, of any law to the proper Federal and State authorities.

Such a Select Committee would also have the power to investigate any violation by Members, officers, or employees of the House of any standards of conduct established by the House of Representatives or already in effect. This investigation would be made upon receipt by the Committee of a complaint, in writing and under oath, made by or submitted to a Member of the House and transmitted to the Committee by such Member. Upon the completion of such investigation, the Committee may recommend to the House appropriate resolutions of censure for its consideration and action thereon.

I am immensely pleased that the Committee on Rules is considering this legislation so early during this Session. Certainly there is widespread interest throughout the country in the question of ethics and credibility in government, and I feel it is most essential that public confidence in the integrity of the Congress be maintained at the highest possible level. After all, a Representative in Congress has the unique role of providing the most direct link between the people and their Government—and if our people lose confidence in the objectives and goals of those they elect to public office because of a few highly