

CREATING A SELECT COMMITTEE ON STANDARDS AND CONDUCT

TUESDAY, MARCH 14, 1967

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON RULES,
Washington, D.C.

The committee met at 10:40 a.m., pursuant to recess, in room H-313, the Capitol, Hon. William M. Colmer (chairman of the committee) presiding.

The CHAIRMAN. The committee will come to order.

I am sure I express the sentiment of the committee when I say we are all happy and delighted that our friend, the gentleman on my left, Mr. Smith, is back among the living and with us.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you very much.

The CHAIRMAN. The committee will resume hearings on House Resolution 18 and allied resolutions, and the committee will hear Mr. Burleson, the chairman of the House Administration Committee, first this morning. We will get his views.

Mr. Burleson, the committee will be glad to hear from you.

STATEMENT OF HON. OMAR BURLESON, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF TEXAS

Mr. BURLESON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, I will be as brief as you wish me to be. I shall leave it up to you to determine how much discussion is desired. I know you have a great deal of testimony on this subject. I have an idea much of it is repetitious.

Probably you have heard quite a few verbal essays on what we need in the House of Representatives to conduct ourselves in the public sight, at least in a way to protect what apparently is an unfavorable image which more recent events have created over the country.

I come before you as objective as I ever was on anything. I do not feel strongly about who or what committee is assigned jurisdiction. I do feel strongly about what is meant to be done. Ethics is a very generic term, as you know. It could mean all things to all people, in a broad sort of way.

I am not too sure just what you have in mind, or what anybody else has in mind. On the floor the other day when we were asking for funds for operation of the House Administration Committee, this subject arose and led to considerable exploration. Does ethics mean a delving into an individual Member of Congress' personal conduct? This was the only line which made very much publicity. I repeat here what I said in the debate last week.