

If it means looking into what a Member does, after 5 o'clock—whether he is taking a drink, playing poker, or whatever is meant by unbecoming conduct, I just want no part of it, and I cannot conceive that is what we are really talking about although it seems to be some people's idea we should so police ourselves.

It seems to me it is like children, or men without responsibility. I have always felt that a man who comes to this Congress came here with a heavy respect from the people who sent him here, and that until he proves otherwise by obvious misconduct, his good character and integrity should be assumed.

Speaker Sam Rayburn used to say—and it always impressed me very much—that a man who came here, if he did not have integrity and if he did not maintain the respect of his colleagues, he is not going to stay very long.

Mr. Chairman, you have been here many years. You have seen many Members come and go. We are the severest critics of our own and soon learn about our colleagues. It is not particularly a conscious effort that we judge one another but by daily associations we reach understanding. "How can you formalize honesty and integrity?"—this was the subject of a column by Carl Rowan the other day. It is the heart and the fundamental question involved.

There are some other things about this whole question, which I assume we are going to have to decide some time or other. I assume specific legislation would be required on such matters as conflict of interest, nepotism, and to what degree, but ethics, good conduct, and so forth, is not clearly defineable.

Maybe we could measure the degree of conflict of interest by consanguinity as we could relatives on the payroll. Should we purge ourselves on certain legislation—walk down and disqualify ourselves on having a conflict of interest? Again it seems to me it has got to be up to the individual.

Should Members who have a farm or a ranch not vote on farm legislation? Should he disqualify himself or, as it was related the other day, he has an interest in some financial institution and a bill comes out of the Committee on Banking and Currency, should he disqualify himself on a conflict of interest?

It is hard to define, and again it seems to me it is a matter of individual conscience. Now, as to what committee this task should be assigned—if we are going to have it who should be given the responsibility and the commensurate authority?

I repeat that I am objective about it. In conversation a few minutes ago in the chairman's office I mentioned to someone, somewhat facetiously, that maybe it is a compromise to leave it right here in this committee. Maybe you should take charge of this issue. You have charge of rules, and conduct relates to rules and the decorum of the House.

Now, if a special committee is set up, call it the Ethics Committee or whatever you may call it, again what is its scope, what is it for?

If it is for the watchdog over the handling of money, then the House Administration has certain responsibilities which we expect to continue but some clarifying on that is needed. It is a little vague in places as to what our authority and responsibility is. I can find a great deal more responsibility than authority.