

might be interesting to you, about this time last year we asked the Secret Service in Puerto Rico to check on this individual to see how long she had been there and what she was doing.

They interviewed her and she told them the truth. She was living in Puerto Rico and not doing anything. We tried to find some handles and take hold of this thing, and not rush in with an accusation without any foundation having been built before.

Finally, when we did find a place to start, that is when the Hays Committee started early last fall, and finally got itself in operation and, as you know, produced the report on which the Select Committee then acted.

In all of these things, we have operated pretty much in the dark and with vagueness of authority, which should be clarified.

Just this other thing, Mr. Chairman. By having the responsibility of administering expenditures from the contingent fund, any other committee assigned to see that "ethics" was practiced would have to come to the House Administration Committee for its information regarding the use of funds. At least it would if it involved funds appropriated from the contingent fund.

If this committee assumed the responsibility of ethics, we would have to furnish you our records, which would be perfectly all right, but it would be a duplication.

Now, if it is a matter of personal conduct, then funds would not be involved necessarily, but certainly the tightest control should be exercised in the use of public money, how it is spent, and to see that it is used correctly and honestly.

That is what ethics means to me, that is what fair conduct means to me. Any other committee having anything to do with contingent funds is going to have to come to the House Administration Committee for its records, because that is where they are, unless you tell us to let somebody else assume these functions.

As I say, I think I am objective about this thing. I am not campaigning for the job because I do not particularly want it, but just in reason it seems to me the case is as I have tried to describe.

Mr. Chairman, I do not know of anything further I can add. I will certainly respond as best I can to questions.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, Mr. Burleson, I am sure the committee is indebted to you for your statement, and for clarifying some of the finer points of the duties of your committee and your jurisdiction.

I am going to be very brief here as far as I am concerned. Of course, you are aware of the fact that there is some criticism of your committee—that you should have been more alert, that you should have locked the door before the horse got out. What is it that your committee should have in the way of additional authority and jurisdiction, assuming for the moment that your committee is chosen to handle this matter?

Mr. BURLESON. I think under the present arrangement, Mr. Chairman, we need additional authority to be able to question the chairman of a committee, if this is what we want to do, more closely about the expenditures, preauthority for travel, prior authority for expenditures above a certain sum other than, we will say, supplies, pencils and paper and such which the chairman is not going to know anything about in the committee anyway. He has got to depend on people who do that,