

The CHAIRMAN. We would like to have the chairman of the House Administration Committee back again, and that goes for you, too, Mr. Goodell, as we had not finished with you yet.

Mr. GOODELL. Mr. Chairman, due to the death of a good friend and campaign manager, I will be at his funeral tomorrow and will not be here. But I will be back, if you do not finish tomorrow, at your convenience.

The CHAIRMAN. We hope to finish tomorrow. We understand your problem.

Mr. Burleson, we will excuse you.

(Whereupon, at 12 o'clock noon, the committee proceeded to the consideration of other business.)

(The following was submitted for the record:)

STATEMENT BY THE HONORABLE THOMAS J. MESKILL BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE
ON RULES

Mr. Chairman, I welcome this opportunity to testify before your distinguished Committee and compliment the Committee on moving so swiftly to act on proposals to create a Select Committee on Standards and Ethics.

I am the sponsor of H. Res. 166, similar in most respects to the legislation now before you. It is different in two respects, however, in that it incorporates features which I strongly urge the Committee to include in any bill it reports to the House.

My bill, like the others, continues the Select Committee on Standards and Ethics and gives it the assignment of drafting both a Code of Ethics for Members of the House, and the machinery for enforcing it. My bill has a deadline of December 31, 1967, for these tasks to be completed and reported to the House. I think this deadline is more than ample, but nonetheless needed, to assure the country that we intend to take prompt action.

Secondly, my bill would give to the Select Committee the specific power to recommend either censure or expulsion of any Member found in violation of the Code and the censure or discharge of any employee of the House found in violation of the Code.

This specific power is not provided in the other bills I have seen relating to this area.

In addition, I wish to second the proposal made earlier by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. Bennett) that the Standards and Ethics Committee be made a permanent, standing Committee of the House. This problem of ethics in the Congress will always be with us and it is only good sense to provide permanent machinery for dealing with it.

There is no doubt that this machinery is needed. Allegations concerning a few Members and a few employees during recent years have cast a cloud of suspicion over all Members and employees. It is a poisonous cloud which erodes public trust in the country's elected representatives as surely as air pollution corrodes everything it touches. We all see the suspicion reflected in the press, radio and television commentary. We hear it from our constituents. Only Congress can remove this cloud from itself. Let us do so promptly.