

Are there any questions of Mr. Reid?

Mr. Sisk?

Mr. SISK. Mr. Chairman, I know the gentleman wants to move along, and I know my good friend, the chairman of the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, is waiting, but I did want to examine one aspect again because I think this seems rather serious to me that in the consideration of what we do that we do not create a Frankenstein that will literally become a self-perpetuating body.

In the final analysis, our constituents, the right of those 400,000 or 500,000 people to elect their Representative, and to elect the man they want to elect, from whatever walk of life, is very important.

For example, going into the matter of disclosure, and I have not fully made up my mind on it, I have some reservations on it. For example, a Member of Congress came to me just the other day and was talking to me about it, a man whose name I will not mention.

He said to me, "In my opinion full disclosure would put me in a very tough position."

I said, "What do you mean?"

He said, "I am a poor man. I do not have a thing in the world but my salary. I would be open target for every lobbyist in the country because of the temptations they might feel, because I am struggling trying to make ends meet."

I differentiate a little bit between appointive jobs vis-a-vis a man who can be seated in a body only by the votes of his constituents. And we are the only body that is in this position, because even the Senate, a Senator has been appointed under a certain set of circumstances.

A House Member has to be elected by his constituents. I would be a little concerned about some of the things that the distinguished gentleman from New York proposes in hoping that we consider the fact in the final analysis, where we are not moving so far in this field that we are taking away the right of constituents to make their own determinations, and whether we like exactly the type of business he is in or the fact that he continues that business, or how much or how little money he has would become more important, and that we in the final analysis would become the determining factor as to who would represent these people rather than themselves.

I only bring this out as a matter of concern that I think this committee has to be concerned with, and certainly the Congress, in how far we are going to go in things like disclosure, things like conflict of interest, and matters of these kinds, because I am somewhat concerned.

I would like to have the gentleman's comment on this aspect of it.

Mr. REID. Yes, I think it is a thoughtful question, and an excellent one. Very simply, I believe if we could have election law reform, including the possibility of contributions being tax deductible, so that there would be a number of contributors and no one would rely on the fat cats, I think the day would come when any American could run for office.

I think Mr. Madden has been persuasive and eloquent on this point.

Once a Member is here, I think pay and allowances should be adequate to the job. There are some Members of Congress who are under some difficulty financially, whether it is because they maintain a second residence or travel back to their constituency to keep in contact.