I ask my colleagues to oppose this resolution, in order to send a clear message to the American people that we understand and respect the role of the legislature in our democratic system.

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time for debate has expired.

The resolution is considered read for amendment.

Pursuant to House Resolution 436, the previous question is ordered.

The question is on the resolution.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Evidently a quorum is not present.

The Sergeant at Arms will notify absent Members.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 259, nays 157, answered ''present'' 6, not voting 11, as follows:

[Roll No. 176]

YEAS—259

Abercrombie
Aderholt
Archer
Armey
Bachus
Baesler
Baker
Ballenger
Barcia
Barr
Barrett (NE)
Bartlett
Barton
Bass
Bereuter
Berry
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Bliley
Blunt
Boehlert
Boehner
Bonilla
Bono
Boswell
Brady (TX)
Bryant
Bunning
Burr
Burton
Buyer
Callahan
Calvert
Camp
Campbell
Canady
Cannon
Castle
Chabot
Chambliss
Chenoweth
Christensen
Coble
Coburn
Collins
Combest
Condit
Cook
Cooksey
Cox
Cramer
Crane
Cubin
Cunningham
Danner
Davis (VA)
Deal
DeLay
Diaz-Balart
Dickey
Doolittle
Dreier
Duncan
Dunn
Ehlers
Ehrlich
Emerson
English
Ensign
Etheridge
Evans
Everett
Ewing
Fawell
Foley
Forbes
Fossella
Fowler
Fox
Franks (NJ)
Frelinghuysen
Gallegly
Ganske
Gekas
Gibbons
Gilchrest
Gillmor
Gilman
Goode
Goodlatte
Goodling
Goss
Graham
Granger
Green
Greenwood
Gutknecht
Hall (TX)
Hamilton
Hansen
Hastert
Hastings (WA)
Hayworth
Hefley
Herger
Hill
Hilleary
Hobson
Hoekstra
Holden
Horn
Hostettler
Hulshof
Hunter
Hutchinson
Hyde
Inglis
Istook
Jenkins
John
Johnson (CT)
Johnson, Sam
Jones
Kasich
Kelly
Kildee
Kim
King (NY)
Kingston
Klug
Knollenberg
Kolbe
LaHood
Largent
Latham
LaTourette
Lazio
Leach
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
Lipinski
Livingston
LoBiondo
Lucas
Maloney (CT)
Manzullo
McCarthy (NY)
McCollum
McCrery
McDade
McHale
McHugh
McInnis
McIntosh
McIntyre
McKeon
McKinney
Metcalf
Mica
Miller (FL)
Mink
Moran (KS)
Morella
Myrick
Nethercutt
Neumann
Ney
Northup
Norwood
Nussle
Oxley
Packard
Pappas
Parker
Pascrell
Paul
Paxon
Pease
Peterson (MN)
Peterson (PA)
Petri
Pickering
Pitts
Pombo
Porter
Portman
Price (NC)
Pryce (OH)
Quinn
Radanovich
Ramstad
Redmond
Regula
Riggs
Riley
Roemer
Rogan
Rogers
Rohrabacher
Ros-Lehtinen
Roukema
Royce
Ryun
Salmon
Sanford
Saxton
Scarborough
Schaefer, Dan
Schaffer, Bob
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shadegg
Shaw
Shays
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuster
Sisisky
Skeen
Smith (MI)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (OR)
Smith (TX)
Smith, Linda
Snowbarger
Solomon
Souder
Spence
Stabenow
Stearns
Stenholm
Strickland
Stump
Sununu
Talent
Tauzin
Taylor (MS)
Taylor (NC)
Thomas
Thornberry
Thune
Tiahrt
Traficant
Turner
Upton
Walsh
Wamp
Watkins
Watts (OK)
Weldon (FL)
Weldon (PA)
Weller
White
Whitfield
Wicker
Wolf
Young (AK)
Young (FL)

NAYS—157

Ackerman
Allen
Andrews
Baldacci
Becerra
Bentsen
Bishop
Blagojevich
Blumenauer
Bonior
Borski
Boucher
Boyd
Brady (PA)
Brown (CA)
Brown (FL)
Brown (OH)
Capps
Cardin
Carson
Clay
Clayton
Clement
Clyburn
Conyers
Costello
Coyne
Cummings
Davis (FL)
Davis (IL)
DeFazio
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
Deutsch
Dicks
Dingell
Dixon
Doggett
Dooley
Doyle
Edwards
Engel
Eshoo
Fattah
Fazio
Filner
Ford
Frank (MA)
Frost
Furse
Gejdenson
Gephardt
Gordon
Hall (OH)
Hastings (FL)
Hefner
Hilliard
Hinchey
Hinojosa
Hooley
Houghton
Hoyer
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee (TX)
Jefferson
Johnson, E.B.
Kanjorski
Kennedy (MA)
Kennedy (RI)
Kennelly
Kilpatrick
Kleczka
Klink
Kucinich
LaFalce
Lampson
Lantos
Lee
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Lofgren
Lowey
Luther
Maloney (NY)
Manton
Markey
Martinez
Mascara
Matsui
McCarthy (MO)
McGovern
McNulty
Meehan
Meek (FL)
Menendez
Millender-McDonald
Miller (CA)
Minge
Moakley
Mollohan
Moran (VA)
Murtha
Nadler
Neal
Oberstar
Olver
Ortiz
Owens
Pallone
Pastor
Payne
Pelosi
Pickett
Pomeroy
Poshard
Rahall
Rangel
Reyes
Rodriguez
Rothman
Roybal-Allard
Rush
Sabo
Sanchez
Sanders
Sandlin
Sawyer
Scott
Serrano
Skaggs
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith, Adam
Snyder
Spratt
Stark
Stokes
Stupak
Tanner
Tauscher
Thompson
Thurman
Tierney
Towns
Velazquez
Vento
Visclosky
Waters
Watt (NC)
Waxman
Wexler
Weygand
Wise
Woolsey
Wynn
Yates

ANSWERED ''PRESENT''—6

Barrett (WI)
Berman
Johnson (WI)
Kind (WI)
Obey
Rivers

NOT VOTING—11

Bateman
Crapo
Farr
Gonzalez
Gutierrez
Harman
Kaptur
McDermott
Meeks (NY)
Schumer
Torres

□ 1318

Mr. CUMMINGS, and Mr. DAVIS of Florida changed their vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

Messrs. PASCRELL, ABERCROMBIE, and STRICKLAND changed their vote from ''nay'' to ''yea.''

So the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message in writing from the President of the United States was communicated to the House by Mr. Sherman, one of his secretaries.

CALLING UPON PRESIDENT TO URGE FULL COOPERATION WITH CONGRESSIONAL INVESTIGATIONS

Mr. ARMEY. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 436, I call up the resolution (H. Res. 433) calling upon the President of the United States to urge full cooperation by his former political appointees and friends and their associates with congressional investigations, and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of House Resolution 433 is as follows:

Whereas approximately 90 witnesses in the campaign finance investigation have either asserted a fifth amendment privilege or fled the country to avoid testifying in congressional investigations;

Whereas prominent among those who have asserted the fifth amendment privilege or fled the country to avoid testifying are former political appointees and friends of the President of the United States, such as former Associate Attorney General Webster Hubbell; former Department of Commerce political appointee John Huang; former Presidential trade commission appointee Charlie Trie; former senior Presidential aide Mark Middleton; longtime Presidential friends James and Mochtar Riady, as well as family, friends, and associates of some of these individuals;

Whereas when the Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation Louis Freeh testified before the House Government Reform and Oversight Committee on December 9, 1997, he had the following exchange with the Chairman of the Committee:

Mr. Burton: Mr. Freeh, over 65 (at that time) people have invoked the Fifth Amendment or fled the country in the course of the committee's investigation. Have you ever experienced so many unavailable witnesses in any matter in which you have prosecuted or in which you have been involved?

Mr. Freeh: Actually, I have.

Mr. Burton: You have. Give me a run-down on that real quickly.

Mr. Freeh: I spent about 16 years doing organized crime cases in New York City, and many people were frequently unavailable.

Whereas never in the recent history of congressional investigations has Congress been faced with so many witnesses who have asserted fifth amendment privileges or fled the country to avoid testifying in a congressional investigation; and

Whereas the unavailability of witnesses has severely limited the public's right to know about campaign finance violations which occurred over the past several years and related matters: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That—

(1) the House of Representatives urges the President of the United States to immediately call upon his friends, former associates and appointees, and the associates of those individuals, who have asserted fifth amendment privileges or fled the country to avoid testifying in congressional investigations, to come forward and testify fully and truthfully before the relevant committees of Congress; and

(2) that the President of the United States should use all legal means at his disposal to compel people who have left the country to return and cooperate with the investigation.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LATOURETTE). Pursuant to House Resolution 436, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARMEY) and a Member opposed, each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARMEY).

Mr. ARMEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

This is just a simple and sincere resolution to resolve that the President of the United States should use all legal means at his disposal to compel people who have left the country or taken the Fifth Amendment to return and cooperate with the investigation.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to indulge myself in a quick reminiscence about one of my favorite situation comedies I saw on TV. Some of my colleagues may remember Archie Bunker. Archie Bunker was a conservative. He had a son-in-law that he affectionately called the ''meathead'' that was a liberal.

I remember in one of my favorite episodes of the show, Archie Bunker's son-in-law discovered that he had sneaked a few parts, spare parts home from work in his lunch box. And the son-in-law gave him a stern lecture on integrity and honesty and personal standards of conduct, and how he had to in fact rue and regret and apologize and atone for this grievous affront to all the principles we hold sacred.

And then just a few minutes later, Archie's daughter came in and exposed that the son-in-law had taken materials home from his office. The son-in-law, when confronted with this by Archie, responded with horror that even he, with all his virtue, could be corrupted by the institution.

It was, in fact, one of the greatest laugh lines of the evening, precisely because we all sat there and thought, pity the poor liberal, the more they feign moral outrage, the more they set themselves up to get stuck on their own stick.

Well, last year we were entertained all year long with all kind of expressions of piety and fidelity to the principles of individual integrity, openness, honesty, as the liberals in this body railed against the Speaker that he must step forward, reveal all documents, answer all questions and, in a word, come clean, because the Speaker of the House must be, beyond all shadow of doubt, a man of integrity.

Today, when we say to the President of the United States and all with whom he associates, come forward, come clean, present yourself, tell the truth, be open, release the documents, their response is, the system is corrupt. And before we ask any of these questions regarding who in the White House may or may not have violated the laws of the United States in their own short-sighted self-interest, what we hear from the other side is that it is we who are being irresponsible because we are not changing the system.

Let me say once more, the Nation will not forgive a Congress that believes that it is correct to change the rules and laws of finance, campaign finance, rather than to first discern who is or who is not obeying the law and bring to account those who do not obey the law. It does not take a great deal of understanding to know that matters of personal compliance, personal integrity, honesty and respect for the law are, in the longer run, more important than the law itself.

Mr. Speaker, again we must come to the floor of the House of Representatives with a resolution that simply says, let us get everybody together, present yourself and tell the truth. Certainly it is not beyond the normal expectation that we should expect the President of the United States to encourage by all means possible any persons with whom he has an association to do just that.

Mr. Speaker, I yield the balance of my time to the gentleman from New York (Mr. SOLOMON), and I ask unanimous consent that he be able to yield the time as he sees fit.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, since October 2 years ago I have been extremely concerned with allegations swirling around the White House, and I am not talking about personal or domestic scandals. Rather, I am talking about the compromising of America's national security and potential economic espionage.

Both of us on both sides of this aisle should be concerned about political/economic espionage because it costs thousands and thousands, if not hundreds of thousands of jobs in Members' districts and mine and all across America, political/economic espionage and national security breaches.

That is why I have brought this bill to the floor. If Members do not understand that, I would ask them to get a Central Intelligence Agency document which is unclassified, which states, ''Applicability of Space Launch Vehicle Technology to Ballistic Missiles.'' Take a look at it, because the technology we have been giving to China today can be so easily converted to intercontinental ballistic missiles. That is not me saying it; is our Central Intelligence Agency. Read it. That is how important this debate is on this issue right here today.

Dating back to my first letter trying to find out about John Huang, and Members all know who he is, and his connections to the President and senior members of his administration, we have faced nothing but contempt for legitimate congressional oversight which is our constitutional authority, duty in this Congress.

All told, I have written over 50 letters and made dozens of inquiries to over 8 departments, as chairman of the Committee on Rules that has legislation pending before it on this matter, and agencies of the Clinton administration, including the President himself numerous times, trying to get the truth out.

□ 1330

For just one example, in my very first letter, on October 21, 1996, coming up to 2 years now, I asked for all information from Secretary Kantor, do my colleagues remember him, Secretary Kantor at the Commerce Department, concerning his department's connection with John Huang to the Riady and the Lippo Group.

Do those names ring a bell, my colleagues? It took numerous letters and words like ''obstruction of justice'' to acquire the briefing book of the late Commerce Secretary Ron Brown that identified his early connections with John Huang, which dated all the way back to April of 1993.

The consistent pressure was also necessary to force Secretary Kantor to begin to come clean on John Huang's access, and my colleagues should listen to this because this is so important, on John Huang's access to highly classified briefings from a CIA official in the government regarding Communist China, an area of the world that this same John Huang was prohibited from having anything to do with.

But lo and behold, and this is a matter now of public record because we have been able to obtain this information and make it public, lo and behold, the information was still dribbled out over a period of not just months, but months and months and months, which ultimately showed that it was not just 12 or 37 or even 109 classified briefings or meetings, but it was more like 150. And who knows if even that is accurate. It could have been a lot more that this man John Huang was receiving classified information that could deal with national security breaches and political espionage. In addition, over 400 to 500 pieces of classified information were passed on to this particular man. Five hundred.

My colleagues, today, despite all of this and more, John Huang remains silent and untouched by justice. He refuses to come forward. In other words, and this is what my colleagues should pay attention to, in other words, a friend of President Clinton, a frequent White House guest, a senior political appointee of the President, one of his chief fund-raisers and vice chairman of the Democratic National Committee, is still hiding behind the Fifth Amendment.

The American people want to know why. What is he hiding; who is he protecting? Congress wants to find the truth and so do the American people. Why can President Clinton not help us with his friend?

And that is really what this resolution is all about. And again I will just read the last section of the resolve clause.

We resolve that the President of the United States should use all legal means at his disposal to compel people who have left the country, taken the Fifth Amendment, to return and cooperate with this investigation.

It ties in with the President's statement back on January of 1998, which said, ''The American people have a right to get the answers.'' That is what the President said and that is what we are urging in this resolution.

My colleagues, today, despite all of this and more, John Huang remains silent and untouched by this justice. But perhaps even more dangerous are 20 witnesses that have fled the country and 17 other foreign nationals who have refused to testify. Foreign nationals, my colleagues, who were in this country.

For example, one of those is a man named Ted Sieong. Do my colleagues remember that name? Have any of my colleagues read the papers in their districts back home? Mr. Sieong, now, listen to this, reportedly an agent for the PRC, that is the People's Republic of China, and a guest of both the President and Vice President, has recently been spotted in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, with his business partner Thung Bun Ma, who has been identified as the leading heroin smuggler in Cambodia, heroin that is reaching into this country and being shot into the arms of our children.

Imagine that, Mr. Speaker, a potential spy and drug kingpin sitting down with the leaders of the free world. What in the world have we come to?

I wrote to Secretary Albright in the beginning of this year, almost 5 months ago now, to find out more about Mr. Sieong and Mr. Bun Ma's visit to America. I have yet to hear back from the State Department. Do they not take this seriously? Why are they stonewalling? Is this obstruction of justice or what? We need to know these answers.

This delay is running to ground individuals who have compromised our national security, and I am sorry to say is not uncommon in this administration, and is entirely unacceptable.

Mr. Speaker, I could go on and on talking about the Riadys, who refuse to cooperate, the largest donors to President Clinton's 1992 campaign and close friends and guests of his. This is one of the largest international conglomerates in the world, my colleagues. Sure, they are rich and, sure, they have all the money to continue hiding, but why can the President not urge them to come forward and tell the truth?

Or what about Wang Jun, who, while having coffee with the President, was the chairman of an outfit preparing to smuggle automatic weapons into America and lobbying to reverse protection on the transfer of American satellite technology to China. In other words, my colleagues, and this is not just me standing up here and saying this, according to recent New York Times reports, this Chinese government arms dealer, sitting for coffee with the President of the United States, made billions of dollars for China upon reversal of those protections while we Americans pay the consequences in potentially deadly breaches of our national security.

Again, get the CIA report, unclassified, and see what I am talking about here today. Mr. Speaker, it is that serious. The stability of the world is in serious jeopardy for the first time since the Cold War.

The President's moral and ethical obligation as Commander-in-Chief, my colleagues, is to insist with the full power, with the full majesty of his office that information is made available, and individuals are compelled to come forward to tell the truth. He ought to be using the power of that office to get them to come forward, to let the American people know the truth and to judge for themselves the damage done to our national security and, consequently, to the future of this great democracy of ours.

Are we going to have these ballistic missiles once again pointed at the United States of America? The immense powers and reach of his executive branch should be commissioned to tell the American people the truth and to identify just how serious our security and foreign policy has been compromised.

I fought for a long time frustrating battles trying to impress upon the administration the severity of this matter, and I have done it in a nonpolitical way, because we were out after the national security breaches and out after the economic espionage, not about this sex scandal. We want to know the truth about how this country has been jeopardized.

Despite all these frustrations, not all was for naught. We found out some information, but more often than not that information was even more disturbing and begged additional questions. Through all of this, I found some good people in the administration, some very good people, willing to help get to the bottom of these breaches of our security. And make no mistake, our national security has been compromised.

But what we need and what the American people deserve, my colleagues, is cooperation from the very top, from the President of the United States himself, in answering our questions and bringing his associates to justice. That is all that we are asking for, is the truth, the truth, the truth.

This resolution stands for all of those things and will put the Congress on record strongly behind the effort to get to the truth and let the American public find out just what has happened to our national security because of many of these shady associations. And I will talk a little bit later about some of those shady associations to try to dramatize just what we are talking about here.

I hope my colleagues across the aisle will join us in a bipartisan appeal to the President. National security is too important for partisan politics. It should stop at the water's edge. We should rally together. We should rally together with the President of this country to try to get to the bottom of this so that we do not have this situation facing the future of our country.

So please vote for this resolution. It is reasonable and deserves my colleagues' support.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LATOURETTE). Does the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) claim the time in opposition to the resolution?

Mr. CONYERS. I do, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) is recognized for 30 minutes.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. FRANK), a senior member of the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, the gap between reality and the description we have just heard is very, very wide. The suggestion that the national security of this country has been endangered or is in danger because of the People's Republic of China, with its relatively weak military capacity, is an absolutely unjustified denigration of the military strength of this country. But it also raises an important question in my mind.

Now, the gentleman from New York was complaining of the President's failure to listen to him regarding apparently the terrible menace of the People's Republic of China. But the President is not the only one to whom he should be addressing his words. It was the leadership of his party that brought forward recently a bill to grant the People's Republic of China Most Favored Nation treatment.

Indeed, Mr. Speaker, I had to check the record. I heard a lot of this denunciation of the threat that China poses to the United States, and I had this vague recollection that the Republican leadership had given the Chinese the single thing they most wanted from this government: Most Favored Nation treatment. Indeed, if we look at the trade practices, if there could be one thing the American government could do that would make the People's Republic of China happier than anything else, it would be to give them Most Favored Nation treatment.

Now I know my friend from New York was against it, and so was I, but it was the Speaker of the House, of his

party, who put it through. Has the gentleman been so focused on the President that he has forgotten to share his wisdom with the Speaker? The staffer who sits next to him, who so carefully hands him that paper every 4 minutes when he forgets where he put it, can the gentleman not have him with him the next time he meets with the Speaker? The gentleman should bring that staffer along, because the gentleman will have to show that paper to the Speaker.

If the gentleman asked the Chinese what they wanted, some missile technology or the right to sell us $50 billion a year worth of goods, I think the $50 billion would come first.

Now, I disapprove strenuously of the way in which the Chinese government runs its people. I think they are oppressing Tibet. I think they are a threat to some of their neighbors. I was supportive of our going to the defense of Taiwan. I do not believe they are a threat to this great strong country. But if I thought they were trying to become a threat to this country, the last thing I would begin to do is to fund them, and that is what Most Favored Nation treatment does.

The Chinese government makes far more money because of Most Favored Nation treatment than anything else. And the gentleman's party put the bill through. The gentleman's party controls the House.

Now, on the other hand, maybe there is good news, Mr. Speaker. Maybe the Speaker has seen the light. Because my understanding, until recently, was that the Republican Party, the leadership of the House, planned once again to bring a Most Favored Nation bill for the People's Republic of China before us. Now, I know I would vote against it and my friend from New York would vote against it, but given the organizational power of that coalition of President Clinton and Speaker GINGRICH, the People's Republic of China would probably get it.

And, apparently, there is a breach in the coalition, because I certainly would find it hard to believe that the Republican leadership, who so excoriated China and so warned us of the danger China presents to our very national security, surely they are not prepared to give the Chinese Most Favored Nation treatment.

The gentleman said it is the Cold War again. During the height of the Cold War, in fact, during the low parts of the Cold War and the medium parts of the Cold War we never gave Russia Most Favored Nation treatment. So I guess those of us who voted against Most Favored Nation treatment for China should take heart: Allies are apparently coming. Because I am sure that the passionate nonpartisan eloquence of the gentleman from New York will not spare his Speaker if he were to err and provide Most Favored Nation treatment for that threatening nation of China.

The other thing I wanted to talk about briefly was the resolution. The facts on this are that the President has, I think, been doing everything he can. I hope no one is suggesting the President has the right to order people not to plead their constitutional rights. But, in fact, the suggestion that the President is not doing what he can is clearly contradicted by the facts.

One of the things the gentleman mentioned were the people who have fled the country. They fled the country because the Justice Department is after them. But the Justice Department works, of course, under President Clinton. We have heard these arguments that said, oh, we must have an independent counsel. And what is the basis recently for demanding an independent counsel? Well, the Justice Department cannot investigate that. How do we know that? Well, we just got facts that show the Justice Department cannot investigate it. Where did we get the facts? From the Justice Department's investigation.

The latest revelations which came from Johnny Chung came from the Justice Department's investigation. The people that have fled the country, in all honesty, I do not think they fear the gentleman from Indiana, who chairs the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight, as much as they fear the Attorney General and her prosecutors.

□ 1345

They are the ones who are threatening them. So what we have here are people have fled the country because the Justice Department is engaging in a tough, honest investigation. And so, what do we say? We say, ''Mr. President, bring them back.'' The only way the President could bring them back would be to order the Attorney General to stop the investigation. It is the Justice Department that is involving them in this investigation.

The gentleman says he wants to pursue this in a nonpartisan way, and I am glad to hear. I look forward to being here the day he chooses to do that. Apparently, today was not the day. Because this is a resolution that is accompanied by rhetoric denouncing the President for following a policy towards the People's Republic of China, which in substantial ways is the same as the Speaker of the House and the people in the other body, because both Houses passed Most Favored Nation.

It is the Administration through the Justice Department which is investigating these people. And that is what they are taking the fifth amendment from. They are refusing to testify before the Justice Department, they are fleeing the Justice Department, and they are saying, well, what are you doing about it? Well, the President is in fact, by the toughness of the investigation under the Attorney General, ultimately the cause of precisely these things.

Now, of course, we want an investigation. And there do appear to be people who abuse the campaign finance system on both parties. We had high-ranking fund-raisers in both the Clinton and Dole campaign in 1996 who behaved badly, who appeared to have violated the law. They should be prosecuted, and we should do it in a nonpartisan way.

But just in summary, first of all, let us not grossly exaggerate the physical threat that the People's Republic of China poses to the United States. Yes, they threatened Taiwan. And when the United States sent military force, they backed down. There is a disparity, fortunately, between the United States and the People's Republic of China military that means we are not in any danger from them. Others might be.

Secondly, if they do believe that the People's Republic of China is such a threat, then how do they put through the House a bill that continues their Most Favored Nation treatment which does as much to fuel their economy as any other single thing, is something they greatly want?

The gentleman from New York (Mr. SOLOMON) is not guilty of inconsistency here. Because he and I agree; we voted against Most Favored Nation treatment. What happened was, and I know the gentleman is very busy, he is busy keeping amendments off the floor, the defense bill, and doing other things, he forgot that the Speaker was for Most Favored Nation treatment. I understand that. He cannot always remember everything.

But now that I have reminded the gentleman that it is his Speaker who was bringing forward Most Favored Nation treatment, I will be glad to go with him, I will even hand him the document and show him if he misplaces it to remind him how terrible it is and how he should not even have it.

Finally, let us note that the investigation from which these people are hiding, in which they are pleading the fifth amendment, is the investigation being conducted by the Attorney General and her aides. And that is, of course, proof that these allegations of cover-up are pretty silly.

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Well, as Ronald Reagan used to say, we could go to vote right now. Because the gentleman has made my case, and we won, and we could just go to vote. But let me comment a little bit.

I do not know how we got into the Most Favored Nation debate here. The gentleman and I happen to agree with it. But we are talking about bringing fugitives back to the United States.

The gentleman has tried to make the point that maybe it was the Republicans that initiated Most Favored Nation treatment. Everybody knows if they have been here for a while, and the gentleman has been here for a while, same as I have, I see my colleagues all smiling, but it has to be the President of the United States that has to initiate a request for Most Favored Nation. Congress cannot do it. I cannot do it. In other words, it is the President.

The President initiates, and then the gentleman from New York (Mr. SOLOMON) the day after, which I will do on June 3, the day we get back here, because that is probably the day my spies over at the White House tell me the President is going to ask for Most Favored Nation treatment for China again. Although he may not have the nerve to do it after all of the votes that we have had here just in the recent couple of days.

But let me just say to him that he wonders had I not been talking to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGRICH). Oh, I have been talking to the gentleman from Georgia for many, many years about this issue. I have been talking to TRENT LOTT, who is the Majority Leader, the leader of the Senate. Guess what? I made a lot of inroads with the Majority Leader of the Senate. He is now on our side. And now I have got to work on the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGRICH) a little more. We might get there.

The gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. FRANK) also was being a little miscourteous I believe, I do not know whether it was intentional or not, when he was referring to the gentleman sitting next to me handing me papers. It ought to be, for the RECORD, that the gentleman sitting next to me is a former Marine fighter pilot in Vietnam. Everybody ought to know that. That is the kind of people I associate with.

I associate with someone just as important in the next speaker. He is a former fighter pilot in Vietnam as well, one of the most decorated heroes of our country. He is the gentleman from California (Mr. CUNNINGHAM). I will let him respond to what I would call an outrageous statement, without being disrespectful, about the weaknesses of the People's Republic of China military. What?

Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from California (Mr. CUNNINGHAM).

Mr. CUNNINGHAM. Mr. Speaker, most of the time the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. FRANK) is very eloquent. People listen to him. He has got a lot to say. But I would say that the gentleman is grasping at straws and his last comments are unbelievable, that I do not believe in my lifetime there will be peace in the Middle East or in Bosnia, not even northern Ireland. And I strongly believe that China and Russia today are our biggest enemies today.

The gentleman would like to say the Cold War is over so he can cut defense more, but that is just not the fact. And to engage in trade with Bosnia, with China, with the Middle East, we need to engage not only in dialogue, diplomatic relations, but also trade.

If we look at China, it is a lot different than it was 20 years ago because we have had an influence in there. But to suggest that trade equates to giving away military and technological secrets that would benefit a country in striking other countries and this one is ludicrous, and that is why I say the gentleman is grasping at straws.

Another thing is that the threat is very evident from China and Russia today. I have gone through that several times on the floor of what their threats actually are. And for someone to propose himself as an expert of military strategy and technology that has never dealt with it, never donned a uniform, never planned strategic strikes is amazing, a self-proclaimed expert.

They are a threat, Mr. Speaker. China is a very serious threat. And to give them the technology that could destroy this country is very, very serious.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

My thanks to the Majority Leader for his fond recollections of the television production ''All In The Family.'' It was produced by none other than Norman Lear, with whom I am sure the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARMEY) shares many common interests and beliefs.

The President is now being asked in this resolution that everyone who may have invoked the fifth amendment consider abandoning it. Well, why? Well, because, as the Chairman of the Committee on Rules said, why are they hiding behind the fifth amendment? This is technical constitutional lawyer stuff, but the fifth amendment is for all people. The fifth amendment is not used for people to necessarily hide behind it and then have to explain why they invoke the fifth amendment.

I do not think we did that when Lieutenant Colonel Oliver North, during his crisis, invoked the fifth amendment. People use the fifth amendment who are totally innocent and have reasons for not wanting to bring forward information. So I do not think that the test of whether someone is telling the truth or not or is guilty or innocent can be arrived at by whether or not they invoke the fifth amendment. I hope everybody in the Congress will agree on this elementary point of constitutional understanding.

Now, there have been a lot of names of people who are involved, and we said over 90 in the resolution. But may I remind my colleagues that the Senate Banking Committee held exhaustive hearings on some of these subjects, the House Committee on Banking and Financial Services held exhaustive hearings on other parts of the people referred to and the incidents referred to, the Senate Governmental Affairs Committee held incredibly lengthy hearings. And the House Committee on Government Reform and Oversight not only has held lengthy committee hearings but are continuing to hold committee hearings.

So what are we asking the President to do? We are asking him to state that he hopes everyone will cooperate with the investigators and tell the truth. Does anybody on the other side recognize that the President of the United States, Bill Clinton, has already publicly stated that he hopes everyone will cooperate with investigators and tell the truth?

Now, it is both bizarre and unprecedented for us to request one party in an investigation to advise the other party as to how they should conduct themselves and whether they should, in effect, ignore the advice of their lawyers.

Again, as raised in the other resolution, do my colleagues on the other side really mean that that is what they want the President to tell other people that are being investigated? Again, on their behalf, I do not think so.

So I will ask the Members considering this resolution, for what it is worth, I can tell them that I am not favorably disposed toward it and I feel that it is a totally frivolous amendment that is consuming a lot of important time.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LATOURETTE). The Chair would advise that the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) has 17 minutes remaining, and the gentleman from New York (Mr. SOLOMON) has 8½ minutes remaining.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 6 minutes to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE), my colleague on the Committee on the Judiciary.

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) for yielding me the time.

I think it is important that as we finish this discussion that we try to step away from the allegations that would create hysteria that caused my telephone to ring feverishly last night when Americans from around the Nation considered that we were under immediate attack by Chinese missiles.

I think the important point is what are we discussing here on the floor of the House. I take great aversion to anyone being challenged who has taken an oath of office that they are un-American, that they would do something to endanger the lives of so many millions of Americans. I believe this Nation will not forgive a Congress that itself violates the law.

□ 1400

We need to have the facts why H.R. 433 and 432 have even been brought to the floor of the House. I will tell you why they are on the floor of the House today. One, asking the President to give up his rights to executive privilege, and, two, asking him gratuitously to tell people to testify.

The reason, because Democrats thought that someone presiding over an oversight committee that would call publicly the President a scumbag and then offer to distort tapes and present them to the American public as truth needed to step aside from that investigation.

Our position was not that he needed to step aside from being chairperson of that committee, but during the time of this investigation, the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight needed someone else who would not have characterized his bias such that he would have called the highest officer of this Nation a scumbag.

We always ask for a certain decorum. So the reason why we are on the floor today is because this is a punitive measure against Democrats and a punitive measure against the President of the United States.

Members brought a resolution. We will bring a resolution. Interestingly enough, the resolution that had facts attributable to it was tabled. Yet, many Democrats voted just last week or this week to direct that committee to immunize witnesses so that we could get to the facts.

Democrats are not afraid of an investigation. Democrats are not afraid of campaign finance reform. We have been arguing for such reform time after time after time.

These resolutions are what they are. They are political. They are partisan. Why do I say that? As a Member of the House Committee on the Judiciary, neither one of these resolutions found their way to the committee of jurisdiction.

The Committee on Rules, which is the gatekeeper for this particular body in order to create orderliness, did not get notice of these resolutions but for 5 minutes before they had to review them.

In fact, the law is clear. Someone taking the Fifth Amendment cannot, if they were to testify, attribute their allegations and Fifth Amendment rights to someone who is outside of the realm. So, in fact, why would the President be fearful of someone coming to testify or why would the President in any way be impacted by someone taking advantage of their constitutional rights, the Fifth Amendment?

Why would the President of the United States or anyone other than your religious leader, your spouse, your family member have any authority to tell someone that is not part of his immediate family, to engage them in any discussion about what they do with their constitutional rights? I ask every American to consider moving aside the fairness of what we are asking here.

Then the last resolution that passed was about executive privilege. Executive privilege has been characterized as a sinister tool. Let me tell you that President Reagan claimed it. President Bush claimed it a number of times.

Executive privilege is what it is. It is a recognition of a distinction of three branches of government, the Executive, the Judiciary, and the Legislative Branch. In fact, John Dean, the counsel to Nixon, someone who well knew what executive privilege can bring about, declared just a couple of weeks ago that the President should appeal determinations made on his use of executive privilege.

If you want to talk about national security, the tampering with executive privilege will truly tamper with our national security.

What is this about China? I want the facts about China. I absolutely do not want to see our people in jeopardy. But I would say to the men and women of this country, I believe you are a fair and honest people. If you come to the table making allegations of treason, which one of the Members of our colleagues on the other side of the aisle has already done, then how can you have a fair and unbiased process when the Members who are asking for such resolutions have already committed themselves that the President of the United States has committed treason? We do ourselves an international disservice.

If we are to presume that we want a fair and unbiased hearing on what has happened in China, do we need to then make representations, before we have even heard a single fact, that the President is guilty of treason?

These resolutions are not what they seem to be. I want those who have absconded from the law to return and to acknowledge their constitutional rights, if that is what they so choose, but to respond to the laws of this land. All of us do.

If the executive privilege is used improperly or illegally, then we must address that question. But it is an executive privilege that is a constitutional or a legal provision.

I think we are well to recognize that all is not right just because it happens to be the law of the land, for the Independent Counsel statute has already showed us the abuse that can occur, the millions of dollars that can be spent.

Mr. Speaker, I would simply say that if these resolutions had come through the legitimate processes of this House, if they had been debated in committee, if they had been fairly brought, I would say that we should go forward. Otherwise, I think these are partisan and unfair, and I ask for their defeat.

Mr. Speaker, this Nation will not forgive a Congress that violates the law of equity and the rule of fairness. I must rise today in opposition to H. Res. 433, a resolution which urges the President to compel his associates to cooperate with any and all pending Congressional investigations, for several key reasons. First of all, this issue is moot. The President has consistently asked all of his associates and/or friends involved with any investigation pending in this Congress or elsewhere, to cooperate to the fullest extent of the law. So with that in mind, what unique kind of petition do the authors of this resolution honestly expect the President to make, that he has not made already?

Secondly, the language of this resolution notes that approximately ninety (90) witnesses connected to the campaign finance investigation in the House Governmental Affairs Committee have asserted a Fifth Amendment privilege or have left the country. Do the authors of this resolution actually intend to imply that the President is somehow responsible for the actions of these ninety (90) individuals in choosing to leave the country and/or exert their Constitutionally-protected rights? As we all know, the Fifth Amendment privilege exists only for those individuals that may incriminate themselves with their testimony, not those that may incriminate an outside party like the President. So what possible relationship does the exercise of this individualized Constitutional liberty by the President's so-called ''associates'' have to do with the conduct of the President himself?

And finally, I must take exception with the implicit presumption of Presidential guilt carefully weaved into the language of this resolution. Why is it necessary to include a statement from a December hearing with the Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation that seems to imply that the President is a part of a grand conspiracy to conceal evidence from this body? If our intentions truly are to simply compel the President to continue to encourage his friends, colleagues and associates to cooperate with this investigation, so be it. But I do not see what the kind of inference made by the FBI Director (that the only other time he has ever seen such an unavailability of witnesses was in a organized crime case he handled over 16 years ago) has to do with the effort to achieve full cooperation by all parties involved in this campaign finance investigation?

In any investigatory proceeding, the key is always process. If we are after the truth, why does the language of this resolution imply Presidential complicity? I need not remind this body that the cornerstone of the American democratic process is the presumption of innocence, yet somehow, the United States Congress seems unwilling to extend that same presumption to the President. I sincerely hope that we can get to the bottom of the campaign finance investigation in the Governmental Affairs Committee, but I just do not see how this resolution is helping to serve that purpose. For all of these reasons, I urge all of my colleagues to ignore partisan differences and please vote down H. Res. 433.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LATOURETTE). The Chair will advise that the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) has 11 minutes remaining and the gentleman from New York (Mr. SOLOMON) has 8½ minutes remaining.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. SKAGGS) who heads up the Constitutional Caucus in the House.

Mr. SKAGGS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for the time. I understand there is some frustration on the other side about all of this. This resolution has been cleverly drafted to appear, at first reading, perhaps, even to be innocuous.

But let me just suggest to my colleagues that we ought not to rush to judgment in this matter. It has much larger constitutional consequences then may be first apparent.

The gist of the resolution is to exert the power and the authority of this House to have people waive their constitutional rights, and we need to examine the significance of that proposition very carefully.

First, let us acknowledge that confrontations and disputes in which the Bill of Rights are invoked often come up under difficult and unseemly circumstances. That is simply because the Bill of Rights was designed to protect minority and unsavory points of view, the less powerful, those out of step with the majority, to protect such people from the potentially overzealous power of government.

When a criminal asserts a Fifth Amendment privilege against self-incrimination, it is easy to condemn it and even easier to forget that that privilege exists to protect us all from an overzealous government. Is that not what this recent to-do over IRS reform is all about, for example?

When a miscreant like Khalid Muhammed gives a vitriolic antisemitic hate speech, it is easy to condemn it and finesse its protection under the First Amendment, as this House, unfortunately, did a few years ago. And easier still to forget the First Amendment's guarantee of free speech exists to protect all of us against government-imposed orthodoxy, even those, especially those, with views offensive to the majority.

When a drug dealer asserts a Fourth Amendment privilege against unreasonable search and seizure, it is easy to speak grandly about people who hide behind technicalities, and still easier to forget that those Fourth Amendment protections exist to protect all innocent Americans against abuse by government power.

So while, as here, these issues typically come up in a way that appears to work to the benefit of some questionable behavior, the intended and enduring beneficiaries of the Bill of Rights are all of us. We forget that at our great peril.

But this resolution, boiled down to its essence, is an effort to force Americans to waive their rights. In this case, it happens to be the Fifth Amendment that would be waived. The point resolution, and the danger in this is that its reach is much broader, and the precedent is chilling. If it is the Fifth Amendment today, why not the Fourth Amendment protection against unfounded searches tomorrow, and the Sixth Amendment's guarantee of a speedy and public trial the day after.

If it is the Fifth Amendment today, what about the First Amendment protection against peaceable assembly, or the Fifth Amendment's guarantee against double jeopardy?

We can all think of many cases in which we wish these protections did not apply. They are inconvenient. But that is not the issue.

The point is that in order to have these protections for the vast majority of innocent American citizens, we must also extend those protections to bad actors.

As a matter of simple logic, if we are willing to compromise those fundamental principles as they apply to those whom we hold in low regard, as in this resolution, then we compromise the same principles as they apply to everyone.

That is a danger and a cost that far exceeds whatever satisfaction we may derive from this resolution's attack on the rights of individuals subjected to the delicate and tender ministrations of the investigation by the gentleman from Indiana.

Some will attempt to characterize a ''no'' vote on this resolution as if it were endorsing stonewalling. That is just plain silly.

Unfortunately, in order to support the Bill of Rights and its protections, we have to endorse it, as here, even for cases of people whose behavior we do not and cannot defend, but whose rights are held in common with our own.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) has 6 minutes remaining, and the gentleman from New York (Mr. SOLOMON) has 8½ minutes remaining.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I am happy to yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. HINCHEY).

Mr. HINCHEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Michigan for yielding to me.

Mr. Speaker, the House is currently debating a series of three nonbinding resolutions that are heavy in their political content and very light in their substantive content. They also contain within them a very substantial degree of vindictiveness.

The resolutions in themselves probably would not be harmful except that they are in their intention and in their wording and, also, secondly, because they take away from the House valuable time which it would be better advised dealing with more substantive issues.

This resolution, first of all, suggests that the Congress urge the President of the United States to urge other people to waive their constitutional rights. It says, in effect, that the President of the United States should behave as some kind of a sultan or dictator and have people dragged before a congressional committee and submit to that congressional committee, ignoring completely their rights under the Constitution and ignoring completely the separation of powers which is the hallmark of this government.

This resolution in that regard is enormously dangerous. This comes from the party that asserts itself as being the party of small government, the party of a weaker, less intrusive government. Yet, in this very resolution, all of that is denied. All of that is put aside.

This resolution says that this particular party that advocates this resolution is the party of strong dictatorial government that would force people to behave in ways that are contrary to their own best interests and contrary to the basic protections of the Constitution.

It is very difficult to understand the reasoning behind this resolution, very difficult to understand the reasoning behind its author who stands for different kinds of things, or at least gives voice to different perspectives and different viewpoints than are expressed in this particular resolution.

This resolution says that people should be forced before a particular congressional committee, even though they do not want to appear before that congressional committee.

Why might people be reluctant to appear before this particular committee headed by this particular chairman, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON)? It is quite clear. In doing so, they are simply being sensible. They are using good common sense.

They have seen the way that this particular chairman behaves. They have seen that this particular chairman falsifies evidence and information that comes to his attention and is in his hands. They have seen that this particular Chairman will take a person's statements and falsify those statements. He will falsify those statements by extracting from them words, whole sentences, and whole paragraphs.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. BUYER. Mr. Speaker, I would like to make a point of order. When someone is on the floor and makes a statement against another Member by saying ''falsifying evidence,'' whether those words would really be in order on the House floor when, in fact, they are not even proven?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BUYER) requesting that the words of the gentleman from New York (Mr. HINCHEY) be taken down?

Mr. BUYER. I so request. Actually, I ask it by my parliamentary inquiry, when he makes such allegation that a Member is actually falsifying evidence, whether those such words would be insulting to the House?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In response to the gentleman's parliamentary inquiry, Members are reminded to not make personal observations about other Members of the House.

The gentleman from New York (Mr. HINCHEY) may proceed.

□ 1415

Mr. HINCHEY. Mr. Speaker, I would direct the attention of the House to the recorded dialogues and the way in which those dialogues were handled by this particular committee, and ask the Members of the House to make judgments for themselves with regard to the way that those conversations were transcribed, and observe that in those transcriptions, certain words and sentences were omitted and observe in those transcriptions that words in fact were inserted into those transcriptions, which gave entirely different meanings to the sentence and paragraphs allegedly therein transcribed. I think if people will look at that, they will be able to judge for themselves exactly what was taking place there.

Now, with regard to these three nonbinding resolutions and all the time

that these three nonbinding resolutions have taken from the House, it would be one thing if we had all the time in the world to dwell on these political issues. But the fact of the matter is that languishing in committees in this House are important measures that are critical to the health, safety and well-being of millions of Americans.

Languishing in committees in this House is are legislation dealing with the safety of patients in hospitals; languishing in committees in this House is legislation dealing with the regulation of HMOs. Languishing in committees in this House is legislation dealing with the reauthorization of the Federal Superfund. We need to bring that legislation to the floor and have it voted on.

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2½ minutes to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BUYER), a very great American from Monticello, Indiana, and a chairman of the Subcommittee on Personnel of the Committee on National Security.

Mr. BUYER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me time.

Mr. Speaker, one of my former Democrat colleagues came to the floor and said he recognizes that there a general level of frustration in the House, and I think he is accurate and correct. The level of frustration is there because I believe that the correct body to conduct such a vast investigation should be an independent counsel.

We have asked for an independent counsel for a very long time from the Justice Department, and that is who I think the proper body is. Even the Speaker of the House has an idea to have a select committee, and different people are trying to grope with it. My preference is to have the Attorney General appoint the Independent Counsel, and the momentum of the evidence is building.

I can recall how disturbed I was when I learned that the Attorney General in the fall of 1995 had been warned by our security sources that China was attempting to influence our elections, and then that she thought enough about that concern to pick up the phone and call the National Security Adviser, Sandy Berger, but he was not in and she never bothered to call back personally again.

That really bothered me. I asked her if she ever had a peculiar feeling about not having exercised her due diligence, and she said no, it did not bother her at all. See, that kind of bothers me. It bothers me because if I had a friend whom I knew was about to be shot or killed, I would want to warn them. When the Attorney General finds themselves in that position of having such information, they should have in fact warned the President that there are individuals who were going to seek to have monies come into this country to influence the process.

We find out now it was influenced from so many different angles, there are different allegations. Whether the debates are in this House with Loral and whether or not they have transferred, whether it is satellite, to dual use technologies in the ballistic missile category, it is very, very concerning.

Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to come to the House just to share this. I am very bothered that over 90 witnesses would come forward and take the Fifth Amendment. That is their Constitution right. The gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) is absolutely correct, and so is the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. FRANK). That is their constitutional right. But how do you get around that Fifth Amendment? You have the Independent Counsel, or Justice, you take them before the grand jury. Then they give them that immunity, and if they do not testify, then they end up going to jail. But there is a proper mechanism for us to get here. I understand the general level of frustration by the chairman of the Committee on Rules.

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 30 seconds to a very distinguished gentleman from Alabama (Mr. EVERETT).

(Mr. EVERETT asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. EVERETT. Mr. Speaker, as part of the discussion on this administration's lack of cooperation with the Congressional investigations, as well as the continuous assertion of executive privilege, I thought my colleagues would be interested and surprised to learn of another stonewalling situation and another assertion of executive privilege by President Clinton's White House. It involves the waiver granted by this administration for the burial of Ambassador Larry Lawrence at Arlington National Cemetery.

I would ask, why on the Earth would the President of the United States not want to reveal to the Congress what happened in the White House in decisions involving matters not even remotely connected to national security? It is stonewalling, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, as part of this discussion on this Administration's lack of cooperation with Congressional investigations, as well as on assertions of executive privilege, I thought my colleagues would be interested and perhaps quite surprised to learn of another stonewalling situation and another assertion of executive privilege by President Clinton's White House counsel. It involves the waiver granted by President Clinton to the former surgeon general, Dr. C. Everett Koop, for burial at Arlington National Cemetery, and the waiver granted by the Secretary of Army for the burial of Ambassador Larry Lawrence at Arlington.

As Chairman of the Veterans' Affairs Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, I asked the White House for information and documents regarding the White House role in the waivers for Dr. Koop and Ambassador Lawrence. My colleagues will certainly recall the Subcommittee's discoveries that Dr. Koop is the only living person with a waiver, a violation of Arlington's regulations and that Ambassador Lawrence had falsely claimed heroic wartime service in the U.S. Merchant Marine.

The White House has declined to provide responsive answers to the Subcommittee's questions about Dr. Koop's waiver, which was subsequently withdrawn after its existence became public knowledge. That's the long and the short of it.

And, Mr. Speaker, I was totally surprised and amazed, when the President's counsel, Mr. Charles F.C. Ruff, not only did not provide responsive answers to the Subcommittee's questions about Ambassador Lawrence, he asserted executive privilege with respect to certain documents that the privilege log enclosed with his letter of January 23, 1998, described as a ''Memorandum to President from Deputy Counsel to the President and Deputy Assistant for Intergovernmental Affairs regarding Ambassador Lawrence's burial at Arlington Cemetery'' and ''Cover memorandum to President from Assistant to the President and Staff Secretary attaching a copy of document ANC 0000018 described above and a list of persons buried at Arlington Cemetery.''

Mr. Speaker, I ask, why on earth would the President of the United States not want to reveal to Congress what happened at the White House in decisions involving matters not even remotely related to national security. I don't have the answer to my question, and I don't know if the White House is hiding anything, but I am going to keep on trying to find out.

I do believe this is the first time the Veterans Affairs Committee has ever been confronted with an assertion of executive privilege as it attempts to fulfill its constitutional oversight responsibilities, and I want America's veterans to know what the White House is doing, because I think it is the wrong way to conduct the people's business, particularly when it comes to veterans. I hope veterans will let the President know how they feel about it. I can't imagine any good public policy reason to be hiding away information and documents under these circumstances, and I hope the White House will reconsider its position.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield one minute the to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. FRANK).

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman from Alabama helping draw it all together in a logical way.

Mr. Speaker, I would first say to the gentleman from Indiana, the Justice Department is doing the investigation. He said the way to get around their invocation of the Fifth Amendment is to get them before a grand jury. It is the fact that the Justice Department, or Attorney General Reno, is trying to bring them before the grand jury, that has led them to do this. That investigation is going on.

Finally, I do want to say apparently something I said was misinterpreted as in some way reflecting on the very able staff, and I regret that, because we are very well served here by our staff.

I did mean to call attention to what I thought was the uncharacteristically repetitive argument of my good friend from New York. In no way did I mean to reflect on the first-rate staff work he depends on. This was between Members, and I apologize, because apparently something I said may have had that inference.

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, I just have to call attention to the fact that no one has

criticized a particular sentence or particular paragraph in my bill.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, I have a parliamentary inquiry. I thought the time had expired.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Does the gentleman from New York (Mr. SOLOMON) yield for a parliamentary inquiry?

Mr. SOLOMON. No, we have 5 minutes to close.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. I thought the gentleman was yielding to me to close.

Mr. SOLOMON. To close for your time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from New York (Mr. SOLOMON) controls the time, and has 5½ minutes remaining.

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, may I please start over again.

Mr. Speaker, I just have to call attention that no one has criticized a particular sentence or paragraph in the bill. Let me just again refer to the very last section, paragraph in the bill. It says that the President of the United States should use all legal means.

Now, you have heard the lawyers on that side stand up and say oh, they are infringing on the Constitution. But all I am saying is to use all legal means at his disposal to compel people who left the country to return and cooperate with the investigation.

Who are those people, Mr. Speaker? If you look at this fellow with the mutton chops right here, I do not know if you can see it from here, but his name is Ted Sieong. The media has identified him as a PRC, People's Republic of China, communist agent. He gave hundreds of thousands of dollars to the Clinton-Gore campaign and the Democratic National Committee. He had dinner with the President. He appeared at the temple, the famous temple with AL GORE.

Ted Sieong, whose business is cigarettes, and you have heard that referred to here, bought and then changed a Chinese newspaper in Los Angeles to support the People's Republic of China communist viewpoint against Taiwan. Even worse, this Ted Sieong guy you are looking at right here, is in business with Thung Bun Ma, the other man identified in the picture, over here, people who have been at the White House.

Thung Bun Ma is the leading Cambodian heroin kingpin that is exporting heroin into this country, into the arms of our children. He sponsored the coup, and I want you to listen to this now, these are the people we are trying to get to come here and testify, he sponsored the coup in Phnom Penh in Cambodia that brought Hun Sen, you know who he is, they brought him to power, reinstating the deadly Khmer Rouge influence. Do you remember the Killing Fields? Have any of you seen that? That murdered over 2 million people.

These are the kind of thugs we are talking about, trying to get the President to cooperate with you and I to bring here. I wrote to Secretary Albright in January, 5 months ago, to learn more about these thugs. I requested again in February, asking the Secretary of State to accelerate the process, and my committee has yet to hear back one word.

Mr. Speaker, here are about 50 news accounts. This is not just me saying it. It is not just people on our side of the aisle. This is the news media from across the country and the world that speaks to the proxy have just mentioned. These are the people we want to come back here and to testify. I will include these articles for the RECORD.

Mr. Speaker, let me say just one more time, on a bipartisan basis, we are urging, we are pleading with the President of the United States to use his legal means, legal means, to get these people to come forward and tell the truth about the national security breaches and the economic espionage that is costing thousands of Johns in this country, but, more than that, is jeopardizing the future of this democracy. Let that is all we are asking for.

Mr. Speaker, I include the articles referred to earlier for the RECORD.

[From the Los Angeles Times, Oct. 30, 1996]

FUND-RAISER HUANG SURFACES, TESTIFIES

(By Robert L. Jackson)

WASHINGTON.—Democratic fund-raiser John Huang emerged from hiding Tuesday and insisted that his evasion of a subpoena in recent days did not mean he wanted ''to run away from the issue'' of his past activities as a Commerce Department official or a Democratic Party fund-raiser.

Huang, who is at the center of a controversy over illegal campaign contributions, testified for more than four hours behind closed doors in a freedom-of-information civil suit brought by a conservative legal organization seeking to show that Commerce Department trade missions overseas solicited money for the Democrats.

A videotape of his testimony released later showed he took the position that he never acted illegally or improperly. He denied that there were any fund-raising aspects to overseas trade missions in which he participated.

Even as Huang surfaced for questioning. Republicans stepped up their assault on the issue of Democratic fund-raising. Sen. John McCain of Arizona and four Republican House committee chairmen asked Atty. Gen. Janet Reno to apply for the appointment of an independent counsel to investigate not only Huang's activities, but also a variety of other alleged improprieties by Democrats in raising funds from foreign sources.

The Republicans accused Huang of ''the apparent deliberate flaunting of federal election law . . . with the apparent cooperation of President Clinton and Vice President [Al] Gore and the Democratic National Committee.''

McCain and the four House chairmen—Bill Thomas of Bakersfield, William F. Clinger Jr. of Pennsylvania, Benjamin A. Gilman of New York and Gerald B.H. Solomon of New York—told Reno that the Justice Department could not be counted on to carry out an inquiry that will be considered fair and free of outside influence.

For that reason, they called on Reno to ask a special federal court to name an independent counsel. Reno gave no immediate reply.

Huang, of Los Angeles, resigned from the Commerce Department in December to join the staff of the Democratic National Committee—where his fund-raising activities led to questions that forced him into hiding earlier this month. At the DNC. Huang solicited more than $800,000 from Asian interests that violated or may have skirted the prohibition on foreign contributions to American political campaigns.

He was not asked about his DNC Activities Tuesday because the Judicial Watch civil suit is limited to Huang's work at Commerce, and his lawyers raised objections to questions they felt went beyond that.

On the subject of his work at Commerce, Huang said he had ''played a very passive role'' in the trade missions at issue in the law-suit. ''The whole Commerce Department objective was to try to help American business overseas.''

* * * * *

Judicial Watch attorney Larry Klayman said he may have more questions today if a federal judge permits them.

Huang said he never traveled on any of the foreign trade missions, which were led by the late Commerce Secretary Ronald H. Brown. And described his only role as participating in ''preparation meetings'' at the department before some overseas trips.

While at Commerce. Huang said, he also never had sought to advance the interests of the world-wide Lippo Group, in which he had been an executive before joining the government. Lippo Group is an Indonesian conglomerate founded by the wealthy Riady family, who have been longtime Clinton supporters.

Huang did acknowledge that over the years he had met ''quite a few times'' at the White House with the president and First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton and members of the Riady family. He did not describe the purpose of those meetings or say what had been discussed.

While hiding from public view. Huang said, he felt encouraged when Asian American friends told him that Mrs. Clinton had said: ''John's a friend of mine. We all support him.''

Huang insisted that he had not been dodging federal marshals who last week tried to serve him with a subpoena in the Judicial Watch suit, but rather was avoiding ''harassment'' by news media representation seeking to question him about his fund-raising.

''I didn't think it was the proper time to show up,'' he said, adding that he spoke by phone from time to time with Democratic committee officials who did not press him as to his whereabouts.

Huang, who was a high-ranking official with Lippo Group banking enterprises for nine years, said he accepted the Commerce Department position in 1994 because ''as a member of the Asian American community, we have so few working for the government.''

He charged that press reports about his fund-raising ''have tainted the reputation of anyone in our Asian American community.''

In calling for the appointment of an independent counsel, the Republicans cited a number of questionable contributions, including:

$450,000 from Arief and Soroya Wiriadinata, an Indonesian couple who lived in Washington's Virginia suburbs before returning to Indonesia at the end of last year.

$325,000 from Yogesh Gandhi, a great-grandnephew of Mahatma Gandhi.

$250,000 from a South Korean company called Cheong Am America.

$140,000 from individuals at a fund-raiser in April at a Buddhist temple in Hacienda Heights.

In a related development, the Democratic committee continued to delay filing a preelection report that would disclose contributions or expenditures made during the first * * *.

However, the DNC did file with the Federal Election Commission what party representatives said was a comparable set of ''raw data.'' Ann McBride, president of Common Cause, the nonpartisan citizens lobby, termed illegal and ''outrageous'' the Democrats failure to file a formal preelection disclosure report.

[From the Washington Times, Oct. 30, 1996]

5 GOP LAWMAKERS ASK RENO FOR OUTSIDE PROBE OF FUNDING

(By Jerry Seper)

The chairmen of four House committees and a senator yesterday formally called on Attorney General Janet Reno to seek the appointment of an independent counsel to investigate suspected illegal campaign activities by the Clinton administration and the Democratic National Committee.

In a letter prompted by ongoing probes into the campaign activities of the Lippo Group, a $6 billion Indonesian real estate and investment conglomerate, the Republican lawmakers cited ''eight specific instances'' in which the administration and the DNC may have violated federal campaign laws.

They asked that a decision in the request be made by Miss Reno no later than Friday. Justice Department officials had no comment yesterday.

''The magnitude of the funds involved, the high rank of the officials involved and the potential knowing and willful violations committed make it impossible for any officials of this administration's Justice Department to carry out an investigation that will be considered fair and free of outside influence,'' they said.

* * * Bill Thomas of California, chairman of the House Oversight Committee; William F. Clinger of Pennsylvania, chairman of the House Government Reform and Oversight Committee; Benjamin A. Gilman of New York, chairman of the House International Relations Committee; Gerald B.H. Solomon of New York, chairman of the House Rules Committee; and Sen. John McCain of Arizona.

Mr. McCain, who has questioned whether ''foreign influence'' altered U.S. foreign policy on Indonesia, was the first to ask Miss Reno to appoint an independent counsel. He has said Congress needs to know whether President Clinton arranged a ''quid pro quo'' to soften human rights policy on Indonesia in exchange for the contributions.

The eight areas cited were:

The involvement of Mr. Clinton, Vice President Al Gore and the DNC in questionable campaign contributions from Cheong Am America, a South Korean electronics firm whose illegal $250,000 donation was returned, and Arief and Soraya Wiriadinata, Indonesian landscapers who gave $452,000 to the DNC while living in Arlington.

* * * * *

The acceptance of questionable contributions from Yogesh Gandhi, from individuals at the Hsi Lai Buddhist Temple in Los Angeles, from individuals at the Hay-Adams Hotel in Washington and from the Wiriadinatas.

The fund-raising activities of DNC executive and former Commerce Department official John Huang.

The possible improper influence of official government decisions as a result of campaign contributions to the DNC by associates and allies of Mochtar Riady, who controlled Lippo.

The DNC's use of tax-exempt facilities at the Hsi Lai Temple for fund-raising purposes.

The possible attempt by Mr. Huang, with either the knowledge or approval of the DNC, to obstruct an investigation of his activities by evading a subpoena.

The DNC's September FEC report listing the DNC's address as the home address of at least 31 contributors.

At the center of GOP concerns are the millions of dollars in contributions to the DNC solicited by Mr. Huang, the group's vice chairman for finance.

[From the Washington Times, Nov. 1996]

FOREIGN-MONEY SCANDAL GROWS AS $15 MILLION OFFER IS REVEALED

(By Jerry Seper)

A local businessman told two of Taiwan's leading newspapers this week he was present when the chief financial manager of the ruling Nationalist Party offered to donate $15 million to President Clinton's re-election campaign.

The businessman said the offer was made to Mark E. Middleton, an Arkansas lawyer and former top aide to White House senior adviser Thomas F. ''Mack'' McLarty. Federal election laws forbid such a contribution from foreign residents, and there is no record the donation was ever made.

News of the offer capped a day in which:

The White House said there are two John Huangs—one a fund-raiser embroiled in a scandal over contributions to the Democratic National Committee, the other, a former IRS employee working on Vice President Al Gore's ''reinventing government'' initiative. A John Huang visited the White House 78 times in the last 15 months. The White House says the visits weren't all by the DNC fund-raiser—but it doesn't know how many were.

The DNC filed its overdue financial report, which revealed it returned a $10,000 contribution on Oct. 16 to Kyung Hoon Lee, chairman of Cheong Am America Inc., the South Korean electronics company that illegally donated $250,000 to the Democrats earlier this year.

In the Taiwanese connection, Mr. Middleton, who left the White House in February 1995 to work in Washington as an international business consultant, arranged a controversial meeting in September 1995 between Mr. Clinton and the Nationalist Party financial officer, Liu Tai-ying, during a critical moment in U.S.-Taiwan relations, said businessman Chen Chao-ping.

The Los Angeles Times said Mr. Middleton escorted Mr. Liu to the Clinton meeting after telling the Taiwanese party chief he had ''a direct channel'' to the White House.

At the time, relations with China had plummeted to the lowest point in years after Mr. Clinton allowed Taiwan's president, Lee Teng-hui, to visit Cornell University in June 1995, breaking a pattern of barring Taiwan's leaders from U.S. visits. China responded with missile tests at sea near Taiwan, causing Taiwan's stock market to plunge and international airlines to reroute flights.

Mr. Middleton denied, in a statement, ever soliciting funds for the DNC or Mr. Clinton during several business trips to Taiwan, or arranging for ''any contributions to the DNC or any candidate from any foreign source.'' He said, ''Any statements to the contrary are completely false.''

Congressional investigators are looking into Mr. Middleton's Taiwanese contacts, along with those of James C. Wood, another Arkansas lawyer and friend of Democratic fund-raiser John Huang, to determine if they used their White House ties to solicit contributions from Taiwanese businessmen and government officials.

Both Mr. Middleton and Mr. Wood are friends and confidants of Mr. McLarty's.

Meanwhile, the Justice Department is reviewing accusations of illegal campaign activities by the White House and the Democratic National Committee to determined if calls by Republican lawmakers for the appointment of an independent counsel is warranted.

The review, required under the Independent Counsel Statute, will include a 30-day preliminary inquiry to determine if suspicions that campaign funds were illegally sought and delivered to the DNC and the Clinton administration are credible and if a formal, 90-day criminal probe is warranted.

That criminal probe would determine whether Attorney General Janet Reno should ask a federal appeals court panel to appoint an independent counsel.

Earlier this week, the chairmen of four House committees and a senator called on Miss Reno to seek the appointment of an outside counsel to investigate suspected illegal campaign activities. Targeting the Lippo Group, a $6 billion Indonesian real estate and investment conglomerate, the lawmakers cites ''eight specific instances'' in which the White House and the DNC may have violated federal campaign laws.

They said the ''magnitude of the funds involved, the high rank of the officials involved and the potential knowing and willful violations committed'' made it impossible for the Clinton Justice Department to carry out an investigation ''that will be considered fair and free of outside influence.''

The letter was signed by Reps. Bill Thomas of California, chairman of the House Oversight Committee; William F. Clinger of Pennsylvania, chairman of the House Government Reform and Oversight Committee; Benjamin A. Gilman of New York, chairman of the House International Relations Committee; Gerald B.H. Solomon of New York, chairman of the House Rules Committee; and Sen. John McCain of Arizona.

Mr. McCain has questioned whether ''foreign influence'' altered U.S. foreign policy on Indonesia and has said Congress needs to know if Mr. Clinton arranged a ''quid pro quo'' to soften human rights policy on Indonesia in exchange for the contributions.

During a press briefing on Thursday, Miss Reno acknowledged she had received the request, saying, ''We are looking at it in the context of the Independent Counsel Statute.'' She said the act ''prescribes certain deadlines, and we will operate under that and do everything we can based on the evidence and the law.''

Miss Reno said the matter had been referred to the department's public integrity section, which is staffed by career lawyers who investigate and prosecute corruption cases involving public officials and the electoral system.

Mr. Wood, who has been unavailable for comment, was named in 1995 to head the American Institute in Taiwan (AIT), a private foundation on contract to the State Department to maintain unofficial ties with Taiwan. As head of the AIT, he effectively served as U.S. ambassador to Taiwan.

Published reports said senior officials in Taiwan complained that Mr. Wood pressured businessmen for donations, suggesting Mr. Clinton should be rewarded for his pro-Taiwan policies. On a visit to Taiwan this year, Mr. Wood was accompanied by Mr. Huang in what the DNC said was a fund-raising trip.

Mr. Wood practices international-trade law in Washington and has clients with economic interests in China and Taiwan.

Mr. Middleton helped raise $4 million in the 1992 Clinton presidential campaign.

[From the Washington Times, Nov. 27, 1996]

COMMERCE DEPT. QUERIED ON LIPPO, VIETNAM POLICY

(By Jerry Seper)

The chairman of a House committee probing foreign-linked campaign gifts to the

Democratic Party asked Commerce Secretary Mickey Kantor yesterday to explain the role three Lippo executives played in President Clinton's 1994 decision to end a 30-year trade embargo with Vietnam.

Rep. Gerald B.H. Solomon, the chairman of the House International Relations Committee, demanded ''all information'' concerning contacts, agreements or ''other dealings'' involving the Lippo Group; Mochtar Riady, the company's founder; his son. James, a Lippo executive; and John Huang, a former Lippo and Commerce Department official, in ''any influence of U.S. policy and the normalization of relations with the Socialist Republic of Vietnam.''

In a letter, the New York Republican said he wants clarification on Vietnam policy meetings called and attended by Mr. Huang while he was deputy assistant secretary of international economic policy at Commerce and on efforts by Lippo to end the Vietnam embargo.

In a handwritten note on the bottom of the two-page letter. Mr. Solomon said: ''This is important, I ask you.''

Mr. Huang is at the center of a controversy over foreign-linked campaign donations to Mr. Clinton and the Democratic National Committee.

After the embargo was lifted, talks began within the administration on formulating trade policies toward Vietnam. Mr. Huang moved from Lippo to the Commerce Department during this process and began a vigorous campaign to open Vietnam to U.S. trade.

Mr. Solomon wants to know whether Lippo sought to influence U.S. policy toward Vietnam while the company was making trade overtures to that country. He asked Mr. Kantor for similar documents in October. Mr. Kantor responded with some but did not include Vietnam-related files.

Commerce spokeswoman Maria Cardona said yesterday Mr. Kantor had not seen the letter and therefore had no comment.

The panel's interest in Lippo's role in the end of the embargo surfaced in October When it got Mr. Huang's appointment calendars and found that he began an aggressive campaign for a new trade policy toward Vietnam a day after his July 1994 appointment. He pushed that policy for the next 17 months while Lippo, his former employer, sought to expand its investment empire into Vietnam.

Mr. Huang's Commerce Department calendars show that immediately after he left Lippo with a $780,000 bonus, he began a series of meetings with White House officials, key associates, international bankers and corporate executives to discuss an expansion of trade with Vietnam.

Republicans have suggested his activities on Vietnam represented a conflict of interest, and they have called for congressional hearings and the appointment of an independent counsel to investigate the matter.

The Justice Department is reviewing a request by Mr. Solomon and the chairmen of three other House committees for the appointment of an independent counsel. Assistant Attorney General Andrew Fois has said the case is being examined by the department's public integrity section.

Mr. Huang's first involvement in Vietnam policy as a deputy assistant secretary came on his first day on the job, July 19, 1994, when he scheduled a 9 a.m. meeting on ''U.S.-Vietnam policy.''

Mr. Clinton lifted the Vietnam embargo on Feb. 4, 1994, reneging on a 1992 campaign pledge to first get a ''full accounting'' of Americans missing from the Vietnam War.

Mr. Solomon, in his letter, asked Mr. Kantor to explain meetings Mr. Huang had in July and October 1994 and in January, February and August 1995 that are listed as Vietnam-related.

Mr. Solomon also asked for information on an April 1993 meeting involving Commerce Secretary Ronald H. Brown and 40 Asian community leaders in Los Angeles to discuss most-favored-nation trade status for China and the normalization of relations with Vietnam.

Mr. Huang, then an official at Lippo Bank in Los Angeles, attended that session, congressional investigators said.

At least 11 House panels, including Mr. Solomon's, are probing foreign contributions to the DNC, looking at Mr. Huang's ties to Vietnam policy, and examining his appointment calendars to determine with whom he met, what was said and what agreements were reached, particularly those that could directly benefit Lippo.

While Mr. Huang was at the Commerce Department, the Lippo Group, based in Indonesia, sought to expand its $6.9 billion investment empire into Vietnam.

Mochtar Riady led a trade mission of Asian bankers to Vietnam in September 1993. Lippo opened trade offices in Ho Chi Minh City and Hanoi after Mr. Riady's visit.

James Riady, Lippo's deputy chairman, has said Mr. Huang was ''my man in the American government.''

[From the New York Times, Dec. 3, 1996]

LETTERS SHOW HOW INDONESIAN DONOR FAMILY LOBBIED CLINTON

(By Alison Mitchell)

WASHINGTON, Dec. 2.—Mochtar Riady, an Indonesian businessman with longstanding ties to President Clinton, recommends to the President that the United States normalize ties to Vietnam and pursue economic engagement with China.

Mark Grobmyer, an Arkansas businessman, lets Mr. Clinton know that Indonesia's President Suharto would like to address the Group of Seven industrial nations.

And an Alabama insurance executive asks Vice President Al Gore for a letter congratulating his company for a venture with a Riady company.

These letters—details of which were made available today by White House officials—are among more than a dozen pieces of correspondence to and from the White House concerning the Riady family. White House officials are preparing to turn over the documents to Congressional committees looking into questionable fund-raising practices by the Democratic National Committee.

White House officials said they were still culling records and could not yet say whether more letters would be found or when the materials would be delivered to Congress.

Representative Gerald B. Solomon, the chairman of the House Rules Committee, wrote a letter to the White House asking why he had not been told of the correspondence in October when he asked for information about the Riadys from Commerce Secretary Mickey Kantor.

''I would appreciate convincing assurances that it was not an attempt to cover up embarrassing information before the election,'' Mr. Solomon, Republican of New York, said.

As described by White House officials, the letters cast little light on the questions Republicans are most interested in: whether the Riady and their associates affected American policy toward Asia or benefited from helping raise millions in donations for the Democratic committee.

Replies to the Riadys and their associates from the President and Vice President, also described by the White House, often seemed little more than form letters. Some of the correspondence was social. Mr. Clinton sent a brief birthday note to Mr. Riady on May 7, 1993, for instance.

But the letters do help paint a fuller picture of the relationship between the Clinton White House and the Riady family, which became a focus of Republican attacks after the Democratic National Committee suspended John Huang, a fund-raiser who had been a top executive in the United States for the American interests of the Riady family.

In a four-page letter to Mr. Clinton on March 9, 1993, Mochtar Riady thanked the President for seeing him briefly during Inaugural festivities and then offered detailed advice about how the United States should approach trade relations with Asia.

He argued that the Administration should normalize relations with Vietnam, saying in passing that he had two managers there looking for investment opportunities. Mr. Riady said Suharto, the Indonesian ruler, wanted to attend the G–7 summit. And he urged that the Administration allow economic engagement with China as the best way to bring about reform. Mr. Clinton in 1992 had assailed President George Bush for seeking to use economic engagement to change China. But once in office, he followed essentially the same policy.

Mr. Clinton has acknowledged discussing policy with Mr. Riady's son James, once an Arkansas businessman, but said Mr. Riady never influenced policy decisions. Speaking to reporters today, Mr. Clinton the March 1993 letter was ''a letter like tens of thousands of other letters I get.'' He called it ''a straightforward policy letter, the kind of thing that I think people ought to feel free to write the President about.''

Michael D. McCurry, the White House press secretary, said that the President had been interested in input from business executives regarding economic policy in Asia. And while the Administration decided in 1994 to lift the United States embargo against Vietnam, Mr. McCurry said that ''to suggest that any particular individual's views, whether it be a financial contributor or not, would have a disproportionate thinking on the work of the Administration is a little bit less than credible.''

In another letter to Mr. Clinton in March 1993, Mr. Grobmyer a Little Rock lawyer who has been active with the Riadys and others in Asian business dealings, wrote to Mr. Clinton about a recent trip he took to Asia. He too said that Mr. Suharto wanted to address a meeting of the Group of Seven in Tokyo.

Mr. Grobmyer said he had already spoken to Thomas F. McLarty 3d, then the White House chief of staff, and Nancy Soderberg, an official at the National Security Council, about his trip. He said the Riadys had helped him in his travels and attached a draft thank you note that he said the President might consider sending to them, with suggestions on increasing American competitiveness in Asia. There is no sign among the correspondence that Mr. Clinton sent such a letter to the Riadys and the United States did not back Mr. Suharto's attendance at the meeting. Instead, Mr. Clinton met Mr. Suharto in Tokyo during the summit.

Vice President Gore also got a letter in 1994 about the Riadys. The White House has found the second page of a letter to the Vice President from W. Blount of the Protective Life Corporation saying that his company was forming a joint venture with one of the Riady companies, the Lippo Group. He asked for a letter of congratulations, noting that it would help with the Riadys if the letter affirmed that his company was known to the Administration. Several months later the Vice President wrote to James Riady expressing congratulations on the joint venture.

[From the Washington Times, Dec. 1996]

WHILE LIPPO EYED VIETNAM, HUANG PUSHED AT COMMERCE

(By Jerry Seper)

John Huang began aggressively arguing for a new U.S. trade policy toward Vietnam only one day after his July 1994 appointment as a top Commerce Department official—and pushed the idea for the next 17 months while his former employer, the Lippo Group, sought to expand its investment empire into Vietnam.

Republican legislators believe Mr. Huang's efforts to open Vietnamese markets after his former company paid him a $780,000 bonus is a conflict of interest, and they have called for congressional hearings and the appointment of an independent counsel to investigate the matter.

''Mr. Huang's prior involvement with Lippo and his activities at Commerce with regard to Vietnam is an absolute conflict of interest,'' says Rep. Gerald B. H. Solomon, New York Republican and chairman of the House Rules Committee. ''It's just outrageous that these kinds of things can happen, these kinds of things can happen, and we're going to insist that we get to the bottom of it.

''If this was Wall Street or the New York Stock Exchange, this kind of insider information would result in people going to jail.''

The Justice Department is now reviewing a request by Mr. Solomon and the chairmen of three other House committees, along with Sen. John McCain, Arizona Republican, for the appointment of an independent counsel. Assistant Attorney General Andrew Fois says the case is being examined by the department's Public Integrity Section.

Mr. Huang's attorney, John C. Keeney Jr., says he and his client ''were not in a position to respond'' to questions concerning the Vietnam accusations.

Now at the center of a growing controversy over foreign-linked campaign donations to President Clinton and the Democratic National Committee, Mr. Huang met several times with White House officials, key friends and associates of Mr. Clinton, international bankers, and corporate executives to discuss an expansion of trade ties with Vietnam, according to his personal appointment calendars.

In fact, his first involvement in the topic as a deputy assistant secretary for international trade came during his first full day on the job, July 19, 1994, when he scheduled a 9 a.m. meeting on ''U.S.-Vietnam policy.'' Several other meetings are listed in his personal calendars as Vietnam-related.

Mr. Clinton, discarding a 1992 campaign pledge for a ''full accounting'' of Americans missing in action during the Vietnam War, ended a 30-year trade embargo against Vietnam in February 1994. Several companies, including the Lippo Group and its U.S. affiliates, were scrambling to take advantage of new market potential.

Five months after the embargo was listed, while talks continued on formulating new trade policies with Vietnam, Mr. Huang moved to Commerce with his $780,000 Lippo bonus and immediately began a vigorous campaign to open up that country to U.S. trade.

Three House committees probing suspected illegal foreign contributions to Mr. Clinton and the DNC are looking into Mr. Huang's ties to Vietnam trade agreements and have begun to examine his appointment calendars to determine with whom he met, what was said and what agreements were reached—particularly those that might have benefited the Lippo Group directly.

Investigators also have focused on assertions by James Riady, deputy chairman at Lippo and son of Lippo's owner, Mochtar Riady, that Mr. Huang was ''my man in the American government.''

Mr. Solomon says preliminary inquiries have shown that ''extremely large contributions'' were made during the 1996 presidential campaign but it is not clear what concerns the Lippo Group had in giving the money or what the company received in return.

The request for an independent counsel is backed by Mr. Solomon; Mr. McCain; and Reps. Bill Thomas of California, chairman of the House Oversight Committee, William F. Clinger of Pennsylvania, chairman of the House Government Reform and Oversight Committee, and Benjamin A. Gilman of New York, chairman of the House International Relations Committee.

Eight specific areas of concern, including ''the fund-raising activities of DNC executive and former Commerce Department official John Huang,'' were cited.

According to Mr. Huang's calendars, copies of which have been obtained by the committees, he scheduled several Vietnam-related meetings with government and corporate officials between his 1994 appointment and his December 1995 resignation to join the DNC as a fund-raiser.

At the time, the Jakarta-based Lippo Group, where Mr. Huang was a banking executive and vice chairman, was seeking White House and Commerce Department help in expanding its $6.9 billion real estate and investment holdings into Vietnam, where the firm had huge financial interests.

Mochtar Riady had led a trade mission of Asian bankers to Vietnam in September 1993 to appraise business opportunities there—five months before Mr. Clinton's decision to lift the embargo. By early 1995, the firm had put together a joint marketing venture with First Union Corp. of North Carolina to finance trade efforts in Southeast Asia.

James Riady and Mr. Huang are longtime friends of Mr. Clinton and were officers at Worthen National Bank in Little Rock (which has become Boatmen's Bank of Little Rock, a subsidiary of Boatmen's Bank of St. Louis) when Mr. Clinton was the governor of Arkansas. In 1992, they approved a $3.5 million loan to the Clinton presidential campaign just before the New York primary.

Mr. Huang also raised $250,000 in contributions for the 1992 race and was responsible for raising $4 million to $5 million in donations for Democrats in 1996.

Most actively involved in the Vietnam venture was Lippo Ltd., a privately held finance and real estate subsidiary of the Lippo Group. the firm reported $3.6 billion in assets, with 143 subsidiaries in 11 countries. The Riady family controls 54 percent of Lippo Ltd. stock and oversees it subsidiaries, one of which was Worthen.

Also involved was Lippo Bank, publicly held and based in Jakarta. With assets of $3.3 billion, it has more than 260 branches in 90 cities in Indonesia, as well as offices in Vietnam and California.

[From the Washington Times, Dec. 1996]

SECRECY ON RIADY LETTERS RIPPED

SOLOMON WARNS OF MORE SCRUTINY

(By Jerry Seper and Paul Bedard)

A House committee chairman probing campaign contributions to the Democratic Party yesterday accused the White House of balking at Congress' request for letters detailing the controversy while it conducts a public-relations campaign through the press.

''I found it offensive that instead of paying me the courtesy of faxing the March 1993 letter from Mochtar Riady, the White House prefers to let the press view the Clinton-Riady correspondence under controlled conditions and with its own self-serving spin,'' said House Rules Committee Chairman Gerald B.H. Solomon, New York Republican.

''For four years, this has been the standard White House reaction to exposure of its own actions. The White House is now in no position to complain of increased congressional scrutiny,'' he said. ''In fact, they can count on it.''

The complaint came as the White House released new details on the letters between the president and Indonesian billionaire Mochtar Riady and his son, James, but continued to put off congressional demands for the documents.

Mr. Solomon, who Monday denounced the White House's refusal to release documents, said a March 9, 1993, letter from Mochtar Riady calling for an end to a 30-year trade embargo on communist Vietnam was critical in determining the scope of pending hearings and whether they should be conducted by a special or standing committee.

He said the hearings are necessary because of Attorney General Janet Reno's decision last week to reject his request for the appointment of an independent counsel to look into accusations of campaign-finance irregularities.

The White House letters suggest a strong friendship between the Riady family, which runs the Lippo Group, and the president and his aides, as well as a reliance by Mr. Clinton on the Riadys' advice on Asia policy. A key to this relationship is the March 1993 letter calling on Mr. Clinton to lift the embargo. The president did so in February 1994.

In that letter, Mr. Riady thanked Mr. Clinton for meeting with him on Inauguration Day in 1993 and suggested that normalizing business relations would snowball into political reforms in the communist country. He also urged Mr. Clinton to continue U.S. engagement in China and suggested he let Indonesian President Suharto attend the 1993 Group of Seven economic summit in Tokyo.

The White House said Mr. Clinton responded by referring Mr. Riady's letter to Robert E. Rubin, who at the time was Mr. Clinton's top economic-policy adviser and now is Treasury secretary.

The letters detailing the president's links to Mochtar Riady also indicate that former Democratic National Committee fund-raiser John Huang wielded influence over the president. For example, after the White House delayed nearly two months in writing a letter congratulating Mr. Riady for receiving an award from Golden Gate University in San Francisco, Mr. Huang weighed in.

In April this year, he wrote Nancy Hernreich, deputy assistant to the president and director of Oval Office operations, seeking a Clinton letter. Seven days later, Mr. Clinton wrote a congratulatory note to Mr. Riady.

The White House said it will release the texts of the letters once it completes its search for all records of the Clinton-Riady relationship.

Many of the letters also detail the relationship between the president and his aides and James Riady, the chairman of Lippo and a longtime Clinton friend.

A Clinton associate, Little Rock businessman Mark Grobmyer, wrote the president about his May 1993 trip to Indonesia and Asia and asked him to write James Riady a thank-you note for aiding in the trip. In May 1993, the president wrote to Mr. Riady, applauding his efforts to strengthen U.S. business ties to Asia. He also thanked Mr. Riady for giving him a specially made nameplate.

The White House also detailed a letter from William E. Blount of Protective Life Corp., whose firm joined in a venture with Lippo in Asia. In January 1994, Mr. Blount asked Vice President Al Gore for a letter

congratulating the firms on the venture. That April, Mr. Gore wrote Mr. Riady to express the administration's satisfaction with the venture.

[From the Washington Times, Dec. 1996]

CLINTON SAYS LIPPO LETTER DIDN'T SWAY HANOI POLICY

(By Jerry Seper and Paul Bedard)

President Clinton acknowledged yesterday that he received a letter from the head of the Indonesia-based Lippo Group seeking normalization of trade relations with Vietnam, but he denied the 1993 letter influenced his decision to end a 30-year trade embargo on that country.

The chairman of a House committee probing the role of three Lippo executives in the decision to end the embargo angrily denounced what he called a possible ''cover-up'' in Mr. Clinton's failure to release the letter from Mochtar Riady, Rep. Gerald B.H. Solomon, New York Republican, demanded that the president immediately make it public to avoid the perception of an ''obstruction of justice.''

Mr. Solomon, chairman of the House Rules Committee, had asked the White House and the Commerce Department in October for all communications, correspondence or ''any other dealings'' involving Lippo; Mr. Riady; his son, James, a Lippo executive; and John Huang, former Lippo and Commerce official, regarding efforts to ''influence'' U.S. trade policy with Vietnam.

The committee chairman also sought clarification on Vietnam policy meetings called by Mr. Huang while a deputy assistant secretary for international economic policy at Commerce and on Lippo efforts to end the embargo at a time when it was moving its $6.9 billion real estate and investment empire into Vietnam.

''Failure to do so could only be construed . . . as a continuation of the pattern of stonewalling begun before the recent elections,'' Mr. Solomon said. ''There could be no other possible explanation of your failure to produce the letter. Such an invitation would also invite suspicions of obstruction of justice, whether such suspicions are warranted or not.''

Mr. Clinton promised to make the letter available, but not before he first delivers it to congressional oversight committees—probably sometime next week. Its existence was first reported yesterday by the Wall Street Journal.

''It's a letter like tens of thousands of other letters I get, people suggesting every day . . . what our policy ought to be in various areas,'' Mr. Clinton told reporters at a ceremony to honor spaceshuttle astronaut Shannon Lucid. ''You will see it's a straightforward policy letter, the kind of thing that I think people ought to feel free to write the president about.''

Mr. Clinton also dismissed threats of hearings. ''They'll have to do their business. They can do whatever they think is right. I'm going to spend my time working on what I can do,'' he said.

His spokesman, Michael McCurry, tried to say there was nothing new in the Journal's story. He said that the letter's existence was ''largely known'' to other reporters and that Mr. Riady's representative had made reference to the letter's having been sent.

''I think we never formally disputed the notion that there was such a piece of correspondence from Mr. Mochtar Riady,'' Mr. McCurry said.

The letter was not released, he said, because the administration wanted first to answer congressional inquiries about the affair.

Mr. McCurry also rejected suggestions that Mr. Riady influenced policy toward Vietnam: ''To suggest that any particular individual's views, whether it be a financial contributor or not, would have a disproportionate thinking on the work of the administration is a little bit less than credible,'' he said.

The March 9, 1993, letter called on Mr. Clinton to normalize relations with Vietnam, noting that two Lippo executives were scouting investment opportunities there. The president responded on April 5, 1993, saying the letter had been sent to Robert E. Rubin, then chairman of the White House National Economic Council and now Treasury secretary.

Mr. Huang and the Riadys are at the center of a growing criticism over foreign-linked campaign donations to Mr. Clinton and the Democratic National Committee, with as many as 11 House committees looking into the matter.

James Riady and Mr. Huang were among 14 donors of $100,000 or more to the 1993 Clinton inaugural festivities—a contribution coming at a time when the administration was considering a change in U.S.-Vietnam relations.

The rules panel has targeted Lippo's role in the president's Feb. 4, 1994, decision to end the Vietnam embargo despite a 1992 campaign pledge to first get a ''full accounting'' of Americans missing from the Vietnam War.

After the embargo was lifted, talks began within the administration on formulating trade policies toward Vietnam. Mr. Huang then moved from Lippo to Commerce and began a campaign to trade with Vietnam, where his former employer had opened offices in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City.

The administration fully normalized relations with Vietnam in July 1995.

Mr. Solomon wants to know whether Lippo sought to influence U.S. policy toward Vietnam while the company was making trade overtures to that country, and he asked Commerce Secretary Mickey Kantor for similar documents in October. Mr. Kantor responded with some documents but did not include Vietnam-related files.

The panel's interest in Lippo's role in the embargo surfaced in October when investigators obtained Mr. Huang's Commerce appointment calendars and found he began an aggressive campaign for a new Vietnam trade policy a day after his July 18, 1994, appointment. He pushed that policy for the next 17 months while Lippo sought to expand into Vietnam.

Mr. Huang's calendars show that immediately after he left Lippo with a $780,000 bonus he began a series of meetings with White House officials, key associates, international bankers and corporate executives to discuss an expansion of trade with Vietnam.

Republicans have suggested his role in the matter was a conflict of interest and have called for hearings to investigate the matter.

[From the Washington Times, Dec. 14, 1996]

CLINTON TIES TO RUSSIAN VISITOR QUESTIONED

(By Jerry Seper)

The chairman of the House Rules Committee has asked the White House for records of all meetings and correspondence between President Clinton and Grigori Loutchansky, a White House visitor and head of a firm identified as being tied to Russian criminal activity.

Rep. Gerald B.H. Solomon, New York Republican, this week also sought records on Sam Domb, a New York real estate executive who brought Mr. Loutchansky as guest to a White House dinner in October 1993 and donated $160,000 to the Democratic National Committee over 12 months after the dinner.

I do not take pleasure in noting that the selective and carefully controlled release of information by the White House has obliged Congress to make repeated following inquiries about possible fund-raising irregularities and conflicts of interest,'' Mr. Solomon said in a letter to the president.

''Public accounts have placed you, Mr. President, and Vice President Gore with both Mr. Loutchansky and Mr. Domb at least once,'' Mr. Solomon said in his request for the records.

Mr. Loutchansky, head of an Austrian-based commodities trading firm known as Nordex, got a private two-minute meeting with Mr. Clinton and his picture taken with the president. He also was invited by the DNC to a fund-raising dinner with the president at the Hay-Adams Hotel in July 1995 but did not attend.

A Russian who now lives in Israel, Mr. Loutchansky was not available for comment yesterday. Mr. Domb also was unavailable but has said he took Mr. Loutchansky to the dinner as part of a business venture that ''didn't work out.''

''Any DNC invitation to Loutchansky in 1995 would show a severe lack of scrutiny and appalling bad judgment. It would be unwise in the extreme for there to be any ties between the U.S. government and Loutchansky or Loutchansky's company, Nordex,'' R. James Woolsey, who headed the CIA from 1993 to 1995 and is a partner at the Washington law firm of Shea and Gardner, has said.

''At a congressional hearing in April, the current director of central intelligence, John Deutch, identified Grigori Loutchansky's company, Nordex, as an 'organization associated with Russian criminal activity'. Next to Loutchansky, the Lippo syndicate looks like the Better Business Bureau.''

The Indonesian-based Lippo Group is at the center of a growing scandal over foreign-linked campaign donations to Mr. Clinton and the DNC. The real estate and investment firm was founded by Mochtar Riady, a longtime Clinton supporter and campaign contributor.

In a four-page report in July, Time magazine said Mr. Loutchansky's firm was linked with nuclear smuggling, drug trafficking and money laundering and that Nordex was established to ''earn hard currency for the KGB.''

Te magazine reported that, during the past three years, the National Security Agency ''found indications that Nordex was engaged in nuclear smuggling.'' It also said Mr. Loutchansky was the sole subject of a two-day Interpol meeting involving 11 nations in 1995.

More than a year before Mr. Loutchansky was invited to the 1995 White House dinner; Canada blocked him from entering that country because he failed a background check.

Questions this year about Mr. Loutchansky's visit to the White House—and that of convicted drug dealer Jorge ''Gordito'' Cabrera—prompted a review by the Justice Department into procedures used for screening guests.

In November 1995, Cabrera gave $20,000 to the DNC. He accepted invitations a month later to a White House Christmas party and a Miami fund-raiser.

[From the Stars and Stripes, Dec. 9–15, 1996]

'93 LIPPO LETTER RENEWS HILL SCRUTINY OF MOVE TO END VIET EMBARGO

(By Mark Allen Peterson)

President Clinton's 1994 decision to end the U.S. embargo with Vietnam has come under renewed scrutiny in the light of correspondence on the issue received by the White House from Indonesian businessman Mochtar Riady.

The Wall Street Journal last week revealed that the White House had received a letter

dated 9 March, 1993, filled with policy advice from Riady, who gave hundreds of thousands of dollars to the Democratic National Committee. Among other thing, the letter urged the president to normalize relations with Vietnam.

President Clinton 2 Dec. described the letter as being ''like tens of thousands of letters I get of people suggesting what our policy ought to be in various areas.''

SOLOMON DISTURBED

White House press secretary Mike McCurry denied Riady's suggestions played any part in the president's decision to lift the longstanding embargo.

But the Journal story created a furor on Capitol Hill, where several committees have expressed interest in probing the gifts by Riady's Lippo Group to the Democrats. One of those most disturbed was Rep. Gerald Solomon (R–NY), head of the Government Rules Committee, which is planning hearings on the issue.

In October, and again last month, Solomon requested from Secretary of Commerce Mickey Kantor ''all information'' involving contacts, agreements or ''other dealings'' with the Lippo Group, its founder Mochtar Riady, his son, Lippo executive James, and former Lippo executive and Commerce official James Huang and ''any influence of U.S. policy and the normalization of relations with the Socialist Republic of Vietnam.''

MORE INFORMATION

In particular, Solomon said, he wanted more information on Vietnam policy meetings called by Huang while he was deputy assistant secretary of international economic policy at Commerce and on efforts by Lippo to end the Vietnam embargo.

After reading the Journal story, Solomon fired off a letter to Clinton, asking why he had not been given a copy of the letter after his request for information, and requesting the White House to fax the letter to the Rules Committee.

The White House 4 Dec. faxed the letter to the House Committee on International Relations, which subsequently made it available to Solomon and other interested lawmakers and reporters.

Sources in Congress said the Rules Committee's investigation would be asking two key questions: First, was Clinton's decision to lift the U.S. trade embargo with Vietnam influenced by the Lippo Group's six-figure contributions and, second, did the administration leak advance information to Riady that the embargo was going to be lifted.

TRADE INITIATIVES

''The media has overplayed the idea that the president was influenced to lift the embargo and downplayed the second scenario,'' said a source close to the investigation. ''But we really think the second scenario is the more likely.''

The committee is particularly interested in whether advance information about the decision played a part in Vietnam ''trade initiatives'' hatched between Hong Kong-based Lippo, Ltd. and North Carolina's First Union Corp., sources said.

The lifting of the trade embargo was a difficult move for the president because of the emotional issue of POWs and MIAs still unaccounted for in Southeast Asia.

In 1992, Clinton said he did not think lifting the Vietnam embargo was a good idea.

REVERSAL

''I don't think we should normalize and then get an accounting [of American POWs and MIAs],'' he told The Washington Times. ''I think we ought to know where our people are. That's putting the cart before the horse.''

But after several visits to Vietnam by presidential advisors and lobbying by several visits to Vietnam by presidential advisors and lobbying by several congressmen, including former POW Sen. John McCain (R–AZ), Clinton reversed his position, saying, ''I am lifting the trade embargo against Vietnam because I am absolutely convinced that it offers us the best way to resolve the fate of those who remain missing and about whom we are not sure.''

SOLOMON STAFFERS WIDENING HUANG PROBE

WASHINGTON.—John Huang, a central figure in the investigation into Asian donations to Democrats, had more access to government secrets during his short tenure at the Commerce Department than previously disclosed, documents show.

The Commerce Department has identified 109 meetings in 1994 and 1994 attended by Huang and at which classified information ''might have been discussed,'' according to information released Tuesday.

Previously, the department disclosed 37 intelligence briefings Huang had attended while a deputy assistant secretary.

Investigators for House Rules Committee Chairman Gerald Solomon, R–Glens Falls, say they also have tracked other dates in which Huang received ''secret'' documents, then called the Los Angeles office of his former employer, the Indonesian-based Lippo Group.

Solomon has been investigating whether Huang, who later became a vice chairman of the Democratic National Committee, passed any secrets to Chinese government and business interests or to Lippo, a financial conglomerate with substantial interests in China.

In addition, the Justice Department is investigating whether the Chinese government plotted to influence U.S. elections last year by funneling illegal contributions to candidates and parties.

Huang, who had a top-secret security clearance while at the Commerce Department, has broadly denied wrongdoing. But he has refused to cooperate with congressional investigators, citing his Fifth Amendment right against self-incrimination. His lawyers did not immediately return calls to their offices Tuesday.

One week in May 1995 has stood out to investigators looking at Huang's activities at Commerce.

According to a summary prepared by Solomon's office, Huang received a document classified ''secret'' at 10 a.m. on May 4, 1995. Four hours later, Huang had a 10-minute call with Lippo's office in Los Angeles.

On May 9, 1995, Huang had a meeting scheduled with other senior Commerce officials on the ''status of Dragongate,'' a multi-billion-dollar Taiwanese power plant project. That afternoon, he made two short calls to Lippo. Taiwan was one area of interest for Huang.

The next day, Huang received additional secret documents and made two short calls to Lippo's office in Los Angeles.

[From the Washington Times, May 1997]

SOLOMON: IS COSCO ''STRATEGIC THREAT''?

(By Rowan Scarborough)

A senior House Republican yesterday asked Navy Secretary John H. Dalton to report whether the Chinese Ocean Shipping Co. (Cosco) represents a ''global tactical or strategic threat'' to the Navy.

The effort by Rep. Gerald B.H. Solomon, chairman of the House Rules Committee, to force the Navy to make an assessment is the latest development in a campaign to block Cosco from taking over the abandoned Long Beach Naval Station in California.

''In order to understand the magnitude of the growing threat of the PRC [People's Republic of China], I would like you to state the U.S. Navy's position on [Cosco],'' Mr. Solomon, New York Republican, wrote in a one-page letter to Mr. Dalton.

''Considering their potential world-wide information gathering capabilities, a history as the delivery system of weapons of mass destruction to terrorist countries and the size of this fleet under direct control of the communist regime—does Cosco pose a potential global tactical or strategic threat against the U.S. Navy?''

The Solomon letter represents a more specific question for the Navy. Before, congressional inquiries have centered on whether Cosco at Long Beach would be a regional threat. The congressman wants to know if Cosco, and its 600-ship fleet, poses a danger to the Navy itself.

Mr. Solomon was one of the first in Congress to speak out against the Chinese-Long Beach connection.

''This is almost a caricature of Lenin's prediction that the West will hand the rope to its Communist executioners,'' he said March 10. ''The Clinton administration seems to be going out of its way to help the most serious threat to American security, the so-called People's Republic of China.''

Cosco plans to lease 144 acres to operate a large container terminal, giving Beijing an important beachhead in making Cosco one of the world's largest carriers.

Lawmakers in recent weeks have emerged from closed-door intelligence briefings with conflicting interpretations.

Conservatives who oppose the deal say the intelligence shows Cosco is a tool of the Chinese People's Liberation Army, trafficking in weapons of mass destruction to known terrorist states such as Iran.

But local Long Beach legislators say the briefings show Cosco is not a threat.

President Clinton personally backed the city of Long Beach's overture to Cosco, after a commission had targeted the station for closure as part of armed forces downsizing.

The negotiations occurred at a time China is suspected of funneling millions of dollars in illegal campaign contributions into the United States in a government-sponsored operation to influence the 1996 election.

Some Republicans wonder if there is a connection between Cosco's expansion plans and the Democratic fund-raising scandal.

Reps. Duncan Hunter and Randy ''Duke'' Cunningham, both California Republicans, want to stop the Cosco-Long Beach marriage through legislation attached to the 1998 defense authorization bill. The House National Security Committee is schedule to write the bill next month.

However, the Cosco transaction may die before the Navy officially transfers the property to the city's Harbor Commission.

A coalition of conservationists and history buffs have filed suit to stop the project, which calls for leveling every naval station building.

A judge in Los Angeles has ordered the city to terminate the Cosco lease and reevaluate the plan's environmental impact.

The New York Times reported yesterday that a Clinton appointee, Dorothy Robyn, in November urged the preservationists to abandon their effort to save any buildings.

Miss Robyn, who serves on the National Economic Council, told the paper she made the calls as a favor to Long Beach's mayor. She said she had no contacts with Cosco officials.

Meanwhile, Sen. John McCain, Arizona Republican, has asked the Federal Maritime Commission to report whether Cosco is guilty of predatory pricing.

[From the Washington Times, May 1997]

SOLOMON SEEKS DETAILS AS NUMBER OF HUANG BRIEFINGS RISES

(By Jerry Seper)

The chairman of a House committee asked Commerce Secretary William M. Daley yesterday to explain briefings in which former Democratic fund-raiser John Huang may have receive classified information at 146 separate meetings instead of the 37 originally claimed or the 109 later acknowledged.

In a letter, Rep. Gerald B.H. Solomon, New York Republican and chairman of the House Rules Committee, also asked whether President Clinton or Vice President Al Gore attended some of those briefings, which the Commerce Department now says may have taken place at the White House.

Mr. Solomon's concerns were raised by a May 9 letter from Mr. Daley, who sought to explain published reports last month that Mr. Huang, now at the center of the growing campaign-finance scandal, received 109 classified intelligence briefings during his 18 months at Commerce, not the 37 previously acknowledged.

Mr. Daley said a recheck of the records showed that Mr. Huang received 37 ''intelligence briefings'' and may have attended 109 other meetings, including, some at the White House, ''at which classified material might have been discussed.'' He said 70 of those meetings were in 1994, and 39 were in 1995.

''These 109 meetings were not intelligence briefings,'' Mr. Daley wrote, although he acknowledged that classified information might have been made available.

Mr. Solomon, who first questioned Mr. Huang's possible ties to national-security violations and economic espionage and urged the FBI to investigate, told Mr. Daley his letter ''begged more questions than it answered.''

''With great concern and no little irritation, I now discover that John Huang received secret and top-secret information not merely 37 times, as the Commerce Department originally wanted Congress and the American people to believe, but possibly as many as 146 times,'' he said, adding that the questions surrounding Mr. Huang ''have long since gone beyond campaign financing to include possible espionage.''

''Until such time as Mr. Huang, who pled the Fifth Amendment, agrees to return to Washington and cooperate with Congress, the information I'm requesting would be helpful,'' he said. ''What's more, some of those meetings taking place at the White House may have included the president and vice president.''

He told Mr. Daley he wants a list of the 109 meetings at which classified material may have been discussed.

Last month, Mr. Solomon asked Mr. Clinton for a list of all meetings he had with Mr. Huang, and explanation for Mr. Huang's 1994 appointment as deputy assistant commerce secretary for international economic policy and a list of ''all meetings'' Mr. Huang had with other White House officials.

Sources close to the Rules Committee said Mr. Solomon is concerned about briefings in which Mr. Huang received classified information including documents stamped ''secret,'' after which telephone logs show he made calls to his previous employer, the Lippo Group.

Phone logs show 70 calls by Mr. Huang to Lippo Bank in Los Angeles and other calls to prominent Arkansas businessmen and lawyers with financial ties to Asia. The bank is controlled by the Lippo Group, a $6.9 billion conglomerate based in Indonesia. Mr. Huang was vice chairman of the bank until his Commerce appointment.

House investigators want to know how Mr. Huang received a top-secret security clearance five months before he reported to Commerce. Such a clearance was explained in a January 1994 memo as necessary ''due to the critical need for his expertise in the new administration'' of Commerce Secretary Ronald H. Brown.

He also was issued a ''consultant top-secret'' security clearance after he resigned at Commerce to become a fund-raiser at the Democratic National Committee. That clearance, issued in December 1995, remained in effect until December 1996, although it is not clear how he used it as a Democratic fund-raiser.

Mr. Huang, who became a U.S. citizen in 1976, has not been available for comment but previously denied any wrongdoing. He is believed to have returned to California.

SOLOMON QUESTIONS SECURITY AT FORMER BASE

WASHINGTON.—A high-ranking Republican lawmaker wants the Secretary of the Navy to determine if a Chinese shipping company seeking to lease a former naval base in Southern California poses a national security threat.

Rep. Gerald Solomon, R-Queensbury, wrote to Secretary of the Navy John H. Dalton Friday, asking if the Chinese Ocean Shipping Co., known as COSCO, poses ''a potential global tactical or strategic threat against the U.S. Navy.''

Dan Amon, a spokesman for Solomon, said the injury by the House Rules Committee chairman is simply an attempt to resolve controversy over COSCO's proposed lease of a $200 million shipping terminal to be build at the former Long Beach Naval Station.

The Clinton administration supported the city of Long Beach when it contacted the Chinese government-owned COSCO about leasing the naval base, which was a victim of military downsizing. But two California Republicans, Reps. Duncan Hunter and Randy Cunningham, want to stop the deal with an amendment to next year's defense spending bill. They say the lease will allow China to spy and smuggle weapons.

The controversy comes as the Justice Department investigates whether the Chinese government tried to influence 1996 elections with illegal campaign contributions

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[From MSNBC, June 10, 1997]

HUANG MAY HAVE PASSED TRADE SECRETS

(By Robert Windrem)

WASHINGTON.—U.S. intelligence agencies told the Senate Intelligence Committee last month that they have found there is evidence that former Assistant Commerce Secretary John Huang ''collected'' and ''passed'' U.S. trade secrets on to his former bosses at the multibillion-dollar Lippo Group of Indonesia, NBC News has learned.

According to a congressional staffer familiar with intelligence matters, the evidence was picked up at a U.S. electronic eavesdropping site targeted on trans-Pacific communications. The United States maintains an extensive network of eavesdropping sites around the Pacific Rim, from Yakima, Wash., to Pine Gap, Australia.

Huang raised millions of dollars for the Democratic National Committee from the Asian-American community after he left the Commerce Department in December 1995 to work as a Democratic fund-raiser. He is the focus of both congressional and Justice Department investigations.

By all accounts, Huang was an instant success, bringing in more cash from Asian-Americans than had been given to any previous president. But on Oct. 18, 1996, Huang was suspended from his job at the DNC after news surfaced that he had solicited a $250,000 South Korean donation in violation of U.S. laws against foreign political contributions. More questions were raised by Huang's dozens of visits to the White House in 1996. It could create a bad impression to have a fund-raiser spending so much time in the White House.

The congressional source said the focus of U.S. intelligence efforts now is what Huang did in the last few months of 1995 just before leaving for the DNC. Congressional critics, in particular Rep. Gerry Solomon, R–N.Y., have noted various meetings and phone calls in which Huang dealt with Lippo officials just before or just after a Commerce Department briefing.

One typical incident: According to phone records and logs, Huang called Lippo's Los Angeles office on Sept. 19, 1995, at 2:45 p.m., just 15 minutes before a classified briefing. After the briefing, at 5:34 p.m., he called Lippo back.

[From the San Diego Union-Tribune, May 11, 1997]

NAVY ASKED TO RULE ON THREAT OF CHINESE USING OLD BASE

(By Alice Ann Love)

WASHINGTON.—A high-ranking Republican lawmaker wants the secretary of the Navy to determine whether a Chinese shipping company seeking to lease a former naval base in Southern California poses a national security threat.

Rep. Gerald Solomon, R-N.Y., wrote to Secretary of the Navy John Dalton on Friday, asking whether the Chinese Ocean Shipping Co., known as COSCO, poses ''a potential global tactical or strategic threat against the U.S. Navy.''

Dan Amon, a spokesman for Solomon, said the inquiry by the House Rules Committee chairman is an attempt to resolve controversy over COSCO's proposed lease of a $200 million shipping terminal to be built at the former Long Beach Naval Station.

President Clinton's administration supported the city of Long Beach when the city contacted the Chinese government-owned COSCO about leasing the base, which was a victim of military downsizing.

But two California Republicans, Reps. Duncan Hunter of El Cajon and Randy Cunningham of Escondido, want to stop the deal with an amendment to next fiscal year's defense spending bill. They say the lease would allow China to spy and smuggle weapons.

The controversy comes as the Justice Department investigates whether the Chinese government tried to influence 1996 U.S. elections with illegal campaign contributions.

The Long Beach Harbor Commission says the new lease to COSCO, which has had a presence in the port for 16 years, would create 1,600 construction jobs over 1½ years, 600 permanent shipping jobs once completed and several hundred jobs elsewhere in the city.

The port would receive about $20 million a year in rent, while the city stands to reap about $1 million in taxes annually.

Local resistance has also stalled the lease. A group of Long Beach environmentalists and preservationists opposes the deal, saying historic buildings would be torn down.

Harbor commissioners face a hearing Tuesday before a Los Angeles Superior Court judge to prove that the project would comply with state environmental laws.

[From the Los Angeles Times, June 13, 1997]

HUANG ACCUSED OF ESPIONAGE—SOLOMON SAYS FUND RAISER SHARED CLASSIFIED INFORMATION TO LIPPO GROUP

WASHINGTON—John Huang, the former Clinton administration appointee and star

Democratic fundraiser, conveyed ''classified information'' to the Indonesia-based Lippo Group, Rep. Gerald Solomon alleged Thursday.

Solomon, R-Queensbury, chairman of the House Rules Committee, said he is aware of electronically gathered evidence—presumably telephone calls monitored by a U.S. intelligence agency—verifying that Huang relayed the information.

''I have received reports from government sources that say there are electronic intercepts which provide evidence confirming what I suspected all along, that John Huang committed economic espionage and breached our national security by passing classified information to his former employer, the Lippo Group,'' Solomon said.

The congressman and his aides declined to elaborate. They would not say, for instance, whether Solomon based his allegation on information provided directly by intelligence or law enforcement officials. The congressman does not serve on either the House Intelligence Committee or a separate panel that has jurisdiction to investigate Huang's activities.

FBI Director Louis J. Freeh, in recent weeks, has briefed members of the Senate and House Intelligence committees about the bureau's ongoing investigation of Huang and others. An FBI spokesman declined Thursday to comment on any aspect of the inquiry.

If Solomon's allegation proves credible, it would magnify the significance of the fund-raising scandal that already besets both President Clinton and Vice President Al Gore.

Documents disclosed earlier by the Commerce Department show that Huang made scores of calls on government phones to Lippo offices in Los Angeles. Some of those calls were made close to times when Huang was scheduled to attend classified briefings convened by the Commerce Department's Office of Intelligence Liaison.

The possibility that Huang passed classified data to Lippo is especially sensitive because the conglomerate is closely aligned with China.

[From the Wall Street Journal, July 1997]

CHINA, AFTER REQUEST FROM U.S., SEARCHES FOR CAMPAIGN DONOR

(By a Wall Street Journal Staff Reporter)

SHANGHAI, China—Responding to a request from Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, Chinese authorities are looking for Charlie Trie, an Arkansas-based restaurateur involved in the U.S. campaign fund-raising controversy.

Agents of China's State Security Ministry have made inquiries with people who may have been in touch with Mr. Trie since he came to this country, possibly to avoid questioning in the U.S. Some of those who were contacted say the authorities didn't appear to know his location.

Mr. Trie, a Taiwan-born entrepreneur who became close to Bill Clinton when they both lived in Little Rock, Ark., owns a restaurant in Beijing and has been involved in property projects in Shanghai and other Chinese cities. He contributed heavily to Mr. Clinton's reelection campaign, and tried to give $600,000 to the president's legal defense fund. (That money was rejected because of questions about the money's origins.)

In June, Mr. Trie came to Shanghai for an off-camera interview with NBC News, but acquaintances say he isn't living here.

Yesterday, Rep. Gerald Solomon (R., N.Y.) disclosed that Mrs. Albright last week asked the Chinese government to help find Mr. Trie. The State Department instructed the U.S. Embassy in Beijing to underscore that request, Barbara Larkin, assistant secretary of state for legislative affairs, wrote in a letter to Mr. Solomon.

[From the New York Times, July 23, 1997]

STATE DEPARTMENT ASKS CHINA TO HELP FIND FORMER FUND-RAISER

(By Leslie Wayne)

WASHINGTON, July 23—Under pressure from House campaign-finance investigators, the State Department has asked the Chinese Government to help locate Yah Lin Trie, a central figure in the Democratic fund-raising controversy, according to a State Department letter released today.

The letter was made public by Representative Gerald B. H. Solomon, the New York republican who heads the house Rules Committee and who is an outspoken critic of Democratic campaign fund-raising practices.

''I am pleased to inform you that, on July 14, the department communicated to the Chinese Government your interest in determining Mr. Trie's location,'' said the letter, which Mr. Solomon received earlier this week.

It continued: ''We informed the Chinese Government that this is a high priority in which Secretary Albright is personally interested. In order to emphasize the importance we attach to this matter, we have also instructed our embassy in Beijing to communicate your request to the Chinese Government there.''

Mr. Trie, a onetime Little Rock restaurateur and longtime friend of Mr. Clinton, raised more than $645,000 in donations that have been returned because of their questionable origin. In addition, investigators are looking at $470,000 in money transfers to Mr. Trie from an account in Macao. They were made about the time he brought cash donations to the Democratic Party or money from donors who cannot be found.

Mr. Trie, a naturalized American citizen, returned to China after the campaign finance investigations began. He has refused to testify before Congressional investigators. In an interview in Shanghai with NBC News in June, Mr. Trie said he had no plans to return to the United States.

''They'll never find me,'' he told NBC.

Three weeks ago the Clinton Administration said it preferred not to ask China for help finding Mr. Trie, citing questions of conflict of interest between the White House and the Congressional investigation.

[From the Washington Times, July 23, 1997]

STATE DEPARTMENT ASKS CHINA TO HELP LOCATE ELUSIVE TRIE

(By Jerry Seper)

The State Department has asked China for help in finding Democratic fund-raiser Charles Yah Lin Trie, a key figure in congressional and Justice Department investigations into accusations that foreign governments sought to influence the 1996 elections.

Barbara Larkin, assistant secretary of state for legislative affairs, said in a letter yesterday to Rep. Gerald B. H. Solomon, chairman of the House Rules Committee, that a request was made of the Chinese government on July 14, and that the U.S. Embassy in Beijing would make a follow-up request in person.

''Secretary [Madeleine K.] Albright has repeatedly made clear her commitment to do everything within her authority to assist Congress in its investigations regarding alleged violations of federal campaign financing laws,'' Mrs. Larkin wrote. ''We informed the Chinese government this is a high priority in which Secretary Albright is personally interested.''

Mr. Trie disappeared in China after surfacing in the campaign-finance probes of Congress and the Justice Department. Mr. Solomon asked the White House on July 3 for help in finding him.

The New York Republican, who described Mr. Trie as a key figure in Congress' inquiries, wants the department to assist congressional investigators in locating and obtaining evidence from the Arkansas businessman. He has questioned Mr. Trie's ties to the fund-raising scandal and his relationships with John Huang and Chinese arms dealer Wang Jun, both White House visitors.

Mr. Trie, who was interviewed in Shanghai by NBC's ''Nightly News'' but who has eluded congressional and federal investigators, has boasted he could hid in Asia for 10 years and has said he had no plans to return to the United States to answer questions by congressional investigators.

A subpoena was issued for him in February by the House Government Reform and Oversight Committee.

Mr. Trie, who ran a Chinese restaurant in Little Rock near the Arkansas State House where he first met Bill Clinton, then governor, came to public notice after the President's Legal Defense Fund announced it was returning $640,000 in donations he collected.

The cash, delivered in two envelopes, was returned when fund executives said they did not know its source. The donations included checks with signatures that matched those on other checks and money orders numbered sequentially but from different cities.

In a statement, Mr. Solomon said it was ''refreshing to see a Cabinet secretary in this administration willing to take a strong personal interest in helping us get to the bottom of such serious matters.''

Besides the Legal Defense Fund donations, House investigators want to know what role Mr. Trie played in getting Mr. Wang, chairman of China's Poly Technologies Ltd., to a White House meeting in February with Mr. Clinton. Two months later, Poly Technologies, which makes weapons for the Chinese military, was identified by U.S. Customs Service agents as a target in a sting operation to deliver 2,000 AK–47s to the United States.

White House records show Mr. Wang, as Mr. Trie's guest, met with Mr. Clinton at a reception with several Democratic campaign contributors. Mr. Huang arranged for Mr. Trie to attend a White House coffee with Mr. Clinton.

Mr. Solomon said that China could ''easily return Mr. Trie . . . if it had a will to do so.''

[From the New York Times, July 27, 1997]

SAVING FACEPOWDER

(By William Safire)

WASHINGTON—It was mid-October, the final month of the 1996 Presidential campaign. A column in this space titled ''The Asian Connection'' had just appeared, followed the next day by a front-page article about John Huang's fund-raising in The Wall Street Journal. Though TV lagged, The L.A. Times and New York Times were advancing the story of illegal Asian money flowing into the Democratic campaign.

But silence from the Republicans. Not only were they not the original source of the story, they offered little newsworthy reaction. I ran into Haley Barbour, then chairman of the Republican National Committee, campaigning in Birmingham, Ala., and put it to him: Did he have a statement?

His reply: ''This is something for Ross Perot to hit hard.'' That struck me as curious; why Perot, the third-party candidate—why not Dole and Barbour? I put it down to the Republican inability to react swiftly to news.

Now it comes clear. Haley must have been worried that the Asian connection would boomerang.

The Republican think tank he headed—an adjunct to the R.N.C.—had in 1994 borrowed $2 million on the collateral of Ambrous Tung Young, a citizen of Taiwan.

Haley made the deal aboard a yacht in Hong Kong and was reluctant at first to blast Clinton for foreign fund-raising.

At the Thompson hearings, that G.O.P. fund-raising chicken has come home to roost. As usual, most media coverage of the Barbour appearance centered on the witness's performance—''spirited,'' ''well-prepared,'' ''combative''—and less on the evidence of wrongdoing developed. We cover the show but ignore the case.

The case is that a top Republican official solicited a huge loan from a foreign national. The millions traveled through an affiliated think tank to the National Committee and—because money is fungible—materially helped G.O.P. political campaigns.

Barbour insists this shell game was legal; if so, the law needs tightening. He borrowed from a foreigner on the anticipation of a favorable I.R.S. ruling on a think tank's status; that was foolish and—most damaging to his reputation—politically debilitating. His Republicans stiffed Mr. Young for half his loan and now the R.N.C. must make him whole.

The Asian lender used a colorful expression to explain his loan: not just to gain influence and access, but ''to put powder on my face.'' That usually derisive Chinese phrase—tu zhi mo fen, ''rouge and powder''—means ''to hide blemishes with makeup,'' its extended meaning ''to improve one's image with superiors.''

That's behind some foreign giving. But to equate the one-time ethical lapse of a G.O.P. campaign chief with the sustained, widespread, and probably espionage-ridden marriage of Asian money to the Clinton-Gore White House is to fall for the ''everybody does it'' excuse.

''Everybody doesn't do it,'' said Barbour (meaning, ''Not everybody does it''). He's right; the scale of the Clinton-Gore Great Asian Access Sale is unprecedented, its pattern of cover-up unique.

The White House-Commerce cover-up has spread to the Justice Department. Lest credible evidence be developed by the Senate implicating a ''covered person'' (Vice President Gore), Janet Reno resisted allowing victimized nuns to testify publicly. Not even Democratic senators could swallow that insult.

In the same way, when the House's Burton committee subpoenaed Justice Department records of $700,000 in wire transfers from Vietnam to an account in the Bank Indo-Suez supposedly controlled by Ron Brown, Justice responded three days later with a subpoena for all Chairman Burton's election records.

Dan Burton is undeterred. His committee will hire a D.C. superlawyer or former U.S. Attorney as counsel this week.

Its staff is quietly taking depositions from aides to White House chiefs of staff and now-unprivileged counsel.

The vital power to depose witnesses under oath was voted at the behest of House Rules Chairman Gerry Solomon, who last week induced Secretary of State Albright to help bring Charlie Trie back from his Chinese hideout. Solomon, first in Congress to blow the whistle on espionage, gets few headlines but gets results.

Republicans who make mistakes and try to brazen their way out will get roughed up in the investigations; that's healthy.

But let us keep our eye on the main arena: the Clinton-Gore sale of influence to agents of Beijing.

TO AVOID SUCH A DISGRACE

(By William Safire)

If by the first week in October Attorney General Janet Reno does not seek appointment of Independent Counsel, she may well be the first Cabinet member since William Belknap in 1876 to be impeached.

That is the clear import of three coordinated letters, all dated Sept. 3 and delivered to the Justice Department last week.

One is a 23-page missive signed by every member of the majority of the House Judiciary Committee, delineating evidence that Federal crimes may have been committed by officials covered by the Independent Counsel Act. The crimes include bribery, use of the White House for political purposes, misuse of tax-exempt organizations and extortion of campaign contributions.

The second letter, from every member of the majority of the House Rules Committee, notes that the weak excuse given by Ms. Reno for refusing to trigger the act—that Vice President Gore's solicitations from the White House were only for ''soft money''—had been shattered by the revelation that the Democratic National Committee allocated funds raised by Gore from Federal property as ''hard money'' for the Clinton-Gore campaign.

Because Congressional committees do not issue threats, a third letter came from an individual member, House Rules Chairman Gerald Solomon, to inform her of the serious consequences of her continued stone-walling

''With credible evidence reported by Mr. Robert Woodward in today's Washington Post that Vice President Gore . . . may have committed a felony,'' wrote Solomon. ''I can not conceive you can so willfully neglect your duty . . . I should inform you that the mood in Congress to remove you grows daily.

If it should ever come to that. Ms. Reno's best defense would be to blame the egregious ineptitude of the vaunted ''career professionals'' in what Justice laughably calls its Public Integrity Section.

It is now 11 months since the Asian Connection story broke. In all that time, it never occurred to those humbling Justice bureaucrats to travel a few blocks over to the D.N.C. to find out if money raised from inside the White House was used to buy Clinton-Gore commercials. They waited to read about the crime in the Washington Post. Their lame excuse: ''The focus of our energies was elsewhere.''

But those conflicted, slow-walking ''energies'' have not been focused on tracking down and bringing back Little Rock's Charlie Trie, a suspected dirty-money conduit now lying low in Beijing. We rightly criticize Whitewater Independent Counsel Ken Starr for being slow; Clinton's in-house Dependent Counsel are hip-deep in Democratic molasses.

The sad part of all this is that Reno and Gore are paying the price for the political fund-raising strategy set not by them but by Bill Clinton in his infamous Sept. 13, 1995, Oval Office sellout to Rlady, Huang and company.

Gore is a serious person, solid on foreign affairs except for some global warming nuttiness, and I confess to liking and often admiring him. But Clinton's anything-goes political morality reduced Gore to describing 86 wrongful calls as ''a few occasions.'' John Huang, D.N.C. fund-raising vice chairman, brought a Buddhist leader into Gore's office to arrange a temple event; the event illegally raised $100,000; now Gore professes to never have known it was a fund raiser.

But here's a campaign memo from Gore's scheduler asking him to choose: give a speech to a long Island Jewish group or ''do the two fundraisers in San Joe and LA.'' Gore replies, ''if we have already booked the fundraisers then we have to decline.'' To call that Buddhist fundraiser ''community outreach'' takes a long reach.

Gore's followers, who see him as a Clinton with integrity, are circling the wagons, expecting two years of assault by Independent Counsel when Reno chooses honor over impeachment. Martin Peretz, owner of the New Republic, has just fired his editor-columnist, the gutsily gifted Michael Kelly, for taking too strong a stand against Clinton-Gore campaign crimes.

But John Huang and Johnny Chung will be flipped; Web Hubbell will be re-indicted and Jim Guy Tucker convicted; House committees will surprise: the F.B.I. will shake its shackles; media momentum will build; and justice, despite the Department of Justice, will be done.

[From the Washington Times, May 1997]

NO MFN WITHOUT TRIE, SOLOMON HINTS—URGES CLINTON TO PRESSURE CHINA

(By Jerry Seper)

The chairman of a House committee yesterday asked President Clinton to help find Arkansas businessman Charles Yah Lin Trie, who disappeared in China after surfacing in Congress' campaign finance probe, and he suggested that China's most-favored-nation status could be in jeopardy if the president refuses.

Rep. Gerald B.H. Solomon, New York Republican and chairman of the House Rules Committee, said that because of Mr. Trie's ties to the growing fund-raising scandal and his relationships with John Huang and Chinese arms dealer Wang Jun, Mr. Clinton should direct Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright to determine his whereabouts.

''If Mr. Trie is indeed in China, it is vital he be returned before any renewal of the most-favored-nation trading status even be considered,'' Mr. Solomon said. ''That is not to say the return of Mr. Trie would convince me and a number of other members that renewing China's MFN status is advisable, considering that nation's performance in other areas.

''But Congress also has the duty to investigate any undue influence on U.S.-China policy, and Mr. Trie would be helpful in that regard,'' said Mr. Solomon, an outspoken opponent of giving China MFN status.

Congress is scheduled to begin debate next month on Mr. Clinton's expected decision to extend China's most-favored-nation trading status for another year. MFN status gives China's products low-tariff access to U.S. markets, similar to those enjoyed by most other U.S. trading partners. Revoking it would price most Chinese products out of the market.

White House Special Associate Counsel Lanny J. Davis declined comment on the letter, but said, ''I can state as a general matter, the president is fully committed to cooperating with the congressional committees and encourages others to do so.''

House investigators want to talk with Mr. Trie, former Little Rock restaurateur and Democratic National Committee fund-raiser, about his delivery of $640,000 in questionable contributions to Mr. Clinton's legal-defense fund. The contributions were later returned when legal-defense fund investigators found they could not establish the source of the money, which included checks with signatures that matched those on some other checks, and money orders that were sequentially numbered but purportedly came from people in different cities.

They also want to know what role Mr. Trie played in getting Mr. Wang, chairman of China's Poly Technologies Ltd., into a White House reception last February with Mr. Clinton. Two months after that reception, Poly

Technologies, which makes weapons for the Chinese military, was identified by U.S. Customs Service agents as a target in a sting operation that had been about to deliver 2,000 AK–47s to U.S. criminals.

Mr. Wang, according to White House records, met with Mr. Clinton at a reception with several Democratic campaign contributors. The records show he was Mr. Trie's guest at the event.

Mr. Trie and Mr. Huang have been described as longtime Arkansas friends of the president. It was Mr. Huang who arranged for Mr. Trie to attend a White House coffee with Mr. Clinton. Both men are now at the center of investigations by a Justice Department-FBI task force and Congress into irregularities involving money that was raised for Mr. Clinton's reelection and his legal-defense fund.

Mr. Clinton, who appointed Mr. Trie to the Commission on U.S. Pacific Trade and Investment Policy in April 1996, has said he did not know his longtime friend was collecting money for his legal-defense fund until after the fact.

Mr. Solomon said the Chinese government could ''easily return Mr. Trie to the United States if it had a will to do so,'' and that refusing a request by Mr. Clinton—through Miss Albright—''would certainly raise even more questions about any nation wanting good relations with the United States.''

Mr. Solomon also asked Mr. Clinton to turn over any background reports or investigations the White House possesses regarding Mr. Trie's appointment to the Commission on U.S. Pacific Trade and Investment Policy.

[From the Washington Post, July 17, 1997]

WAS JOHN HUANG DEBRIEFED?

(By Robert D. Novak)

A previously missing government form that should have indicated whether John Huang was debriefed by a security officer before the left the Commerce Department two years ago turned up last Friday. But the place where the now infamous Democratic fund-raiser was supposed to have signed is blank.

Any government official with top-secret access—Deputy Assistant Secretary of Commerce Huang included—must attest to the return of all classified information when debriefed as he leaves the government. But Huang's unsigned debriefing document underlines questions about what he did with government secrets and how well they were protected.

Complete answers can come only from investigators with subpoena powers. Contrary to the White House mantra, current Senate hearings concern much more than campaign finance reform—such as Huang's security clearance, dubious on its face. Immediately following CIA briefings, Huang would regularly contact the Chinese Embassy. Yet, even after resigning from the government and going to the Democratic National Committee (DNC), he received another security clearance. The CIA, which had given him documents, was not alerted to Huang's change of status.

Under the Freedom of Information Act, the conservative weekly Human Events several weeks ago obtained from the Commerce Department Huang's ''Separation Clearance Certificate,'' noting that his ''effective date of separation'' was Jan. 17, 1995 (though he actually went to the DNC in December). Commerce officials signed the document on Jan. 22, noting Huang's return of government charge cards, his parking permit and his diplomatic passport. ''Security debriefing and credentials'' was noted and signed by a Commerce Department security officer named Robert W. Mack.

At that debriefing, Huang should have signed a Standard Form 312 acknowledging return of classified material. But an official Commerce spokesman told Human Events editor Terrence Jeffrey two weeks ago: ''The recollection of our security personnel is that he [Huang] was debriefed but that a Standard Form 312 has not been located.''

What's more, there are indications it was never given to congressional investigating committees. On July 3, Rep. Jerry Solomon (R–N.Y.), chairman of the House Rules Committee, wrote Commerce Secretary William Daley demanding the Form 312 by July 9.

That deadlines came and went, but late on Friday, July 11, the pieces of paper was dispatched to Solomon. It showed that on July 18, 1994, Huang signed for his security briefing. But Huang never signed the debriefing acknowledgement that ''I have returned all classified information in my custody.''

If security officer Mack signed off for the debriefing, why didn't Huang? ''For reasons that we have not determined,'' Commerce press officer Maria Cardona told me. I called Mack himself, but he said he could not reply. ''When you're as low on the totem pole as I am . . .'' he said, trailing off.

However, an unsigned Commerce document of Dec. 9, 1996, supplied to Solomon earlier this year, quotes Mack as saying that ''he personally briefed Huang and had him sign a SF–312'' in July 1994 but adds: ''Mack has no recall of the debriefing'' the following January. The memorandum continues that ''he does recall'' a call from a high-ranking official ''to make sure that Huang did not lose his top-secret clearance'' but kept it as a ''consultant.''

''Mack said to the best of his knowledge, Huang never worked as a consultant, but DISCO [Defense Industrial Security Clearance Office] did issue a top-secret clearance to Huang. . . . DISCO has never been notified to cancel the clearance,'' the memo continued. The memo writer said the clearance, issued on Dec. 14, 1995, was still valid on Dec. 9, 1996.

Yet another mysterious document: Commerce security officer Richard Duncan—Mack's colleague—on Feb. 13, 1995, wrote an internal memo listing Huang among other officials as signing SF–312s. Was this an attempt to create a paper trail?

This is the curious conclusion of John Huang's access to secret information. It began with the official request Jan. 31, 1994 that the required background investigation for Huang be waived because of ''the critical need for his expertise . . . by Secretary [Ron] Brown.'' When Huang resigned a year later, Assistant Secretary Charles Meissner proposed the consultant's role, in order for Huang to retain access to classified documents. Brown and Meissner both perished in the tragic plane crash in Croatia, but their patronage of John Huang remains a fit subject for scrutiny.

[From Time Warner Pathfinder, Nov. 4, 1997]

INQUIRY SOUGHT INTO CHINA STOCKS

(By Marcy Gordon, AP Business Writer)

WASHINGTON (AP).—A senior congressman wants an investigation of the possibility that China may be skirting U.S. disclosure laws in sales of stock in its big government-owned companies.

Rep. Gerald Solomon, R-N.Y., who heads the House Rules Committee, recently told the chairman of the Securities and Exchange Commission, Arthur Levitt Jr., that the Chinese actions represent ''a potential threat to our country.''

He urged Levitt to take appropriate action, possibly including an investigation.

At issue is the sale to U.S. investors a chunk of giant state-owned China Telecom. Its special New York shares began trading on the New York Stock Exchange on Oct. 22.

In an Oct. 20 letter to Levitt, Solomon cited a Bloomberg News story that quoted China's communications minister as saying the government would ease accounting rules to boost China Telecom's profits.

The statement by Wu Jichuan came in mid-October as shares of companies backed by China plunged on the Hong Kong stock market.

Solomon called Wu's reported statement ''cynical, manipulative and direct evidence of fraud.''

''The highest priority of American securities law is to provide accurate information to the American investor, and (China's) actions flout that objective,'' he wrote Levitt.

The lawmaker expressed similar concerns about two other government-owned companies, China Southern Airlines and Beijing Enterprises, which also are expected to sell special shares in the United States.

At the same time, Solomon and Sen. Lauch Faircloth, R-N.C., are pushing House and Senate bills that would establish a new Office of National Security within the SEC to monitor foreign involvement in U.S. securities markets, financial institutions and pension funds. The legislation doesn't name any countries specifically.

Solomon is to testify Wednesday at a hearing on the issue by the Senate Banking subcommittee on financial institutions.

SEC spokesman Christopher Ullman declined comment on Solomon's letters to Levitt and the proposed legislation. Spokesmen at the Chinese Embassy didn't immediately return a telephone call seeking comment.

[From the Washington Times, November 1997]

17 IN HOUSE WANT CLINTON IMPEACHED—BARR LEADS CHARGE TO FORCE HYDE TO BEGIN INQUIRY

(By Mary Ann Akers)

The House Rules Committee yesterday took the first step toward initiating impeachment proceedings against President Clinton after 17 House conservatives raised the issue in a formal resolution.

Talk of impeachment, which was laughed off by the White House and dismissed as incredible even by most Republicans, was sparked by Rep. Bob Barr, Georgia Republican. His resolution calls for an ''inquiry of impeachment'' on everything from the 1996 campaign fund-raising scandal to the FBI files and White House travel office issues.

''I believe William Jefferson Clinton . . . has violated the rule of law, and however difficult it may be to go down the dark tunnel of impeachment, at the end of the tunnel there is light,'' Mr. Barr said.

Although the resolution has little chance of passing the House or making its way to the House Judiciary Committee for a formal review of impeachment, it is still likely to spark yet another line of investigation of the White House—this time by the Rules Committee.

Rep. Gerald B.H. Solomon, New York Republican and chairman of the panel, indicated he would hold hearings soon relating to ''the matter of the president and others in their potential illegal activities as custodians of the executive branch of the United States.'' He did not set a date.

This investigation would be parallel to the one being conducted by the House Government Reform and Oversight Committee under Rep. Dan Burton, Indiana Republican.

Mr. Barr's plan was to have his resolution go to the Rules Committee first, then to the Judiciary Committee, which has jurisdiction over impeachment proceedings, and finally to the House floor.

But House Judiciary Chairman Henry J. Hyde, Illinois Republican, made it clear yesterday that he wants no part of the impeachment inquiry and disagreed with Mr. Barr's assessment that the current fund-raising scandal is as serious as Watergate.

''The state of play is quite different now than it was then,'' Mr. Hyde said.

Among the differences Mr. Hyde noted: President Nixon's approval ratings were very low; two former attorneys general, John Mitchell and Richard Kleindienst, along with Mr. Nixon's general counsel, John Dean, had been convicted of felonies; Mr. Nixon himself had been named an unindicted co-conspirator; and a rash of other administration officials had either pleaded guilty to crimes or been forced to resign.

By contrast, Mr. Clinton has been enjoying unusually high approval ratings lately, no one in his administration has been indicted for anything relating to fund raising and the ongoing Justice Department or congressional probes have not yet demonstrated that crimes were committed by anyone in the Clinton administration.

''Impeachment is a very political act. It is a Draconian act, and ultimately it must be a bipartisan act,'' Mr. Hyde said.

Only one president in U.S. history has ever been impeached—Andrew Johnson in 1868 for firing his secretary of war without cause and without consent of the Senate.

House Republican leaders, meanwhile, indicated they were not as actively behind the impeachment inquiry resolution as Mr. Barr had implied to reporters.

''The speaker is aware of what we're doing here today, is supportive of it,'' Mr. Barr said. But a spokeswoman for House Speaker Newt Gingrich, Georgia Republican, said only, ''Speaker Gingrich is aware of Mr. Barr's resolution and feels it quite sobering that 17 members find this appropriate.''

At the White House, Mr. Clinton said of Mr. Barr, ''He's always had a rather extreme view of these things.''

White House Press Secretary Michael McCurry added: ''In any body of 535 people, there will always be a denominator that's lowest. And we've seen this from Barr before. . . . Every time things get a little quiet on the [scandal] inquiry front, he pops off about impeachment to get you all excited.''

WHITE WATER—CHINA HAWKS WARN OF BEIJING'S BONDS

(By Timothy W. Maier)

The China hawks are armed with a get-tough-on-China bill that could limit Beijing's access to the U.S. capital market. The bill, called the U.S. Market Securities Act, sailed through a Senate Banking subcommittee last month and now is traveling full-speed ahead for a possible vote next year in the House and Senate.

Supporters say the measure takes the first step in providing both national-security protection and a safeguard for taxpayers by creating a screening process at the Securities Exchange Commission, or SEC, to monitor fund-raising activities of companies with ties to Beijing. Opponents say it will be an expensive federal regulatory nightmare that won't work.

But to Wall Street's dismay, the legislation is gathering strong support on Capitol Hill. The China hawks claim Beijing fails to disclose its business dealings with military enterprises. They fear that of the funds being raised by the Chinese communist regime, close to $7 billion from bonds, may be finding their way into the arms of the People's Liberation Army, or PLA—the same army that rolled tanks into Tiananmen Square to crush a pro-democracy demonstration in 1989.

The U.S. Treasury Department does not restrict foreign countries from the bond market unless they are subject to embargo or trade sanctions, even if a national-security concern exists. The legislation doesn't sit too well with Wall Street. Economists warn that the day the bill is passed the Hong Kong flu that rocked the American stock market two days before the subcommittee held hearings on it will return with a vengeance.

A temporary market setback, however unlikely, is a small price to pay to ensure national security, says Roger Robinson, a senior director of international economic affairs at the National Security Council under President Reagan and one of the principal architects of the bill. ''If China is not doing the wrong thing, it has nothing to worry about,'' he insists. ''All we want is a list of names. The American people have inquiring minds and they want to know. What we want to know is who were the funders and suppliers that paid for weapons of mass destruction now held by Iraq. We can't answer that because we don't know.''

Charles Wolf, dean of the Rand Institute's graduate school of political studies, doesn't buy the story that the money is supporting missiles for the PLA. Wolf says, ''The hawks start the premise by saying China is doing as much as they can get away with, but that's like asking, How many angels can sit on the head of a pin? There is some indirect borrowing or some indirect leakage to the military, but it is not all that big a deal. What is a big deal is pursuing military modernization, especially the Russians. But that's something the intelligence agencies and military should do. I don't think that is the purview of the SEC.''

But Robinson points to China International Trust and Investment Corp., or CITIC, which is run by kaffeeklatsch guest and PLA arms dealer Wang Jun, to show it's not the amount of money but the potentially devastating quality of some of these weapons. For example, CITIC received $800 million from 15 bonds, and some of those funds may have drifted into Wang's weapons company, Poly Technologies—which last year was caught smuggling 2,000 AK–47 assault rifles to California street gangs and which tried to sell rockets capable of bringing down jetliners.

''How would we feel if a street gang shot down a national airliner?'' Robinson asks. ''When you have the wrong management with the wrong reporting structure and not a true corporate identity, you have the ingredients in today's information and technology age for world-class incidents and national-security challenges.''

Leading the charge that is gaining considerable support on Capitol Hill are Senate Banking subcommittee on Financial Institutions and Regulatory Relief chairman Lauch Faircloth of North Carolina and House Rules Chairman Gerald Solomon of New York. The bill these conservative Republicans introduced in the Senate and House also asks the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corp., a federal agency, to issue annual reports on communist China's securities that are held in the portfolios of pension funds—a protection for the American taxpayer.

On Nov. 5, Solomon spelled out the significance of the bill be predicting economic warfare soon will supersede more-traditional forms of conflict. ''With the emergence of the new global economy creating megamergers involving many foreign conglomerates, some of which are reported to involve international Mafia connections and drug-cartel monies, this Office of National Security within the SEC is an absolute must. In other words, we need a special watchdog agency specifically committed to making sure no entity can engineer fluctuations that could bring our markets down.''

And Faircloth tells Insight the bill simply is trying to protect the hard-earned savings of the American taxpayer. ''We must take steps to ensure that the average American investor enjoys the same market protection abroad that he does here stateside,'' Faircloth says. ''In other words, the American investment must be alerted to the insider trading, adulterated disclosure and manipulated accounting standards commonly practiced in the debt and equity markets of countries such as China. Further, the American people need to be aware that through their pension and mutual-fund investments they may be unwittingly supporting the modernization of the Chinese military.''

The bill has bipartisan support from the left-wing, Berkeley-based environmental watchdog group International Rivers Network, or IRN. The group last month launched an advertising blitz calling on American investors to order their fund managers to dump all investments tied with China's State Development Bank, which is behind the huge Three Gorges Dam project. IRN Executive Director Owen Lammers calls it one of the ''largest and most environmentally and socially destructive projects on Earth,'' claiming it will not improve flood control or provide the electrical power needed but instead will displace 1.9 million people. ''We're asking investors to tell their fund managers to get out of those bonds supporting this,'' Lammers tells Insight.

Investors probably have very little idea about how the money is spent based on the perspectives the Beijing banks provide. The State Development Bank supplies a list of 10 projects under development and less than 200 words about the Three Gorges Dam. ''They technically disguise this project claiming it will cost $30 billion but unofficially will likely cost $75 billion because they are building a dam that would stretch from Boston to New York,'' Lammers says.

Insight also obtained hundreds of pages of SEC documents involving other Chinese companies, and what is apparent is what is not present. Red Chinese entities are short on specifics and background information, especially regarding Wang Jun and his ties to the military. The lack of detailed prospectuses is one of the reasons why Randolph Shih Shung Quon, a Chinese-American financial consultant who worked in Hong Kong as an adviser to the Chinese Central Bank from 1993 to 1995, is demanding that the SEC investigate Beijing's offerings underwritten by some leading investment firms such as Goldman Sachs & Co. and Morgan Stanley, Dean Witter, Discover & Co. The SEC is not commenting.

Quon wants to know why foreign countries such as the People's Republic of China are not held to the same threshold of disclosure as American companies. Now based in Washington at the Free Congress Foundation, a conservative think tank, Quon claims he fled to the United States after reporting fraudulent activities among the Beijing princelings' children. ''Whether the Chinese government can be trusted to play by the rules, I have serious doubts,'' Quon tells Insight. ''This is the time to lay down the law in Asia. There is no level playing field. They are like 19th-century barons.''

Quon, who testified at the subcommittee hearings, called for SEC investigations into several high-profile stock and bond deals claiming disclosure violations. For example, he says that just before the $4.2 billion China Telecom offering Wu Jichuan, communist China's minister of posts and telecommunications, stated the government soon would hand over valuable assets to the new company. Wu also declared he would allow China Telecom to book certain networks that normally would go through state companies. In addition, Quon notes the China Telecom prospectus filed with the SEC failed to disclose

Hong Kong billionaire Li Kashing had been found to be involved in an insider-trading scheme and that Li controlled companies that in turn controlled 10 percent of China Telecom.

Michael J. Evans, managing director of Goldman Sachs, the firm that handled the offering, did not return repeated phone messages left at his offices in Hong Kong, London and New York. However, Evans has claimed in other interviews that his firm followed the letter and spirit of U.S. securities law, that Wu only repeated points made in the China Telecom prospectus and that any fee adjustments would have to be reviewed by SEC.

Some economists and Wall Street watchers warn that the legislative proposal creates a costly layer of bureaucracy and is impossible to enforce because, they argue, once funds go to a state-owned company, Beijing still could covertly divert the money to the PLA. ''This is a chapter out of Alice in Wonderland,'' says Steve Hanke, a professor of economics at Johns Hopkins and former Reagan economic adviser. ''I can't conceive how you would make certain the money would stay in state-owned enterprises. Even if it could be done, would it make any difference? The answer is no.''

Hanke says the money just would be funneled from another source and there is no possible way to monitor every single dollar. ''This is a full-employment bill for bureaucratic parasites that want to be doing something. It's jobs for the boys—for the bureaucrats in Washington who want to regulate something that is over China. The effect of this bill in China? You couldn't find it on the radar screen. You won't have any effect in what's going on in China. The administrative expense will cost us and it will cost them. It's going to raise the cost of Chinese doing business. It will be more difficult to make these bond issues.'' v. . . . Intelligence specialists including Robinson strongly disagree with Hanke's evaluation, claiming this simply could be done with one person plugging names into a computer and sending information to Congress for intelligence reviews.

''The idea that it is some costly process is rubbish,'' insists Robinson, who President Reagan credited as being ''the architect of a security-minded and cohesive U.S. East-West economic policy.'' If it is done, Robinson predicts huge defaults that ultimately would be paid by U.S. taxpayers.

To understand the seriousness of the situation, one must look no further than Beijing's major banks, which effectively are bankrupt because of $90 billion in nonperforming loans, says Robinson. Beijing acknowledges that 20 percent of all the bank loans have turned sour, although most analysts say that is an underestimate. Consider the recent bank failure in Japan—triggered by 8 percent nonperforming loans. The People's Republic of China has a banking crisis, with U.S. taxpayers potentially picking up the bill, Robinson says.

The Economist refers to these banks as ''unstable and mired in debt,'' because the ''banks' senior executives rarely are given reliable information by their loan officers.'' Peter Schweizer, a scholar at the Hoover Institution, says investing in bonds issued by these banks could be a disaster waiting to happen. ''U.S. pension funds and individuals who have invested in these bonds could end up holding worthless paper,'' he says.

Is Red China's debt really cause for concern? Tom Byrne, vice president and senior analyst at Moodys' Investors Service in New York, tells Insight he thinks the debt is manageable. ''It is a major problem, but unlike other countries external borrowing is fairly well-controlled,'' Byrne says. ''Long-term borrowing is fairly tight and the short-term debt is at a reasonable level. They have controlled it, and they have sent out signals that they will continue to control it.''

Robinson counters, ''I received the same assurances about the Soviet Union that Moscow's debt was entirely manageable. They said I was overreacting then. Well, what was the epilogue? Very simply, roughly $100 billion in Soviet debt to Western governments was lost in a 25-year rescheduling.''

What did the Soviet Union do with all that U.S. cash? They made their attack submarines quieter and enhanced their range so that now ''they can threaten every American city with no advance warning sign,'' Robinson says.

But there is a significant difference between Russia and China in these matters because, unlike bank loans, the bonds cannot be rescheduled. Instead, if it can't pay the debt, Beijing simply will default—forcing U.S. taxpayers to bail it out.

The whole Asian picture is cause for alarm in light of recent events with more than $100 billion in bailouts already expected. South Korea leads the pack with $50 billion; Indonesia is at $37 billion; Thailand, $17 billion; and Malaysia at $10 billion. The United States is responsible for bailing out 25 percent of it. Now throw Beijing into that picture and the result 10 years from now could be another $100 billion bailout.

And disclosure may be imperfect, Robinson admits. But he says a do-nothing approach could bankrupt the future of American children even as our money and credits, aid and trade, are used to finance building Red China into a military superpower. ''Taken alone, the widespread proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and ballistic-missile delivery systems constitutes a sufficient argument for the establishment of an Office of National Security at the SEC,'' Robinson says. ''After all, foreign governments are by far the largest category of proliferators—but you may be certain the American people will not want to discover in the future that their leaders bankrupted them to fund enemies in an epic global tragedy.''

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time for debate has expired.

The resolution is considered read for amendment.

Pursuant to House Resolution 436, the previous question is ordered.

The question is on the resolution.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Evidently a quorum is not present.

The Sergeant at Arms will notify absent Members.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 342, nays 69, answered ''present'' 12, not voting 10, as follows:

[Roll No. 177]

YEAS—342

Abercrombie
Aderholt
Allen
Archer
Armey
Bachus
Baesler
Baker
Baldacci
Ballenger
Barcia
Barr
Barrett (NE)
Barrett (WI)
Bartlett
Barton
Bass
Bentsen
Bereuter
Berry
Bilbray
Bilirakis
Blagojevich
Bliley
Blumenauer
Blunt
Boehlert
Boehner
Bonilla
Bono
Borski
Boswell
Boucher
Boyd
Brady (TX)
Bryant
Bunning
Burr
Burton
Buyer
Callahan
Calvert
Camp
Campbell
Canady
Cannon
Capps
Cardin
Castle
Chabot
Chambliss
Chenoweth
Christensen
Clement
Coble
Coburn
Collins
Combest
Condit
Cook
Cooksey
Costello
Cox
Coyne
Cramer
Crane
Crapo
Cubin
Cunningham
Danner
Davis (FL)
Davis (IL)
Davis (VA)
Deal
DeLauro
DeLay
Diaz-Balart
Dickey
Dingell
Dixon
Doggett
Dooley
Doolittle
Doyle
Dreier
Duncan
Dunn
Edwards
Ehlers
Ehrlich
Emerson
English
Ensign
Eshoo
Etheridge
Evans
Everett
Ewing
Farr
Fawell
Foley
Forbes
Ford
Fossella
Fowler
Fox
Frelinghuysen
Frost
Gallegly
Ganske
Gejdenson
Gekas
Gephardt
Gibbons
Gilchrest
Gillmor
Gilman
Goode
Goodlatte
Goodling
Gordon
Goss
Graham
Granger
Green
Greenwood
Gutierrez
Gutknecht
Hall (OH)
Hall (TX)
Hamilton
Hansen
Hastert
Hastings (WA)
Hayworth
Hefley
Hefner
Herger
Hill
Hilleary
Hinojosa
Hobson
Hoekstra
Holden
Hooley
Horn
Hostettler
Houghton
Hoyer
Hulshof
Hunter
Hutchinson
Hyde
Inglis
Istook
Jenkins
John
Johnson (CT)
Johnson (WI)
Jones
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Kasich
Kelly
Kennedy (RI)
Kennelly
Kildee
Kilpatrick
Kim
King (NY)
Kingston
Kleczka
Klink
Klug
Knollenberg
Kolbe
Kucinich
LaFalce
LaHood
Lampson
Lantos
Largent
Latham
LaTourette
Lazio
Leach
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
Lipinski
Livingston
LoBiondo
Lofgren
Lowey
Lucas
Luther
Maloney (CT)
Manton
Manzullo
Mascara
McCarthy (MO)
McCarthy (NY)
McCollum
McCrery
McHale
McHugh
McInnis
McIntosh
McIntyre
McKeon
McNulty
Meehan
Menendez
Metcalf
Mica
Miller (FL)
Minge
Mink
Moakley
Mollohan
Moran (KS)
Morella
Myrick
Neal
Nethercutt
Neumann
Ney
Northup
Norwood
Nussle
Obey
Ortiz
Oxley
Packard
Pallone
Pappas
Pascrell
Paul
Paxon
Pease
Peterson (MN)
Peterson (PA)
Petri
Pickering
Pitts
Pombo
Pomeroy
Porter
Portman
Poshard
Price (NC)
Pryce (OH)
Quinn
Radanovich
Rahall
Ramstad
Redmond
Regula
Reyes
Riggs
Riley
Rivers
Roemer
Rogan
Rogers
Rohrabacher
Ros-Lehtinen
Rothman
Roukema
Royce
Ryun
Sabo
Salmon
Sanders
Sandlin
Sanford
Sawyer
Saxton
Scarborough
Schaefer, Dan
Schaffer, Bob
Schumer
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shadegg
Shaw
Shays
Sherman
Shimkus
Shuster
Sisisky
Skeen
Skelton
Smith (MI)
Smith (NJ)
Smith (OR)
Smith (TX)
Smith, Adam
Smith, Linda
Snowbarger
Snyder
Solomon
Souder
Spence
Spratt
Stabenow
Stearns
Stenholm
Strickland
Stump
Stupak
Sununu
Talent
Tanner
Tauzin
Taylor (MS)
Taylor (NC)
Thomas
Thornberry
Thune
Thurman

Tiahrt	Watkins	White
Tierney	Watts (OK)	Whitfield
Traficant	Waxman	Wicker
Turner	Weldon (FL)	Wise
Upton	Weldon (PA)	Wolf
Walsh	Weller	Young (AK)
Wamp	Weygand	Young (FL)

NAYS—69

Ackerman	Hinchey	Owens
Andrews	Jackson (IL)	Pastor
Becerra	Jackson-Lee (TX)	Payne
Bonior	Jefferson	Pickett
Brady (PA)	Johnson, E. B.	Rangel
Brown (CA)	Kennedy (MA)	Rodriguez
Brown (FL)	Lee	Roybal-Allard
Brown (OH)	Levin	Rush
Carson	Lewis (GA)	Scott
Clay	Markey	Serrano
Clyburn	Martinez	Skaggs
Conyers	Matsui	Slaughter
Cummings	McDermott	Stark
DeGette	McKinney	Stokes
Delahunt	Meek (FL)	Thompson
Deutsch	Millender-McDonald	Towns
Dicks	Miller (CA)	Velazquez
Engel	Moran (VA)	Vento
Fattah	Murtha	Visclosky
Fazio	Nadler	Waters
Filner	Oberstar	Wexler
Furse	Olver	Wynn
Hastings (FL)		Yates
Hilliard		

ANSWERED ''PRESENT''—12

Berman	Frank (MA)	Sanchez
Bishop	Kind (WI)	Tauscher
Clayton	Maloney (NY)	Watt (NC)
DeFazio	McGovern	Woolsey

NOT VOTING—10

Bateman	Johnson, Sam	Pelosi
Franks (NJ)	McDade	Torres
Gonzalez	Meeks (NY)	
Harman	Parker	

□ 1447

Messrs. THOMPSON, CUMMINGS, MORAN of Virginia and OBERSTAR and Ms. MCKINNEY changed their vote from ''aye'' to ''no.''

Mrs. KENNELLY of Connecticut, Ms. MCCARTHY of Missouri, and Messrs. HINOJOSA, ROTHMAN, COSTELLO and MANTON changed their vote from ''no'' to ''aye.''

Mr. WATT of North Carolina and Mrs. CLAYTON changed their vote from ''no'' to ''present.''

Mrs. MALONEY of New York and Ms. WOOLSEY changed their vote from ''aye'' to ''present.''

So the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

CERTIFICATION OF COOPERATION BY POLAND, HUNGARY, AND THE CZECH REPUBLIC WITH U.S. EFFORTS REGARDING OBTAINING ACCOUNTING OF CAPTURED AND MISSING U.S. PERSONNEL—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. Doc. No. 105–256)

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LATOURETTE) laid before the House the following message from the President of the United States; which was read and, without objection, referred to the Committee on International Relations and ordered to be printed.

To the Congress of the United States:

In accordance with the resolution of advice and consent to the ratification of the Protocols to the North Atlantic Treaty of 1949 on the Accession of Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic, adopted by the Senate of the United States on April 30, 1998, I hereby certify to the Congress that, in connection with Condition (5), each of the governments of Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic are fully cooperating with United States efforts to obtain the fullest possible accounting of captured and missing U.S. personnel from past military conflicts or Cold War incidents, to include (A) facilitating full access to relevant archival material, and (B) identifying individuals who may possess knowledge relative to captured and missing U.S. personnel, and encouraging such individuals to speak with United States Government officials.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON.

THE WHITE HOUSE, *May 21, 1998.*

WITHDRAWAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 94

Mrs. CLAYTON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to withdraw my name as a cosponsor for H.R. 94, the Volunteer Firefighter and Rescue Squad Worker Protect Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from North Carolina?

There was no objection.

DEEMING THOMAS AMENDMENT NO. 41 TO HAVE BEEN INCLUDED AS LAST AMENDMENT IN PART D OF HOUSE REPORT 105–544 DURING FURTHER CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3616, NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 1999

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that during further consideration of H.R. 3616, pursuant to House Resolution 441, that the Thomas amendment presently at the desk be deemed to have been included as the last amendment printed in Part D of House Report 105–544.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Part D Amendment No. 41 offered by Mr. THOMAS:

At the end of title XXXIV (page 373, after line 2), insert the following new section:

SEC. 3408. TREATMENT OF STATE OF CALIFORNIA CLAIM REGARDING NAVAL PETROLEUM RESERVE NUMBERED 1.

Section 3415(b) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1996 (Public Law 104–106; 10 U.S.C. 7420 note) is amended by striking out the first sentence and inserting in lieu thereof the following: ''Amounts in the contingent fund shall be available for paying a claim described in subsection (a) in accordance with the terms of, and the payment schedule contained in, the Settlement Agreement entered into between the State of California and the Department of Energy, dated October 11, 1996, and supplemented on December 10, 1997. The Secretary shall modify the Settlement Agreement to negate the requirements of the Settlement Agreement with respect to the request for and appropriation of funds.''.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 1999

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 441 and rule XXIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the further consideration of the bill, H.R. 3616.

□ 1452

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the further consideration of the bill (H.R. 3616) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 1999 for military activities of the Department of Defense, to prescribe military personnel strengths for fiscal year 1999, and for other purposes, with Mr. PEASE (Chairman pro tempore) in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIRMAN. When the Committee of the Whole House rose on Wednesday, May 20, 1998, amendment No. 3 printed in Part B of House report 105–544 had been disposed of.

PART D AMENDMENTS EN BLOC, AS MODIFIED, OFFERED BY MR. SPENCE

Mr. SPENCE. Mr. Chairman, I offer amendments en bloc, as modified.

The CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will designate the amendments en bloc and report the modifications.

The text of the amendments en bloc is as follows:

Part D amendments en bloc offered by Mr. SPENCE:

Part D amendment No. 1 offered by Mr. BRYANTt:

At the end of title X (page 234, after line 4), insert the following new section:

SEC. 1044. CLARIFICATION OF STATE AUTHORITY TO TAX COMPENSATION PAID TO CERTAIN EMPLOYEES.

(a) LIMITATION ON STATE AUTHORITY TO TAX COMPENSATION PAID TO INDIVIDUALS PERFORMING SERVICES AT FORT CAMPBELL, KENTUCKY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 4 of title 4, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''§ 115. Limitation on State authority to tax compensation paid to individuals performing services at Fort Campbell, Kentucky

''Pay and compensation paid to an individual for personal services at Fort Campbell, Kentucky, shall be subject to taxation by the State or any political subdivision thereof of which such employee is a resident.''.

(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The table of sections for chapter 4 of title 4, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

''115. Limitation on State authority to tax compensation paid to individuals performing services at Fort Campbell, Kentucky.''.

(3) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by this subsection shall apply to pay and compensation paid after the date of the enactment of this Act.