

down there. They would not be surprised to find out, I suspect, that most of the heroin and cocaine coming into this country is coming in produce trucks.

Beam me up, Mr. Speaker.

TRIBUTE TO RALPH GABBARD

(Mr. ROGERS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ROGERS. Mr. Speaker, this morning I pay tribute to Ralph Gabbard, a friend and a servant to Kentucky. Ralph passed away Tuesday night at the young age of 50.

Ralph was a radio and TV broadcaster all of his life.

And from his teenage days as a radio disc jockey in the 1960's, Ralph grew to serve our State, and unintentionally made a name for himself, like no other media person of our time.

Unassumingly, yet with tenacity, he went about the task of being the best broadcaster he could be, and succeeded. He redefined what we call the broadcaster's public service obligation.

His commitment to news, his commitment to community, his commitment to industry excellence, was unsurpassed inside or outside of the TV stations and boardrooms where his legacies will live.

EXPRESSING CONCERN THAT THE REPORT OF THE SPECIAL COUNSEL WAS PUT ON ICE

(Mr. WISE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. WISE. Mr. Speaker, just a moment ago the Speaker of the House held up an ice bucket. What concerns the American people, and should concern them, is that the report of the Special Counsel which was given to the Ethics Committee one month ago may well have been put on ice, because, Mr. Speaker, this report, which took 9 months to complete—

POINTS OF ORDER

Mr. LINDER. Point of order, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LATOURETTE). The gentleman will state the point of order.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, is it not correct that the rules of the House under regular order prevent people from speaking on the floor of the House with respect to matters before the Ethics Committee?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman is correct.

The gentleman from West Virginia may proceed in order.

Mr. WISE. Continuing, Mr. Speaker, my concern is that any report which has been presented and investigated—

Mr. LINDER. Regular order, Mr. Speaker. Regular order.

Mr. WISE. Regular order, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman will state his point of order.

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Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I will repeat that references to matters before the Ethics Committee are out of order to be addressed on the floor of this House.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LATOURETTE). The previous ruling of the Chair is again sustained and the gentleman from West Virginia may proceed in order.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. VOLKMER. Mr. Speaker, I have a parliamentary inquiry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman will state it.

Mr. VOLKMER. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman from Georgia who raised a point of order feels that the words of the gentleman from West Virginia concerning the lack of the Ethics Committee to make the report public is out of order, the gentleman can demand that the gentleman from West Virginia's words be taken down, is that not correct, Mr. Speaker?

Mr. LINDER. I appreciate the gentleman's instructions on parliamentary procedure.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman will kindly suspend so there may be proper decorum in the House.

The gentleman from Georgia has not taken that step. The gentleman from Georgia made a point of order.

Mr. VOLKMER. I just asked if that was available.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman is correct.

The gentleman from West Virginia will please proceed in order.

Mr. WISE. Continuing, Mr. Speaker, or trying to, any report dealing with an investigative body that has had at least 9 months of investigation and may have cost as much as one-half million dollars I think should be released before the Congress goes home.

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. WALKER. Point of order, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman will suspend.

The gentleman from Pennsylvania will state his point of order.

Mr. WALKER. Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from West Virginia continues to proceed out of order of the House and should be called to order by the Chair.

Mr. WISE. Mr. Speaker, if I may respond.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. If both gentlemen will suspend.

The Chair at this time will read the rule and will repeat the admonition from the Chair of June 26, 1996.

It is an essential rule of decorum in debate that Members should refrain from references in debate to the conduct of other Members where such conduct is not the question actually pending before the House by way of a report from the Committee on Standards of Official conduct or by way of another question of the privileges of the House.

This principle is documented on pages 168 and 526 of the House Rules and Manual and reflects the consistent rulings of the Chair in this and in prior Congresses and applies to 1-minute and special-order speeches.

Neither the filing of a complaint before the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct, nor the publication in another forum of charges that are personally critical of another Member, justify the references to such charges on the floor of the House. This includes references to the motivations of Members who file complaints and to members of the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct.

Clause 1 of rule XIV is a prohibition against engaging in personality in debate. It derives from article I, section 5 of the Constitution, which authorizes each House to make its own rules and to punish its Members for disorderly behavior, and has been part of the rules of the House in some relevant form since 1789. This rule supersedes any claim of a member to be free from questioning in any other place.

On January 27, 1909, the House adopted a report that stated the following: "It is * * * the duty of the House to require its Members in speech or debate to preserve that proper restraint which will permit the House to conduct its business in an orderly manner and without unnecessarily and unduly exciting animosity among its Members. * * *" (Cannon's Precedents, volume 8, at section 2497). This report was in response to improper references in debate to the President, but clearly reiterated a principle that all occupants of the Chair in this and in prior Congresses have held to be equally applicable to Members' remarks in debate toward each other.

The Chair asks and expects the cooperation of all Members in maintaining a level of decorum that properly dignifies the proceedings of the House.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRIES

Mr. VOLKMER. Mr. Speaker, I have a parliamentary inquiry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman will state it.

Mr. VOLKMER. I listened to the Speaker in support of his ruling and comment upon the precedents of the House. But I did not hear the words "reports from other special counsel." I did not hear that report. I heard about the reports from the Ethics Committee, et cetera, but not from the special counsel.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Until such time as there is a report pending on the floor of the House from the Standards Committee, or a question of privilege, the issue is not debatable on the floor of the House.

Mrs. SCHROEDER. Mr. Speaker, I have a parliamentary inquiry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman will state it.