Grant Act is a legislative measure that will assist police departments in providing their officers with such protection. This bill would authorize up to $25 million per year for a new matching grant program to help state and local law enforcement authorities purchase bulletproof vests and body armor. Furthermore, the bill makes preferences in granting awards toward jurisdictions where officers do not currently have vests, and reserves half of the money for jurisdictions with fewer than 100,000 residents. This legislation is very important in light of the fact that on the average, two officers are shot every twenty-four hours. This is disturbing news simply because these figures indicate that approximately 150,000 of the nation's 600,000 state and local law enforcement officers do not currently have access to bulletproof vests.

In consideration of the dangers that today's officers face, I strongly support the passage of H.R. 2829, the Bulletproof Vest Partnership Grant Act. This legislation is needed by the men and women who risk their lives daily for our protection. For their commitment and service, we owe every police officer our support on this issue. As the Representative of the Thirty-Seventh Congressional District of California, I am in strong support of this important legislation. This legislation has been endorsed by the Fraternal Order of Police, the National Sheriff's Association, the International Union of Police Associations, the Police Executive Research Forum, the International Brotherhood of Police Officers, and National Association of Police Organizations, the Long Beach Police Officer's Association and the Compton Police Officer's Association.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HEFLEY). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MCCOLLUM) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2829, as amended.

The question was taken.

Mr. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 5 of rule I and the chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

QUESTION OF PERSONAL PRIVILEGE

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I rise to a question of personal privilege.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman will state his question of privilege.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, the question of privilege deals with statements made in three editorials published in newspapers within the last week. The editorials contain statements which reflect directly on my reputation and integrity and specifically allege deceptive actions on my part and impugn my character and motive.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the press accounts which serve as the basis of the gentleman from Indiana's question of personal privilege and is satisfied that the gentleman states a proper question of personal privilege.

Therefore, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I want to tell my colleagues that I regret having to take this time out of our very busy schedule. I will not take the whole hour, but I think it is extremely important that the issues I am going to talk about be made available to my colleagues and to anyone else who is interested.

I rise today to take a point of personal privilege and to discuss the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight's investigation into illegal campaign contributions and other crimes. My conduct as chairman has been criticized by many of my Democratic colleagues. Those criticisms have been echoed in the press so I am taking this point of personal privilege to lay out for the American people the facts about this investigation.

The fact is that this committee has been subjected to a level of stonewalling and obstruction that has never been seen by a congressional investigation in the history of this country. This investigation has been stonewalled by the White House. This investigation has been stonewalled by the Democratic National Committee. This committee has seen over 90 witnesses, 90, either take the fifth amendment or flee the country to avoid testifying, more than 90.

The fact that all of these people have invoked their fifth amendment right to avoid self-incrimination is a pretty strong indication that a lot of crimes have been committed. Tomorrow the committee will vote on immunity for four witnesses, all of whom have previously invoked their right against self-incrimination. The Democrats on the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight have voted once to block immunity and keep these witnesses from testifying. I hope that tomorrow they will reconsider and vote to allow this investigation to move forward as it should.

This investigation has seen enough obstruction and enough stonewalling for a lifetime. Before tomorrow's vote, I want to lay out for the American people and my colleagues what has happened in this investigation over the last year, the stalling and the delaying tactics that have been used against us and what has brought us to this point. I want to give a comprehensive summary of events so I am not going to yield to my colleagues during this speech.

I became chairman of the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight in January of 1997. The President said he would give his full cooperation to all congressional investigations of illegal foreign fund-raising, including ours. So why are we conducting this investigation? Because there is very strong evidence that crimes were committed.

Let us take a look at some of the allegations that compelled us to begin this investigation: that the DNC had accepted millions of dollars in illegal foreign campaign contributions; that $3 million of the $4.5 million in contributions attributed to John Huang had to be returned because of suspicions about their origins; that the Chinese Government had developed and implemented a plan to influence the elections in the United States of America; that Charlie Trie, a friend of the President's from Arkansas, had funneled close to $700,000 in contributions associated with a Taiwanese cult to the President's legal defense fund; that Charlie Trie's Macao-based benefactor had wired him in excess of $1 million from overseas banks; that Charlie Trie was behind roughly $600,000 in suspicious contributions to the Democratic National Committee; that Pauline Kanchanalak and her family funneled a half a million dollars to the Democratic National Party from Thailand; that Chinese gun merchants, Cuban drug smugglers and Russian mob figures were being invited to intimate White House events with the President in exchange for campaign contributions; that the former associate Attorney General received $700,000 from friends and associates of the President, including $100,000 from the Riady family at a time when he was supposed to be cooperating with a criminal investigation.

These are serious allegations about serious crimes. The Justice Department recently brought indictments against three of these individuals and a fourth, Johnny Chung has pled guilty.

In January 1997, I sent letters to the White House requesting copies of all documents relating to this investigation. I asked for documents regarding John Huang, Charlie Trie, White House fund-raisers, et cetera. I gave the White House a chance to cooperate. Chairman Clinger, who preceded me, had written to the White House in October of 1996, and requested all documents regarding John Huang. Press reports had indicated that the White House had already assembled these documents and had them in boxes at the White House before the end of 1996.

The entire month of February passed and we received only a trickle of documents from the White House. In March it was clear that the White House was not going to comply voluntarily. The President had offered his cooperation at the beginning of the year, but the White House refused to turn over documents to the committee. The White House campaign of stalling had begun. So I issued a subpoena for the documents. I held a meeting with the President's new White House counsel, Mr. Charles Ruff. Mr. Ruff assured me that the President would not assert executive privilege over any of the documents. The White House continued to resist turning over documents despite

the lawful subpoena that we sent to them.

Despite the earlier assurances, they told us they intended to claim executive privilege, even though they had said previously the President would not on over 60 documents that were relevant to the fund-raising scandal. It had always been White House policy not to claim executive privilege whenever personal wrongdoing or potential criminal conduct was being investigated. President Clinton's own counsel, Lloyd Cutler, had reiterated this policy early in the Clinton administration. But now President Clinton was using executive privilege to block our investigation.

The month of April passed and little or no progress had been made in getting the documents we called for in our subpoena. This was more than four months after my first document request had been sent to the White House.

In May, I was compelled to schedule a committee meeting to hold White House counsel Charles Ruff in contempt of Congress. More than four months had passed since I asked for the President's cooperation in producing documents and there had been nothing but stalling and more stalling. It was only with this sword hanging over their heads that the White House finally began to make efforts to comply with our subpoena.

Mr. Ruff agreed to turn over all documents required by the subpoena within 6 weeks. He also agreed to allow committee attorneys to review documents on their privilege log to determine if the committee needed to have them. We reviewed those documents. We did need many of them.

After months of stalling, we finally got some of them. By June, Mr. Ruff provided me with a letter stating that the White House had and I quote, to the best of his knowledge, end of quote, turned over every document in their possession required by the subpoena. We would find out later that that was not true.

All the while we were struggling to get documents from the White House, I was subjected to a steady stream of mudslinging and vicious personal attacks from Democratic operatives and others close to the President. The DNC, which at the time was resisting complying with our subpoena, was spending thousands of dollars conducting opposition research on my background to try to intimidate me. They produced a scurrilous 20-page report detailing every trip I had ever taken, the contributions I had received over the years, my financial disclosure statements and anything else they could find.

This document, which made outrageous and untrue accusations against me, was faxed around to reporters in an effort to drum up negative publicity about me and intimidate me. So much for cooperation with a legitimate congressional campaign investigation.

In March, the week my committee's budget was to be voted on by the House, a former executive director of the Democratic National Committee made a slanderous accusation that I shook him down for campaign contributions. His accusation was printed on the front page of the Washington Post. His actions, which are completely untrue and absurd on their face, became the subject of a Justice Department investigation.

□ 1645

As it turns out, this individual, Mark Siegel, was a former Carter White House aide, a former DNC executive director, a Democratic fund-raiser and a Democratic lobbyist. More importantly, it became known later that he is a close friend and business associate of then-White House attorney Lanny Davis.

His accusations were clearly politically motivated and timed to hurt the chances for approval of our budget for the investigation. So much for cooperation from the Democrats.

Other sleazy accusations were being dished out to the press by anonymous Democratic agents. One reporter from my home State received derogatory information about me in an unmarked manila envelope without any return address. One Washington reporter got an anonymous phone call and was told to go to a phone booth, a phone booth in the Rayburn Building, and look in the back of the phone book. He went to that phone booth and found an envelope of defamatory information about me glued to the inside of the back of the phone book.

Talk about cloak and dagger. This is the type of smear campaign that every committee chairman who has attempted to conduct oversight of the White House has been subjected to.

They attempted to smear the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. LEACH), they attempted to smear Chairman, former Congressman Bill Clinger, they attempted to smear Senator D'AMATO, they attempted to smear Senator FRED THOMPSON, they even attempted to smear FBI Director Louis Freeh when he sought to convince the Attorney General to appoint an independent counsel. And, of course, Mr. Starr has been smeared, and everybody else that has investigated any aspect of the White House.

What does this kind of behavior by the Democratic Party say to the American people? Is this cooperation? Were these smear campaigns orchestrated by the White House? That is something the American people have a right to know.

In February of 1997, my staff learned, by reading The Washington Post, that the White House had sought a briefing from the FBI about the evidence it had gathered about Chinese efforts to infiltrate our political system and to affect the outcomes of elections. For obvious reasons, the FBI resisted giving such a briefing. The criminal investigation potentially implicated members of the White House staff.

I learned from discussions with FBI Director Louis Freeh that at a time he was traveling in the Middle East, senior officials at the Justice Department attempted to provide this information about the ongoing criminal investigation to the White House, that was part of the investigation, a move that the FBI adamantly opposed.

According to Director Freeh, when his staff learned that the Justice Department lawyers were planning on giving this information to the White House, Director Freeh's chief of staff called him on his airplane halfway around the world in a last-ditch effort to stop the transfer of this information to the White House, which could have potentially jeopardized the investigation. Director Freeh was forced to make an emergency phone call to the Attorney General from his plane in the Middle East to intervene and stop that process.

When the Attorney General testified before our committee in December, she told a different version of events. She testified that she initiated the call to Director Freeh on his airplane to consult with him about providing the information to the White House. However, when Director Freeh testified the next day, he confirmed that it was he who initiated the call, after his staff warned him that the FBI was being circumvented so that sensitive information could be provided to the White House against the FBI's wishes.

Now, let us go back to the White House. The stonewalling and the obstruction from the White House did not stop following our agreement with Mr. Ruff, the President's chief counsel. The letter I received in June of 1997 from Mr. Ruff assured me that, quote, to the best of his knowledge, all documents relevant to our investigation had been provided to the committee. Unfortunately, these assurances were hollow. They were false.

Throughout the summer, boxes of newly discovered documents dribbled into the committee offices. Often, when the documents contained damaging revelations, they were leaked to the press before being provided to the committee. On one occasion, on a Friday night, we got about 12 boxes of documents. We did not even open them until the next Monday. But in the Saturday morning papers there was information that was in those boxes in the papers, and the White House was accusing us of leaking the information when we had not even opened the boxes.

When this happened, the documents were normally given to reporters late on a Friday or over a busy weekend to try to deaden their impact on the American people.

It was not unusual to receive documents pertaining to a White House or a DNC employee shortly after that employee was deposed. This forced us, on a continuing basis, to consider redeposing witnesses, costing additional time and money.

In the Senate, Senator THOMPSON faced the same obstacles. Last July, the Senate Committee on Governmental Affairs heard 2 days of testimony from DNC Finance Director Richard Sullivan. The evening following Sullivan's testimony, after he testified, the White House delivered several boxes of documents shedding new light on Sullivan's activities. The chairman of the committee in the other body was so infuriated that he canceled his agreement allowing the White House to provide documents voluntarily and he issued his first subpoena to the White House.

On August 1, more Richard Sullivan documents turned up at the Democratic National Committee. The DNC turned over several boxes of memos and handwritten notes from the filing cabinet in Sullivan's office.

The idea that the DNC could have overlooked drawers and drawers of relevant documents right in Richard Sullivan's office strains credibility. The Senate was forced to redepose Mr. Sullivan.

The final straw came in October when the White House videotapes were discovered. The White House had in its possession close to 100 videotapes of the President speaking and mingling with subjects of our investigation at DNC fund-raisers and White House coffees. The President could be seen at the White House fund-raisers with John Huang, James Riady, Pauline Kanchanalak, Charlie Trie, and many others.

In one tape the President could be seen introduced at a fund-raiser to Charlie Trie and several foreign businessmen as ''The Trie Team.'' This was serious evidence that the White House had withheld from Congress and the Justice Department investigation for over 6 months.

Despite the fact our subpoena clearly ordered the production of any relevant videotapes, the White House had, for 6 months, failed to reveal their existence. It was only under pressure from a Senate investigator, who had received a tip from a source, that the White House admitted to the existence of the tapes. In other words, they did not turn over the fund-raising tapes until their hand was caught in the cookie jar.

Charles Ruff has said publicly that he was informed of the existence of the tapes on Wednesday, October 1. Now, remember this. The President's counsel said he was informed of the existence of the tapes on Wednesday, October 1. He met with Attorney General Janet Reno on Thursday, October 2, the day after he found out about the tapes. He did not inform the Attorney General at that meeting that the tapes existed and that they had not been turned over to the Justice Department. I believe he had an obligation to do so.

Now, this was a critical week, because the Attorney General was in the process of deciding whether to seek the appointment of an independent counsel and she had to make her decision on Friday, October 3. So the President's counsel knew about the tapes on the 1st, he talked to the Attorney General on the 2nd, she had to make her decision on the 3rd, but he did not tell her about it. And so she made the decision not to appoint an independent counsel. Had she known about those tapes, her decision might have been otherwise.

On Friday, the Attorney General released a letter declining to appoint an independent counsel. The tapes were not released until the Justice Department—until the weekend. Another stonewalling. In other words, Mr. Ruff had a face-to-face meeting with the Attorney General. He failed to disclose to her that the fund-raising videotapes existed and allowed her to make a very important decision on an independent counsel without having any knowledge of them.

That is just wrong. It is obstruction of our investigation and all these investigations.

I called Charles Ruff and the other attorneys from the White House counsel's office to testify before our committee in November, to answer for their failure to produce these tapes. Under questioning from a committee attorney, White House Deputy Counsel Cheryl Mills admitted that she and White House Counsel Jack Quinn had withheld from the committee for 1 year an important document related to the investigation of political uses of the White House database.

The document in question was a page of notes taken by a White House staffer that indicated the President's desire to integrate the White House database with the DNC's database, which is not legal. This document had a direct bearing on the subcommittee's investigation. Cheryl Mills admitted that she had kept the document in a file in her office for over a year, based on a legal sleight of hand. Her behavior in this instance was another in a long string of incidents that reflected the White House's desire to stall and delay congressional investigations of its alleged misconduct. This kind of behavior is inexcusable for a White House attorney and a public servant.

It was not the only time the subcommittee has faced obstructionism. The White House official most directly responsible for developing the controversial database was Marsha Scott. Committee attorneys had to attempt to depose Ms. Scott on three separate occasions to overcome her refusal to answer questions.

This April, Ms. Scott was subpoenaed to attend a deposition. She arrived for the deposition, began to answer questions, and then abruptly got up and walked out of the deposition. This committee has never seen a witness who was under subpoena walk out in the middle of a deposition.

The subcommittee chairman, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. MCINTOSH), was forced to call an emergency meeting of the subcommittee at 8 o'clock that night to force Ms. Scott to return and answer the questions.

This is typical of the kinds of obstruction this committee has encountered while dealing with this White House.

The White House strategy was accurately described in a recent New York Post editorial as ''The Four Ds: Deny, Delay, Denigrate and Distract.'' It appears that the White House's game plan has been to stall and obstruct legitimate investigations for as long as possible and then criticize the length of the investigations, all the while attacking the investigators.

It has been fairly noted by a number of leading editorial pages that if the President and his subordinates would simply cooperate and tell the truth, these investigations could be wrapped up quickly. The Committee on Government Reform and Oversight continued to have White House documents dribble in as late as last December, 6 months after Charles Ruff had certified they had given us everything.

Since January of last year, I have been seeking information from the Justice Department about its investigations into allegations that the Government of Vietnam may have attempted to bribe Commerce Secretary Ron Brown to influence policy on the normalization of relations with Vietnam, even though we had not had complete reporting on the 2,300 or 2,400 POWs and MIAs left behind.

The New York Times reported that the Justice Department had received evidence of international wire transfers related to the case, that there was money transferred from Hanoi to another bank. There was information in the papers about that. Despite the fact that the Justice Department had closed the case, they were resisting providing any information to my committee.

On Tuesday, July 8, because the Justice Department would not give me the information, I sent a subpoena to the Attorney General and the Justice Department demanding this information.

Now, get this: 3 days later, after I sent a subpoena to the Attorney General, on Friday, July 11, my campaign had an FBI agent walk in and give us a subpoena for 5 years of my campaign records. Although Mr. Siegel had made his allegations against me in March, there had been no signs of any investigative activity within the Justice Department until I sent a subpoena to the Attorney General about Mr. Brown and that FBI report.

Was this a case of retaliation? That is a question the American people have a right to have answered, and I think I do, too.

This committee has faced obstructions from the White House. That is obvious. It is also true that this committee has faced serious obstructions from other governments in this world.

We tried to send a team of investigators to China and Hong Kong earlier this year. There are important witnesses that need to be interviewed to find out who is behind major wire

transfers of money that wound up being funneled into campaigns in this country. The Chinese Government turned us down flat. They would not give visas to our investigators.

We attempted to get information from the Bank of China about who originated the wire transfers of hundreds of thousands of dollars to Charlie Trie, Ng Lap Seng and others. The Bank of China told us they are an arm of the Chinese Government and they would not comply with our subpoena.

I wrote to the President and asked for his assistance to break through this logjam with the Chinese Government. We have received no answer and no assistance whatsoever from the White House.

My friends on the Democratic side of the aisle are fond of complaining about the number of subpoenas I have issued. For the record, I have issued just over 600 since the investigation began a year-and-a-half ago. There is a very simple reason that I have been compelled to issue that many subpoenas. This committee has received absolutely no cooperation from more than 90 key witnesses and participants in efforts to funnel foreign money into U.S. campaigns. And many of these people are personal friends of the President, many of these people worked in the White House, and they have taken the Fifth or fled the country.

More than 90 witnesses have either taken the Fifth to avoid incriminating themselves or fled the country to avoid testifying because they possibly are involved in criminal activity.

The Justice Department did not receive much cooperation either. Director Freeh, when he testified before the committee last December, told us that they had issued over 1,000 subpoenas from the FBI.

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Fifty-three people have taken the fifth. These include Webb Hubbell, the President's hand-picked Associate Attorney General; John Huang, the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Commerce, who was in the White House over 100 times during the President's first term; and Mark Middleton, a high-level aide in the office of the White House Chief of Staff.

I want to be clear about what this means. High-level appointees of the President have exercised their fifth amendment rights against self-incrimination in criminal investigations, in crimes. These people do not want to testify because they do not want to admit to the commission of any crime that they may have been involved in. And these are people that have worked in the White House close to the President, his friends.

Thirty-eight witnesses have either fled the country or refused to make themselves available to be interviewed in their countries or their residence. There has never before in the history of this country been a congressional investigation that has had to investigate a scandal that is so broad and so international in scope. There has never before been a congressional investigation that has seen and had over 90 witnesses refuse to cooperate or flee the country.

The fact that we have had so many non-cooperating witnesses is the reason that we have had to issue so many subpoenas. For instance, Charlie Trie, even though he has returned to the United States, has refused to cooperate with the committee. To overcome this problem, we had to issue 117 subpoenas to banks, phone companies, businesses, and other individuals to get information that Mr. Trie could have provided himself to us and to the committee. We have had to issue 60 subpoenas to attempt to get information about Ted Sioeng.

Ted Sioeng and his family have given $400,000 to the Democrat National Committee. They have also given $150,000 to Republican causes. Not only has Ted Sioeng fled the country, but more than a dozen people associated with them have left as well. I mean, they are all heading for the hills. If Ted Sioeng would come back to the United States and cooperate with this investigation, we would not have to issue all of these subpoenas.

Eighty percent of the subpoenas I have issued have been targeted to get information about half a dozen individuals who have been implicated in this scandal and who have taken the fifth amendment to avoid testifying.

Just to be clear, more than 90 people have taken the fifth amendment or fled the country. That is scandalous. It has never happened before in the history of this country. Friends of the President, friends of the administration, contributors, leaders from other countries, have all headed for the hills. This is unprecedented. This should be a clear indication to people of the extent of the lawbreaking that occurred during the last campaign.

At this point, I would like to say a few things about the release of the Webster Hubbell tapes, which we read about in the papers last week. First, Webster Hubbell was the Associate Attorney General of the United States. He was hand-picked by President Clinton to serve as one of the highest law enforcement officers in our land. Within a year, he was forced to resign in disgrace because of a criminal investigation into fraud at his law firm. He was eventually convicted and served 18 months in prison.

Between the time he resigned, between the time he left the Justice Department and he was convicted, about 6 or 7 months later, he received $700,000 in payments from friends and associates of the President's for doing little or no work; and many people believe that was hush money. One hundred thousand dollars came from the Riady family in Indonesia, owners of the Lippo Group. This payment came within a few days of 10 meetings at the White House, some including the President himself, involving the President, John Huang, James Riady, and Webster Hubbell. Serious allegations have been made that this $700,000 was hush money meant to keep Mr. Hubbell silent. A criminal investigation is underway. And Mr. Hubbell was just indicted for failure to pay almost $900,000 in taxes.

The American people have a right to know what happened. They have a right to know why Mr. Hubbell received this money and what he did for it. There is no such thing as a free lunch, and people do not shell out $700,000 for nothing. We would expect the President's hand-picked appointee to a powerful Justice Department position would be the first to volunteer to cooperate with the congressional investigation.

Instead, Mr. Hubbell, a close friend of the President, former leader at the Justice Department, has taken the fifth amendment and remains silent. This has forced us to seek other sources of information. And that is why I subpoenaed the prison tapes of Mr. Hubbell's phone conversations.

Out of 150 hours of conversations, my staff prepared just over 1 hour for release to the public, private conversations that had nothing to do with our investigation, and we screened those out. What was contained in that hour of conversations raises troubling questions. Given the seriousness of the allegations, this material deserves to be on the public record.

On these tapes, we hear Mrs. Hubbell say that she fears that she will lose her job at the Interior Department if Mr. Hubbell takes actions that will hurt the Clintons. We heard Mrs. Hubbell say that she feels she is being squeezed by the White House. Webster Hubbell states, after she says that, that ''I guess I must roll over just one more time.'' ''Roll over one more time.'' These statements raise very disturbing questions about the conduct of the White House and the conduct of the Hubbells. The American people have a right to know the answers.

Let me say a couple things about the charges of selective editing. Mistakes were made in the editing process. As chairman, I take responsibility for those mistakes. But they were just that, innocent mistakes. In the process of editing 149 hours of personal conversations, the staff cut out a couple of paragraphs that should have been left in. Here are a few points to be kept in mind. We are not talking about transcripts. What were prepared were logs of the conversations, logs, summaries of information on the tapes. They were not verbatim transcripts and they were never identified as such. They were logs of where these conversations came from out of the 150 hours of tapes that was condensed on to one.

Exculpatory statements about both Mrs. Clinton and other Clinton administration officials were left in the logs. In one case, an exculpatory statement by Mr. Hubbell about Mrs. Clinton was underlined to highlight it. The tapes were never altered. This charge has

been repeated time and time again by the Democrats and it is false. The tapes were not altered.

Once the tapes were made public, reporters were allowed to listen to and record the appropriate sections of the tapes in their entirety. These sections included the statements about Mrs. Clinton and Mr. Hubbell that have been complained about. How can anyone argue that there was an intent to deceive when reporters were allowed to listen to the comments I have been accused of deleting?

Finally, in an effort to end once and for all these charges of selective editing, I have released the tapes of these 50 conversations in their entirety, even though I did not want to because there is personal stuff in there that I did not think should be in the public domain, but the integrity of the investigation had to be maintained.

What I find most unfortunate is that this incident has detracted from the important facts about the Hubbell tapes that it appears that Mr. Hubbell and his wife were under a great deal of pressure to keep their mouths shut. This is something that absolutely must be investigated. It is something that the American people absolutely have a right to know. She felt she was being squeezed by the White House, and he felt he had to roll over one more time. He had to roll over one more time.

And when we have over 90 people fleeing the country or taking the fifth amendment, we have to wonder if Mr. Hubbell is only one of a number that are scared to talk, that are afraid to say anything because of pressure from the White House.

This brings us to tomorrow's committee meeting. Tomorrow we will try to break through this stone wall one more time by granting immunity to four witnesses. The Justice Department has agreed to immunity. The Justice Department has agreed to immunity. They have been thoroughly consulted. The Justice Department has already immunized two of these witnesses themselves. There is no reason to oppose immunity. Yet 19 Democrats on the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight voted in lock step against immunity. They voted to prevent these witnesses from telling the truth to the American people.

I want to tell the American people a little bit about who these witnesses are. Two of these witnesses were employees of Johnny Chung. They were involved in his conduit contribution schemes, bringing money from illegal sources into the DNC. They were involved in setting up many of his meetings at the White House and with other government officials.

Kent La is a very important witness. He is a business associate of Ted Sioeng, one of the people that had fled the country. He is the U.S. distributor of Red Pagoda Mountain cigarettes. Ted Sioeng has a major stake in these cigarettes. This is the best selling brand of cigarettes in China. This company is owned by the Communist Chinese Government. It is the third largest cigarette selling in the world. This company is owned by the Chinese Government, and it is a convenient way to funnel money into campaigns in the United States by Ted Sioeng, Kent La, and others.

Ted Sioeng and his associates gave $400,000 in contributions to the Democrat National Committee. Of that amount, Kent La gave $50,000. Was that money from Red Pagoda cigarettes from the Chinese Communist Government? We need to find out. The American people have a right to know.

Every witness that we have spoken to says that ''If you want to understand Ted Sioeng, you have got to talk to Kent La.'' And that is one of the people we want to talk to, but we have to get immunity for him first. Kent La has invoked the fifth amendment. He will not testify without immunity. But the Democrats on our committee will not grant him immunity. The Democrats have voted to block immunity. I cannot, for the life of me, understand why they want to do that.

This is not a partisan issue. Ted Sioeng did not just give money to Democrats, he gave to both sides. He gave $150,000 to Republican causes as well as the Democrats. So this is not a partisan issue with Kent La and Ted Sioeng. It seems very clear that most of this half a million dollars donated by Ted Sioeng and his associates came from profits of selling Chinese cigarettes around the world. Kent La is the one individual who can tell us if this is true or not. I do not understand why my colleagues want to keep this witness from testifying and protect a major Communist Chinese cigarette company, especially when the gentleman from California, who has been such a forceful advocate of reducing smoking here in the United States, is one of those voting against immunity.

We have a number of good members on my committee on both sides of the aisle. I think we have conscientious members, both Democrat and Republican, who are outraged by some of the things that have happened during the last election. I hope all of my colleagues are thinking long and hard about their votes, and I hope that they will reconsider and support immunity tomorrow.

Now, in conclusion, I have tried throughout this discussion to try to make clear to the American people and my colleagues that this is an investigation that has faced countless obstacles, stone walls. We have faced obstruction from the White House. We have faced stalling from the Democrat National Committee. We have faced non-cooperation from foreign governments. We have had over 90 people take the fifth amendment or flee the country because they did not want to testify because of criminal activity.

However, we will continue. There are very serious allegations of crimes that have been committed, and the American people have a right to know. I hope that tomorrow we will start to tear down the stone wall by granting immunity to these four witnesses and getting on with the investigation. None of this should be covered up. The American people have a very clear right to know if our government was compromised. They have a right to know if foreign contributions influenced our foreign policy, if it endangered our national defense. These are things the American people have a right to know, and we are going to do our dead level best to make sure they get that right and they get to know it.

PROCEDURE FOR CONSIDERATION OF CAMPAIGN REFORM LEGISLATION

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

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, on April 22, the leadership issued a statement committing that campaign reform legislation would be brought to the floor and fully debated under an open rule permitting substitutes an amendments. The statement provided that the base bill would be H.R. 2183, the bipartisan freshman bill.

The leadership statement further provided that substitutes would be printed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD prior to consideration of the legislation.

While the Committee on Rules will not actually vote on a rule until next week, it is necessary to lay the ground work in order to carry out the commitment by the Republican leadership.

Since the House will not be conducting business on either this Friday or next Monday, any Member who has an amendment in the nature of a substitute for the campaign reform bill should submit it for printing in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD by the close of business this Thursday, May 14. That is two days from now, two full days.

At the same time, a brief explanation of the substitute should be submitted to the Committee on Rules so that the Committee on Rules will be able to compile a list of all the substitutes that are filed and make those available to the public. Filing substitutes this Thursday means that Members who want to offer perfecting, second degree, amendments to those substitutes will have time to prepare them.

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Under an open amending process, any Member may offer any perfecting amendment that complies with the rules of the House to any of the substitutes; that means any germane amendment.

If any Member wants to offer a perfecting amendment which does not comply with the rules of the House to any of these substitutes, that means any nongermane amendment, then they are going to have to submit that