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PRELIMINARY INVENTORY OF THE  
RECORDS OF THE  
SPECIAL COMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE  
CAMPAIGN EXPENDITURES, 82D  
CONGRESS  
(1952)

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## INTRODUCTION

It has been for some time the practice of the House of Representatives to appoint, early in the second session of a Congress, a special committee to exercise surveillance over the biennial campaigns of candidates for election to the lower chamber of Congress. Accordingly, the House of Representatives, on May 12, 1952, adopted House Resolution 558, 82d Congress, which created such a committee of five members.

The resolution, submitted on March 6, 1952, by Representative John W. McCormack, of Massachusetts, provided in part as follows:

"Resolved, That a special committee of five Members be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives to investigate and report to the House not later than January 3, 1953, with respect to the following matters:

- "1. The extent and nature of expenditures made by all candidates for the House of Representatives in connection with their campaign for nomination and election to such office.
- "2. The amounts subscribed, contributed, or expended, and the value of services rendered, and facilities made available (including personal services, use of advertising space, radio and television time, office space, moving-picture films, and automobile and other transportation facilities) by any individual, individuals, or group of individuals, committee, partnership, corporation, or labor union, to or on behalf of each such candidate in connection with any such campaign or for the purpose of influencing the votes cast or to be cast at any convention or election held in 1952 to which a candidate for the House of Representatives is to be nominated or elected.
- "3. The use of any other means or influence (including the promise or use of patronage) for the purpose of aiding or influencing the nomination or election of any such candidates.
- "4. The amounts, if any, raised, contributed, and expended by any individual, individuals, or group of individuals, committee, partnership, corporation, or labor union, including any political

committee thereof, in connection with any such election, and the amounts received by any political committee from any corporation, labor union, individual, individuals, or group of individuals, committee, or partnership.

"5. The violations, if any, of the following statutes of the United States:

(a) The Federal Corrupt Practices Act.

(b) The Act of August 2, 1939, as amended, relating to pernicious political activities, commonly referred to as the Hatch Act.

(c) The provisions of section 304, Public Law 101, Eightieth Congress, chapter 120, first session, referred to as the Labor-Management Relations Act, 1947.

(d) Any statute or legislative Act of the United States, or of the State within which a candidate is seeking nomination or re-election to the House of Representatives, the violation of which Federal or State statute, or statutes, would affect the qualification of a Member of the House of Representatives within the meaning of article I, section 5, of the Constitution of the United States.

"6. Such other matters relating to the election of Members of the House of Representatives in 1952, and the campaigns of candidates in connection therewith, as the committee deems to be of public interest, and which in its opinion will aid the House of Representatives in enacting remedial legislation, or in deciding any contests that may be instituted involving the right to a seat in the House of Representatives."

On June 16, 1952, the Speaker of the House appointed as members of the Special Committee to Investigate Campaign Expenditures, 82d Congress, Representatives Hale Boggs, of Louisiana (chairman); John J. Rooney, of New York; Frank M. Karsten, of Missouri; Kenneth B. Keating, of New York; and William M. McCulloch, of Ohio. Gillis W. Long became the general counsel to the committee. House Resolution 691, 82d Congress, agreed to on July 2, 1952, provided:

"Resolved, That the expenses of conducting the investigation authorized by H. Res. 558, considered and agreed to on May 12, 1952, incurred by the Special Committee To Investigate Campaign

Expenditures, 1952, acting as a whole or by subcommittee, not to exceed \$30,000, including expenditures for employment of such experts, special counsel, and such clerical, stenographic, and other assistants, shall be paid out of the contingent fund of the House on vouchers authorized by said committee and signed by the chairman of the committee, and approved by the Committee on House Administration.

"Sec. 2. The official stenographers to committees may be used at all hearings held in the District of Columbia, if not otherwise engaged."

At the outset, the committee decided that in view of the time and financial limitations obtaining, it could best execute the trust committed to it by furnishing the candidates for the House with information on pertinent Federal election laws, and on the jurisdiction and policy of the committee; by conducting investigations of particular campaigns only upon complaints, signed by candidates, which established prima facie cases for action; and by studying the effectiveness of the election laws on the books with a view of recommending remedial legislation wherever needed. However, the committee reserved the right to initiate on its own volition an investigation of a particular campaign, or of any other concern which it believed would better enable it to carry out the duties imposed by House Resolution 558.

The committee embarked upon its work by preparing, with the assistance of the American Law Section of the Library of Congress, a committee print entitled "Information of Importance to Candidates for Office of United States Representative in the Eighty-third Congress." The print, mailed to every candidate for the House, presented relevant information

on the provisions of the United States Constitution, of the Federal Corrupt Practices Act, of the Hatch Act, of the Pendleton Act, and of the Powers Act. In addition, the publication supplied facts about the committee's jurisdiction and policy.

In the course of its existence, the committee received several complaints invoking its intervention in election campaigns. Three of the complaints reached the committee so late that it had no time to act on them. They came from Representative John T. Wood, of Idaho; from Theodore Gunnett, chairman of the Lawrence County Democratic Committee of Pennsylvania; and from Edmund Campbell, candidate for the House from the 10th Congressional District of Virginia. Representative Wood asked the committee to recount the votes cast for United States Representative from the 1st Congressional District of Idaho, on the ground that his opponent had received only a small plurality of the votes, that the State of Idaho had failed to provide recount machinery, and that his opponent was possibly guilty of improprieties in the conduct of his campaign. From Mr. Gunnett the committee received information charging "error, negligence ... and perhaps fraud" in the general election for United States Representative from the 25th Congressional District of Pennsylvania. Alleging possible errors of tabulation and the erroneous voiding of ballots, Mr. Campbell, the defeated candidate, petitioned the committee to recount the votes cast for United States Representative from the 10th Congressional District of Virginia. The committee .

disposed of the complaints of Messrs. Wood and Campbell by apprising them that because the days of the committee were numbered, it had no time to inquire into their charges; and, further, that they had the right to contest the elections before the House committee on Administration in the 83d Congress. On the other hand, to this standing committee the special committee referred the charges made by Mr. Gunnett.

Of the complaints seasonably received by the committee pertaining to particular political campaigns, it investigated only three, since they were the only complaints which established prima facie cases for full action. These complaints involved the Democratic primary election for United States Representative from the 25th Congressional District of California, the general election for Representative at Large from Nevada, and the Democratic primary election for United States Representative from the 1st Congressional District of West Virginia.

Earlier committees of the Senate and of the House of Representatives charged with duties similar to those of the special committee had found that existing Federal laws governing political campaign expenditures and elections were in need of revision, because of the widespread disregard or evasion of these statutes in the spirit, if not in the letter. From the beginning of its existence, the select committee, in accordance with House Resolution 558, 82d Congress, studied these Federal laws, with the intent of presenting a bill which would strengthen and codify them. However, the committee discovered that the task of

framing comprehensive remedial legislation was too complex to be entrusted to a special committee on campaign expenditures, laboring under limitations of time and of research resources. In consequence, it felt that in the 83d Congress, the House of Representatives should delegate this duty to a standing committee. Nevertheless, the committee presented, for the benefit of such a standing committee, "certain basic considerations" which had evolved from its study of, and from the public hearings held from December 1 to 5, 1952, on, the problem:

"1. Money should not be allowed to become the determining factor in deciding who our public servants will be. Balanced against this is the right of a free people to express themselves freely with respect to the candidate of their choice -- and often the means by which such expression may be made effective is money.

"2. The right of the people freely to select the candidate of their own choosing should be secure. But there is a question whether the people's choice is truly 'free' if they are subjected to an overwhelming preponderance of the views of one party or candidate to the exclusion of others, through undue concentration of money.

"3. Citizens should have the right, irrespective of financial worth, to run for public office. But is there not also a right in a candidate and his supporters, who may happen to have greater financial power, to express their support of his campaign to whatever extent they deem necessary to insure the election of their 'best man'?

"4. Campaign contributions should be restricted, either as to source or size, or both, to the extent necessary to prevent the placing of our elective processes in the hands of a few people or groups. Balanced against this, however, is the right of a free people to spend their money as they see fit; and, to the extent that restrictions on its use are absolute, they may result in abridgment of freedom of speech to a corresponding extent. Through all these considerations, which are, in fact, only facets of the same question, runs the problem of possible undue regimentation and restriction of a people who cherish their political and economic freedoms above all others."

In addition, the majority of the members submitted several recommendations for the study of the framers of the new legislation:

"1. That the Federal election laws be made applicable to the nominating process, including primaries and nominating conventions.

"2. That the financial reporting requirements now applying to political committees be extended to include all organizations which accept contributions and make expenditures for the purpose of influencing or attempting to influence the election of candidates for Federal office.

"3. That the financial reporting requirements of existing law, now applicable only to activities and expenditures in two or more States, be extended to include activities and expenditures in a single State, if for the purpose of influencing or attempting to influence the election of candidates for Federal office.

"4. That the existing limitation of \$3,000,000 for national political committees be substantially raised, and a lower limit be established for political committees active in only one State, in accordance with recommendation 3.

"5. That the existing limitations on candidates for the Senate and House of Representatives of \$25,000 and \$5,000, respectively, be raised substantially, and that the law be clarified to indicate what expenditures are to be included in determining compliance.

"6. That the financial reports required to be filed by candidates, political committees, and others, be so revised as to indicate how much was spent by, or in aid or support of, each candidate for a Federal office.

"7. That the depository office receiving the financial reports be given the responsibility of insuring that they have been filed according to law, and of making them available for public inspection.

"8. That the present provision setting a limit of \$5,000 on individual contributions be revised to reflect more clearly the intention of the Congress. This provision, as presently written, is subject to a variety of interpretations, many of which constitute evasions of the spirit, if not the letter, of the law."

But a minority of the committee preferred to be noncommittal on these recommendations, saying:

"The basic recommendation of this committee, in which we join, is that the entire subject receive detailed study by one of the standing committees of the House of Representatives. It impresses us as somewhat presumptuous to suggest to that committee what its answers should be to the questions raised regarding the present state of the law on the subject of political contributions and expenditures. We do not necessarily disagree, nor agree, with the specific recommendations made by the majority of the committee."

With the presentation of its report (House Report 2517, 82d Congress, 2d Session, 106 pp.) to the House of Representatives on January 3, 1953, the committee concluded its labors.

The records described in this inventory, amounting to twelve cubic feet, are the records of the Special Committee to Investigate Campaign Expenditures, 82d Congress, and are a part of Record Group 233, records of the United States House of Representatives. No person may have access to, or receive information from, the records of the special committee, without having procured the express authorization of the House of Representatives.

ADMINISTRATIVE RECORDS. June 1952 - Dec. 1952. 1 ft.

1

Among the administrative records of the committee are correspondence of the chairman and of Mr. Long respecting the meetings of the committee; minutes of the committee; memoranda of committee counsel, and of the American Law Section of the Library of Congress, dealing with legislation governing political campaigns; personnel records; press releases; reading file; staff memoranda; biographical sketches, prepared by the Library of Congress, of prospective witnesses of the Committee; prepared statements of witnesses, submitted for inclusions in the committee's record; copies of vouchers showing disbursements of the committee for salaries, travel, and other expenses; surrendered credentials of staff members; mailing lists, showing the names and addresses of persons sent copies of the Committee's publications; and letters requesting copies of the committee's hearings. For a list showing the arrangement and headings of the records in this series, see Appendix A.

GENERAL RECORDS. July 1952 - Dec. 1952. 8 in.

2

Among these records are the general correspondence of the committee, particularly relating to political advertisements in the press, and to the type of records on political campaign expenditures maintained by some of the States; copies of publications of the Committee for Constitutional Government, of the Constitutional Educational League, of the National Economic Council, Inc., and of the Life Insurance Policyholders Protective Association; correspondence regarding charges lodged with the committee alleging wrongful political campaign tactics represented as meriting the attention of the committee, together with some accompanying documents. Arranged alphabetically by subject.

RECORDS RELATING TO THE INVESTIGATION OF THE PRIMARY ELECTION IN  
CALIFORNIA. July 1952 - Nov. 1952. 7 in.

3

On August 22, 1952, the committee received a complaint from Woodrow Wilson Sayre, a candidate for the Democratic nomination for U. S. Representative from the Twenty-fifth Congressional District of California. It alleged, in effect, that his only opponent for the nomination was incumbent Republican Representative Patrick J. Hillings, who had cross-filed as a Democrat; that the regular canvas of votes in the Democratic primary election, held on June 3, 1952, showed that Mr. Sayre had received exactly 30,000 votes, and that Representative Hillings had won with 30,033 votes; and that being unable to obtain an order in the State courts for a recount of the votes in the Democratic primary, the petitioner urged the committee to supervise such a recount. The committee, deliberating on the complaint at a meeting on September 8, 1952, decided to conduct a recount of the votes; accordingly, the chairman dispatched to Los Angeles Gillis W. Long to discharge this task. Mr. Long, on September 22, 1952, filed with the committee the results of the recount, which gave Mr. Sayre 30,234 votes, and Mr. Hillings 30,204. The committee approved the report of its representative, and certified its findings to the Secretary of State of California. At length, Mr. Sayre's name appeared on the ballot for the general election, held on November 4, 1952, as the Democratic nominee for the House from the 25th Congressional District. Among the records of the investigation are the correspondence of the chairman and of the staff, investigative notes and memoranda, the complaint of Mr. Sayre, press clippings, exhibits, and the staff report on the recount. Arranged alphabetically by subject.

RECORDS RELATING TO THE INVESTIGATION OF THE GENERAL ELECTION IN  
NEVADA. Nov. 1952 - Dec. 1952. 3 in.

4

On November 26, 1952, the Honorable Walter S. Baring, Representative at Large from Nevada and the Democratic candidate for re-election to that office, sent to the committee a complaint representing that the official count of the votes for the election of the Representative at Large from Nevada in the general election of November 4, 1952, showed that the complainant had obtained 39,912 votes, and that his Republican opponent, the Honorable Clifton Young, had won with 40,885 ballots; that in reviewing the returns of this election, the Democratic National Committee had discovered numerous honestly made errors; and that since the complainant could not procure a recount of the ballots under the law of Nevada, which provided such redress only when fraud was charged, he requested the committee to recount the votes cast for the election of the Representative at Large from Nevada. On December 1, 1952, the committee decided to send its chief investigator, Walter L. Fitzpatrick, Jr., to Clark County, Nevada (alleged to be the main source of the errors) to make a preliminary examination of the election returns and of the records of election officers in that county, before determining whether it should undertake a recount of the ballots. Acting upon the investigator's findings, the committee shortly thereafter ordered a recount of the ballots cast in Clark County for the election of a Representative at Large and, in addition, a random check of precinct election returns and reports in Washoe County (Reno). The investigation conducted by the committee, involving a recount of almost 40% of the

ballots cast in the general election, disclosed numerous errors on the part of election officials, but that the correction of the errors did not change the outcome of the election. Among the records of the investigation are correspondence, memoranda, and notes of Mr. Fitzpatrick; exhibits; informational materials; correspondence of Mr. Gillis Long; tally sheets and other recount documents; and the complaint of Representative Baring. Arranged alphabetically by subject.

RECORDS RELATING TO THE INVESTIGATION OF THE PRIMARY ELECTION IN WEST VIRGINIA. July 1952 - Oct. 1952. 6 in.

5

In response to a written complaint, dated July 3, 1952, filed by Representative Robert L. Ramsay, of the First Congressional District of West Virginia, and by Representative E. H. Hedrick, of the Sixth Congressional District of West Virginia (a candidate for the governorship of that State), the chairman sent staff members Gillis W. Long and Walter F. Fitzpatrick to the First Congressional District of West Virginia to investigate the Democratic primary held there on May 13, 1952. The complaint charged (1) that large sums of money collected by certain officers of the State government from all or most of its appointive employees had been used by officers of the State administration to influence the voters of the election, (2) that "beer sellers" engaged in the illicit sale of hard liquor had been "lined up and coerced to vote as directed," (3) that funds collected from State employees had been paid to county committees which appointed all the "election officers whose duty it was to ... count and return the votes," and (4) that there had been a "deal and understanding" between high

officers of the Federal government and the State government controlling the expenditures of the funds allegedly collected from the State employees. The alleged frauds, the complainants argued, had influenced the vote for the nomination of candidates for U. S. Representative from the First Congressional District of West Virginia, and for the governorship of West Virginia. In a report to the committee, dated September 8, 1952, Messrs. Long and Fitzpatrick submitted their findings on the charges as they affected the Congressional campaign; the committee had no jurisdiction over Representative Hedrick's campaign for the governorship. The committee then transmitted a copy of the report to Representative Ramsay, and invited him to appear before it for a presentation of his views on the findings. Accordingly, the committee, on September 23, 1952, heard Representative Ramsay take exception to the investigators' report, and, on October 20, 1952, it voted to approve the report. Among the documentation of the investigation are affidavits of witnesses interviewed by the committee's investigators; memoranda embodying information derived by them from witnesses; notes of the investigators; correspondence of the chairman and of the staff; drafts of press releases; the investigators' report; memorandum of Representative Ramsay taking exceptions to the investigators' findings; clippings of West Virginia newspapers dealing with the primary election; and correspondence of Representative E. H. Hedrick relating to his campaign for the governorship of West Virginia. Arranged by subject.

MISCELLANEOUS RECORDS. Aug. 1952 - Dec. 1952. 10 in.

Most of the documents in this series furnish information on

contributions received, and disbursements made, by some political committees, for the 1952 Presidential campaign: Citizens for Eisenhower - Nixon, National Volunteers for Stevenson, Illinois Volunteers for Stevenson, the Stevenson - Sparkman Forum Committee, the Democratic National Committee, and Volunteers for Stevenson; the rest of the items consist in the main of printed reports and hearings of Senate and of other House committees for the 82d and earlier Congresses dealing with Congressional political campaigns. Also among the miscellaneous records are mimeographed informational materials from the Federal Communications Commission on subjects such as "editorializing by broadcast licensees," and the use of broadcast facilities by candidates for public office. Arranged alphabetically by subject.

APPENDIX A

List of folder headings in the Administrative Records  
(Entry 1)

The following list shows the arrangement and folder headings of the records described in entry<sup>1</sup> of this inventory:

Bills introduced pertaining to elections and campaigns, 82d Cong.

British corrupt practices legislation

Committee hearings

Committee meetings

Committee minutes

Committee print

"Congressional Quarterly"

Fitzpatrick, Walter L., Jr.

Travel file

Forms used by other committees

Forms used by past committees

Information of importance to candidates for Office of U. S. Representative  
in 83d Congress (Committee Print)

House Report No. 2469, Campaign Expenditures Committee, 1948

House Resolution 558, 82d Congress

House Resolution 691, 82d Congress

Lobbying registrations

Long, Gillis W. (General)

Long, Gillis W. (Travel file)

Members' travel file

Office, general

Personnel

Press releases

Proposed committee hearings

Reading file

Receipts, bills, etc.

Requests for committee report

Requests for hearings

Senate Subcommittee on Privileges and Elections of the Committee on  
Rules and Administration

Staff memoranda

Staff memoranda (extra copies)

State laws on campaign expenditures

Subversive organizations

Vouchers

Witness biographies

Witness biographies (extra copies)

Witness statements

Witness statements (extra copies)