

Obama Takes His Revenge on Veteran Rep. Charlie Rangel

Dec. 2—At 6:00 this evening, the 80-year-old war hero and 40-year veteran Roosevelt Democratic leader of the U.S. Congress, Rep. Charles Rangel (N.Y.), was forced to stand in the well of the House of Representatives to be dressed down by the discredited Speaker of the House, Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.).

Pelosi's handmaiden Zoe Lofgren (D-Calif.), the chairman of the "Ethics" Committee, was forced from the start to address the fact that the extreme penalty of censure had never been used for simple rules violations, as in this case. She said, "We're making precedent here; we have to be held to a higher standard."

"Does that mean we hang Pelosi?" asked Lyndon LaRouche.

Rangel's brief opening remarks recounted his heroic rescue of surrounded American troops in Korea 60 years ago, not in order to appeal for sympathy, as he said, but to recall that, after that engagement, he had vowed never to complain of anything in his life, but instead to dedicate it wholly to improving the quality of life of Americans, and, to the extent possible, of all humanity.

Rangel admitted he had broken some rules, but noted that no one had accused him of any concealment, any falsehood, or any self-enrichment. Censure has never been invoked in such a case.

He introduced Virginia Democrat Bobby Scott, who spoke in his colleague's defense and organized the other speakers defending Rangel. Scott stated that censure had never been used in such a case, and that numerous



Elbert Garcia

The censure of New York Rep. Charlie Rangel by House of Representatives, where he has served for 40 years, despite no evidence of corruption or self-enrichment, is proof that the Congress has lost the moral fitness to survive.

Members of Congress, who had been convicted of real, rather than procedural offenses, had been treated far more leniently, for example, Republican leaders Newt Gingrich (Ga.) and Tom DeLay (Tex.). Censure had been reserved for the most extreme cases of financial and sexual corruption, Scott said.

The lead counsel for the Ethics Committee had admitted that Rangel was innocent of corruption or self-enrichment, Scott pointed out. The only previous members cited for tax violations were those who had been bribed, and not paid taxes on the money. Republican

leaders Tom DeLay and Newt Gingrich had subverted the rules of the House to their own profit, and were found guilty of concealment, lying, and obstructing investigations, yet neither was censured. Gingrich even remained Speaker after his conviction.

Among Rangel's other defenders were Republican Peter King of Long Island, N.Y. (see below), and Democrat Charlie Gonzales of Texas. King said, "I'll vote against this; the findings don't warrant censure; this is an extraordinary procedure to use in this case."

'It's Not Fair, It's Not Just'

Gonzales began simply, "It's not fair; it's not just. Rep. Butterfield asked the chief counsel for the committee, 'Is there any evidence of personal benefit of corruption?' Answer: 'There is no evidence.' 'Any evidence he enriched himself?' 'No.'

"Since when did we forfeit our right to fairness and justice, when we entered the Congress?"

And then: "In a way, you are sitting as a jury. If you were jurors, you would have to take an oath of fairness, and to avoid any bias. But in reality, you fear political criticism for how you're going to vote on this issue."

Rep. Jo Bonner (R-Ala.), Ranking Member of the Ethics Committee, speaking against Rangel, drove the same point home—but from the other side: "We must all bear in mind how we are seen by our employers, the American people," who, Bonner claimed, Members should fear, were they to vote against censure.

Butterworth pointed out that, "Censure has always been an extreme punishment for outrageous conduct; it doesn't apply here." He introduced a substitute amendment calling for a letter of reprimand instead. This amendment failed with 146 in favor, including three Republicans, against 267 opposed, including 105 Democrats and 162 Republicans.

Censure then carried 333 to 79.

"There goes the Democratic Party," LaRouche concluded. "It's a gone bunny; in its present form, it's a gone bunny. It no longer has any respect. Because they lost their respect when they failed to act when they could have, before the recent election.

"This was Obama's revenge for Charlie's opposition to his candidacy for President," LaRouche said, referring to Rangel's support for Hillary Clinton.

"The point is, this thing, by the Congress, means that the leadership of the Congress will have, henceforth, no respect from the American people. No respect whatsoever."