

(As prepared for delivery)

Thank you, Madam Chair, for the opportunity to offer a few words.

We are nearing the end of what has been a long, difficult and unpleasant task.

And let me speak for just a moment about what makes this so unpleasant.

I know for a fact that many a newly-elected Member of Congress – on both sides of the aisle – have been welcomed to Capitol Hill by that bigger than life, gravelly voice of Charlie Rangel... who would often be one of the first senior members to take a lowly freshman aside and say “welcome.”

So before I go any further, I would personally like to thank you, Madam Chair, Ranking Member McCaul, and the other members of the Adjudicatory Subcommittee for the work you completed earlier this week.

Special thanks are also in order for the entire Committee staff as well as those who were involved in the Investigative phase of this matter which regretfully, but unavoidably, lasted for almost two years.

Individually and collectively, we have shown what the chairwoman stated on Tuesday was our moral obligation, *“to act with fairness, led only by the facts and the law”* as we attempt to discharge our duties.

As most everyone in this room knows, the work of this committee is often mundane and almost always done out of sight.

We give advice and education to Members of Congress and their staffs on what they can – and can't do – to be in compliance with the rules of the House.

We look into matters that have come to our attention to see whether or not a Member has crossed any inappropriate lines.

And as the American people have witnessed this week and in recent months at these rare – but not unprecedented – public proceedings, we have once again demonstrated that your elected representatives can deal with an obviously uncomfortable – *but absolutely necessary* charge that comes to us from the Constitution, itself, which requires that each House of Congress maintains the responsibility to punish its members for breaking either the rules of the House or the laws of our land, for disorderly behavior and for bringing discredit to this, the People's House.

As an aside, I found it especially ironic – and troublesome – that on the very day that almost 100 newly-elected members of the 112th Congress were arriving in Washington for their freshman orientation, in another room only a few steps away, a man who once wielded one of the most powerful gavels in town – and at one time was one of our most highly regarded colleagues – was showing so little regard and respect either for the Institution he has long proclaimed to love or to the people of the 15th District of New York, whom he has claimed to proudly represent for some 40 years.

Now I don't pretend to speak for Mr. Rangel's constituents. They have reelected him – often without opposition – more times than many of the members of Congress have been alive.

But while Mr. Rangel has tried repeatedly this week to claim the “*unfairness*” of what was happening to him, in my mind the most unfair thing of all was that his constituents were denied the opportunity to know these findings of fact – as determined by eight of his colleagues – four Republicans and four Democrats – before they, the voters in Harlem, had an opportunity to choose their representative earlier this year.

This process could have – and should have – been concluded earlier and as such, it is my view this committee failed the people of the 15th District of New York for this reason alone.

Before he marched out of the hearing on Monday, but even *after* the Subcommittee’s conviction by “clear and convincing evidence” on Tuesday, Mr. Rangel stated that this panel should now take into account his entire 40 years of service to the Congress – as well as his military record.

Let me be clear... his distinguished military service is not up for debate, nor is it a relevant part of this deliberation, as far as I am concerned.

For when the American people bestow upon us the privilege of being their “Representative,” it is both a matter of tradition – and protocol – that the position also carries with it the title of “honorable.”

Sadly, Madam Chair, it is my unwavering view that the actions, decisions and behavior of our colleague from New York can no longer reflect either honor or integrity.

As I noted earlier, I can’t speak for the people in Mr. Rangel’s district.

But I do know this: for the tenants who qualified for a rent-stabilized apartment in some American city but couldn’t get one because a powerful man had four... there is something wrong.

For the small businesswoman who didn’t pay her taxes for 17 years and had the IRS breathing down her back, I can only imagine how she would have liked to have had a chance to make the tax code simpler – and less burdensome – for everyone else.

And for the still relatively new member of Congress from California who some time ago questioned whether or not it was appropriate to be building a “monument to me,” I will never forget the arrogance of the response: *“I would have a problem if*

you did it,”

Mr. Rangel said to

Mr. Campbell on the House floor on July 19, 2007,

“because I don’t think that you’ve been around long enough to have your name on something to inspire a building like this.”

Madam Chair, it is painful for me to say this but Mr. Rangel can no longer blame anyone other than himself for the place he now finds himself... not this committee, not his staff or family, not his accountants or lawyers, not the press... Mr. Rangel should only look into the mirror when he wants to know who to blame.

While I am not an attorney – as are most of the Members of this Committee, as well as the respondent himself – I know – we all know – that it should not take either a law degree or a legal Dictionary to tell us the difference between right and wrong.

It is now up to each one of us to determine the appropriate measure of punishment for the discredit Mr. Rangel has brought to this House.

I thank the Chairwoman for this opportunity to offer a few heartfelt observations and I yield back my time.