

## PREFACE

In mid-1995, the President and his strategists decided that they needed to raise and spend many millions of dollars over and above the permissible limits of the Presidential campaign funding law if the President was going to be reelected. They devised a legal theory to support their needs and proceeded to raise and spend \$44 million in excess of the Presidential campaign spending limits.

The lengths to which the Clinton/Gore campaign and the White House-controlled Democratic National Committee were willing to go in order to raise this amount of money is essentially the story of the 1996 Presidential campaign scandal. The President and his aides demeaned the offices of the President and Vice President, took advantage of minority groups, pulled down all the barriers that would normally be in place to keep out illegal contributions, pressured policy makers, and left themselves open to strong suspicion that they were selling not only access to high-ranking officials, but policy as well. Millions of dollars were raised in illegal contributions, much of it from foreign sources. When these abuses were discovered, the result was numerous Fifth Amendment claims, flights from the country, and stonewalling from the White House and the DNC.

Over a brief period of three months of hearings, the Committee was able to fulfill its responsibility in laying out the available facts to the American people. A much clearer picture of what happened during the 1996 Presidential campaign has been developed and presented. However, many questions remain unanswered. It is now the responsibility of the Attorney General or, more appropriately, an independent counsel to take these facts and aggressively pursue any and all indications of criminal wrong-doing. Indeed, the three most important legal developments to come out of the 1996 campaign finance scandal are all attributable to the

investigation conducted by the Committee on Governmental Affairs. First, Yah Lin “Charlie” Trie, an associate of the President, has been indicted for, among other things, obstruction of the Committee’s investigation. Second, Maria Hsia, a prominent Democratic fundraiser, has been indicted for laundering campaign contributions that were a focus of the Committee’s inquiry. Finally, the Attorney General has requested appointment of an independent counsel to determine whether Secretary of the Interior Bruce Babbitt lied to the Committee.