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ONE HUNDRED SEVENTH CONGRESS

# Congress of the United States

## House of Representatives

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June 14, 2002

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The Honorable Dan Burton  
Chairman  
Committee on Government Reform  
2157 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Burton:

I am writing with regard to news accounts indicating that two senior White House officials apparently used government time and resources to develop a partisan analysis of Republican prospects in key House and Senate races.

According to these news accounts, Karl Rove, the President's senior advisor, and Ken Mehlman, the White House political director, spoke to a group of California Republicans on June 4.<sup>1</sup> At that meeting, both Mr. Rove and Mr. Mehlman gave Power Point presentations detailing the White House's analysis of House and Senate races, as well as the White House's strategy for improving the President's standing among women, minorities, and union members. Apparently, at least 21 hours of time was spent editing the presentations, which were stored on an Executive Office of the President computer.<sup>2</sup>

This is precisely the type of issue that this Committee investigated during the Clinton Administration. For instance, during the campaign finance investigation, this Committee spent more than ten hours deposing former White House Political Director Doug Sosnik and former Deputy Political Director Karen Hancox.<sup>3</sup> Among the many topics covered in these depositions were the role of the Clinton White House in raising campaign funds, approving the Democratic

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<sup>1</sup>*Red Faces in White House Over '02 Analysis*, New York Times (June 14, 2002); *Rove Urges "War" for Permanent Repeal of Estate Tax*, Washington Post (June 14, 2002); *Heard on the Hill*, Roll Call (Jun. 13, 2002).

<sup>2</sup>*Rove Urges "War" for Permanent Repeal of Estate Tax*, *supra* note 1.

<sup>3</sup>Deposition of Karen Hancox (Aug. 28, 1997). Deposition of Douglas Sosnik (Jul. 25, 1997).

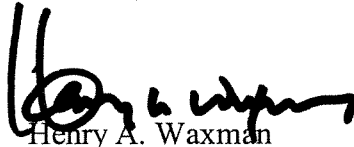
The Honorable Dan Burton  
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National Committee's allocation of hard and soft money, formulating advertising strategy, and approving pollsters and consultants. In addition, the Committee spent countless hours investigating other ways in which the Clinton White House allegedly engaged in political activity, such as the use of a White House database for political purposes<sup>4</sup> and Vice President Gore's use of his government office to make fundraising telephone calls.

On several occasions over the past year, there have been news accounts of political activities being conducted by the Bush Administration that would have automatically triggered a Committee subpoena if they had occurred during the Clinton Administration: Briefings by Cabinet secretaries with major Republican donors; the use of Vice President Cheney's residence for fundraising; Mr. Rove's meetings with Intel executives at the same time he owned over \$100,000 of Intel stock; meetings between the Cheney energy task force and outside groups; and the influence of Enron's political contributions on federal policy. In each instance when I wrote to you about these Bush Administration activities,<sup>5</sup> you have chosen not to investigate them.

Notwithstanding that, given the Committee's intense interest in Mr. Sosnik and Ms. Hancox's activities, I am interested in whether you will be investigating Mr. Rove and Mr. Mehlman's actions.

Sincerely,



Henry A. Waxman  
Ranking Minority Member

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<sup>4</sup>See Minority Views on White House Database Report (on line at [http://www.house.gov/reform/min/pdfs/pdf\\_com/pdf\\_clinton\\_campaign\\_database\\_rep.pdf](http://www.house.gov/reform/min/pdfs/pdf_com/pdf_clinton_campaign_database_rep.pdf)).

<sup>5</sup>E.g., Letters from Rep. Waxman to Chairman Burton (May 10, 2001; May 21, 2001; June 5, 2001; June 15, 2001; June 25, 2001; Feb. 11, 2002).