

TOP TEN REPUBLICAN ABUSES OF POWER

1. CHANGING ETHICS RULES UNILATERALLY

Republicans unilaterally pushed through partisan rules changes to neuter the Ethics Committee and protect Tom DeLay from bipartisan investigation. Republicans further refused to follow the established bipartisan rules and tried to install a partisan Ethics Committee staff director precluding the Committee from moving forward on any of its work for several months. Republicans finally retreated on both of these attempts to block the House Ethics Committee from forming under the rules due to public pressure.

2. UNDERMINING U.S. SECURITY FOR POLITICAL REVENGE

White House Deputy Chief of Staff Karl Rove disclosed the identity of Valerie Plame, a CIA covert operative, to TIME reporter Matt Cooper – a potentially illegal act. It is widely believed that Rove identified Plame, and recklessly put the security of the United States at risk, in retaliation for an article her husband, Ambassador Joe Wilson, wrote casting doubt on the Bush administration's justifications for the Iraq war.

3. UNETHICALLY COERCING A MEMBER TO CHANGE A VOTE

Majority Leader DeLay was admonished by the Ethics Committee for offering to endorse Rep. Nick Smith's son in his run for a House seat in exchange for Smith's vote on the Medicare prescription drug benefit.

4. CALLING POLICE TO ARREST DEMOCRATS

Chairman Thomas called the Capitol Police to oust Ways and Means Democrats from a committee library where they were discussing unfair Republican treatment during a committee hearing (7/28/03).

5. HOLDING VOTES OPEN TO THWART THE WILL OF THE HOUSE

Republicans regularly hold open votes to thwart the House's will. The most egregious example is holding open the Medicare prescription drug bill vote for three hours in the middle of the night (11/25/03).

6. CLOSING DOWN HEARINGS AND SHUTTING DOWN DEBATE

Judiciary Committee Chairman Sensenbrenner shut down debate and turned off the microphones during a hearing on civil liberties and the Patriot Act in response to testimony he didn't like (6/10/05).

7. THREATENING JUDGES

After unsuccessfully trying to force the judiciary to follow the GOP's political agenda in the Terri Schiavo case, Rep. DeLay said the "time will come for the men responsible to answer for their behavior" (3/31/05). After two deranged men killed a judge and members of a judge's family, Sen. Cornyn suggested that violence against judges was because they "are making political decisions yet are unaccountable to the public" (4/5/05).

8. THREATENING STAFF NOT TO TELL THE TRUTH TO CONGRESS

Medicare Administrator Thomas Scully threatened his chief actuary, a professional non-partisan government employee, not to tell the true cost of the prescription drug benefit to Congress (\$724 billion instead of \$395 billion), which almost certainly would have prevented the controversial bill's passage.

9. K STREET PROJECT

The Republicans' K Street Project threatens lobbying firms who do not exclusively hire and donate to Republicans.

10. UNETHICALLY REWARDING CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTORS?

Republican Rep. Randy "Duke" Cunningham sold his home to Mitchell Wade, the founder of MZM Inc. (a defense contractor) in 2003 for \$1.675 million. Wade sold it nearly a year later for \$975,000 - a \$700,000 loss in a hot San Diego housing market. Cunningham also lived part-time aboard a 42-foot yacht owned by Wade. Cunningham, a member of the House Appropriations Defense Subcommittee, has acknowledged helping MZM get federal defense contracts and in 2004, MZM tripled its revenue and nearly quadrupled its staff, according to the company's Web site. Wade has directed contributions to Cunningham from a 527 account and from MZM's own corporate coffers as well as from himself, his wife and MZM's political action committee.