

CONGRESSIONAL SUBPOENAS ARE THE NEW GRAYMAIL

The AP has the list of Congressmen whom Brent Wilkes has subpoenaed to appear at his trial. There are virtually no surprises on the list—all are either former or current Chairs of the Committees that knew of Wilkes' behavior and/or noted earmarkers in their own right. Here's why I think each person was subpoenaed.

Duncan Hunter, R-CA: Duncan Hunter was Chair of the Armed Services Committee when Duke Cunningham pulled off his scams. In fact, Hunter is the one who taught Cunningham how to earmark worthless programs to bring home pork for the district. He showed up on a list of people whose re-election had improved Mitch Wade's position in Congress. And he's on CREW's list of 22 most corrupt Congressmen.

John Doolittle, R-CA: He shows up on a list of people whose re-election had improved Mitch Wade's position in Congress. He's on CREW's list of 22 most corrupt Congressmen.

Jerry Lewis, R-CA: He shows up on a list of people whose re-election had improved Mitch Wade's position in Congress. He's on CREW's list of 22 most corrupt Congressmen. Lewis Chaired Appropriations in the last Congress.

Roy Blunt, R-MO: Blunt has been very good at the same kind of revolving door earmarking as Cunningham.

Denny Hastert, R-IL: Denny was in charge of Congress when Duke was getting bribed. And he shows up on a list of people whose re-election had improved Mitch Wade's position in Congress.

Jerry Weller, R-IL: Willing to craft trade programs for his personal benefit, Weller is on CREW's list of 22 most corrupt Congressmen.

Pete Hoekstra, R-MI: Hoekstra was Chair of the

House Intelligence Committee and refused to declassify that committee's report on how Duke ripped the US off via that committee.

Joe Knollenberg, R-MI: Knollenberg is a fantastic earmarker in his own right and was lauded by Cunningham for his help in getting lobbyists their due. And boy did he squirm and fidget when I read The Wrong Stuff while sitting next to him.

Darrell Issa, R-CA: Issa's district is in the neighborhood and he has brought in some earmarks as well (though to Issa's credit, he started self-disclosing his own earmarks).

Norm Dicks, D-WA: On the Appropriations Committee, Dicks is one of the top earmarkers in Congress.

Silvestre Reyes, D-TX: Reyes is the Chair of the House Intell Committee—and has refused to declassify the committee's review of how it approved Duke Cunningham's scams.

Ike Skelton, D-MO: Skelton is the Chair of the House Armed Services Committee, one of the committees Duke scammed. There is probably a good deal of relevant paperwork in this committee that is otherwise unavailable thanks to Congress' expanding immunity from subpoena.

John Murtha, D-PA: Probably the Democrats' best earmarker, Murtha is also Chair of the Appropriations Defense Subcommittee. And if any Democrat was cognizant of Duke's scams, it'd be Murtha. Murtha showed up on a list of Mitch Wade's list of re-elected Congressmen who improved his, Wade's, position in Congress. And he's on CREW's list of 22 most corrupt Congressmen.

For their part, the Congressmen all said they'll refuse the subpoena. Which is all the more reason, I say, to prompt further scrutiny in these guys. To what degree are they hiding their knowledge of Cunningham's/Wade's/Wilke's activities? To what degree are they engaged in the same kind of massive earmarking that

Cunningham was?

Update: Yup, they're invoking Congressional privilege to avoid testifying.

After consultation with the Office of General Counsel, I have determined that compliance with the subpoena is inconsistent with the precedents and privileges of the House.