

When McCain learned in October 1997 of Babbitt's acknowledgment to Sen. Thompson that in fact Babbitt had invoked Ickes to Eckstein, McCain felt he had been misled by Babbitt's Aug. 30, 1996, letter. Moreover, McCain indicated that he would have taken further action, including making further inquiries of Babbitt and Interior, had Babbitt provided him with the information Babbitt provided Sen. Thompson in October 1997 after Babbitt decided he had to be "more forthcoming" than he had been with McCain in August 1996.⁶²⁴

2. Secretary Babbitt's Oct. 10, 1997, Letter to Sen. Thompson

On March 11, 1997, the Senate authorized its Governmental Affairs Committee, led by Chairman Fred Thompson (R-Tenn.), to conduct "an investigation of illegal or improper activities in connection with 1996 Federal election campaigns."⁶²⁵ A Dec. 31, 1997, deadline

⁶²³(...continued)
allegations, and why I appreciate very much your response." Letter from Sen. McCain to Bruce Babbitt, Sept. 19, 1996.

⁶²⁴McCain G.J. Test. at 63.

⁶²⁵The Committee's jurisdiction generally is set forth in Rule XXV(k)(1), Standing Rules of the U.S. Senate, 105th Congress, which provides in pertinent part:

Committee on Governmental Affairs, to which committee shall be referred all proposed legislation, messages, petitions, memorials, and other matters relating to the following subjects: . . .

7. Intergovernmental relations. . .
 10. Organization and reorganization of the executive branch of the Government. . .
 12. Status of officers and employees of the United States, including their classification, compensation, and benefits.
- (2) Such committee shall have the duty of –
- (A) receiving and examining reports of the Comptroller General of the United States and submitting such recommendations the Senate as it deems necessary or desirable in connection with the subject matter of such reports;
 - (B) studying the efficiency, economy, and

(continued...)