

Captured Congress

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"Do you think party leaders exert too much control over members of Congress and over the agenda," *Full Measure* host Sharyl Attkisson asked retiring Rep. Darrell Issa, "in a way that might be motivated by donations and corporate influence and special interests?"

Winner of five Emmys, as well as the 2012 Edward R. Murrow Award for Excellence in Video Investigative Reporting, Attkisson's "exit interview" with Congressman Issa (R-Calif.) is illuminating.

"It happens every day," he replied, "that a lobbyist calls the majority leader, the minority leader, the speaker, and some chairmen or ranking member gets a call saying, 'hey go light on that.'"

"I have seen the defense-related committees that take money from defense contractors go easy on defense oversight," Attkisson explained, prompting the congressman to agree "that happens every day here."

Issa pointed out that the committee chairs "really don't control the committees. More and more it's controlled out of the speaker's office and out of the minority leader's office. You know, they pick who gets the committees and then they pick really what



you get to do."

And it's getting worse, he said.

As chairman of the House Oversight Committee, Issa has led a number of very high-profile investigations. His investigation of Countrywide, Attkisson noted, "revealed that federal public officials and their staffers, both Democrats and Republicans, had quietly received lucrative VIP loans from Countrywide as the company sought to influence their decisions."

"It was much more effective than political giving," Issa offered.

He also accused Republican leaders of removing the Benghazi investigation from his committee to a select committee to "keep it from going too far."

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Between the party bosses and the special interests, our Congress has been captured.

This is Common Sense. I'm Paul Jacob.

N. B. Full Measure is broadcast every Sunday on 162 Sinclair Broadcast Group stations reaching 43 million households in 79 media markets.