

appeared before the Judiciary Committee on a number of times, I know that he would not in any way flee from coming and telling what he knew. General Mukasey, he has not been asked.

There have been 7,600 documents presented to the Oversight Committee, but yet we will be on the floor tomorrow in a purely personal relating of why Attorney General Holder, a life-long law enforcement officer, the senior officer of the United States, the one who has come riding in and helping the most vulnerable in the United States, those who cannot get to vote, the disabled, and others who have been denied by the oppressive rules that have been passed by many States.

Thank God for the Federal Government and the attorney general of the United States. If it had not been for him, I would not be standing here because I would have still been bent down in the Deep South with hoses on top of me because the General of the United States in the 1960s and the Department of Justice came in and helped Dr. Martin Luther King after Bull Connor turned those hoses on in Birmingham.

Tomorrow we malign the very officer that has come to the aid of any American, those whose homes are being foreclosed. This General led a massive settlement to be able to stand and to be able to provide for the most vulnerable of Americans.

Congress has the responsibility of creating jobs, of passing an important transportation HUD bill that will provide housing and rebuilding of our highways and freeways. Tomorrow we will stop and pause and begin to call each other names and to take a man whose very life has been in public service, who has led the Department of Justice with dignity and respect, who has answered questions, who has prepared, who has appeared before us with a demeanor that is respective of his position. All I ask is that we not bring this to the floor and cooler heads will come and sit down and resolve the remaining documents.

For the love of this Nation, for the patriotism and the honor of serving in the United States Congress, I beg of this Speaker and this House: Do not go down the pathway of contempt. I beg of you to raise this House to a level of dignity.

THERE GOES THE RULE OF LAW

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) for 5 minutes.

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the comments of my friend from Texas. We do have some disagreements, but I want to go back to the issue of jobs.

People are hurting. Without jobs, the unemployment has been higher than the President said it would ever get if we would just simply give him about a trillion dollars to give away to his friends, that that would make it all better. Well, it didn't.

What we've seen over and over from this administration is a complete disregard for the rule of law. When you look at all the people who have been drawn into this country illegally, in violation of our immigration laws—even though there is no country in the world that allows the immigration that this country does and the wide open gates that we do. But we do have parameters.

We've been told there may be a billion, billion and a half people who want to come to this country. If they did all at once, they would overwhelm us, and there would be no country for others to come to.

Why do so many want to come here? It's because we've always had regard for the rule of law. When there were those who would ignore the rule of law and put partisan and personal benefit above the law, eventually they had to account. Some have gotten away, but this country has done a better job of being fair across the board than any other country in history. That's why so many want to come here, because we've had more jobs, a better economy, and made more advancements than any country in history.

Yet, on the issue of immigration, this President stands up and announces we're going to ignore the law, just as he did on marriage. There is a proper law that was signed into law by President Bill Clinton, enacted by Congress, upheld, and he says we're going to ignore that because we don't like it. There goes the rule of law.

When it comes to ObamaCare, we've passed this law. But you know what? So many of the people that pushed this through and rammed it down the throats of America, they're asking for waivers and they're good friends, so we're going to give them waivers so they can ignore the rule of law.

How about the auto bailout? Ignored. The bankruptcy law? It ignored the Constitution and took away dealerships and gave them to others. This was a place where the rule of law was completely ignored.

Then this President stands up and says: Not only are we going to ignore the rule of law, duly passed law, but as I speak, I will create law. I now speak into effect new work visas and work permits that have never existed. But just as the ancient pharaohs or the leaders of the ancient world, as I speak, so it must be. I'm speaking into effect new work permits. I'm speaking into effect an ignoring of the laws that were duly passed. I'm speaking into effect a chance to give them jobs that Americans are hurting and trying to get.

We also have an Attorney General who was not only asked about Fast and Furious, he was asked about Justice Kagan on the Supreme Court: Are you aware of any instances during Justice Kagan's tenure as Solicitor General of the United States in which information related to patient protection and affordable care and/or litigation related thereto was related or provided? He refused to answer.

When did your staff begin removing Solicitor General Kagan from meetings in this matter? On what basis did you take this action? On what other matters was such action taken?

□ 1100

Look, the rule of law required that when it turned out there were possibly thousands of abuses of the national security letter in a Republican administration, I picked up the phone, called the chief of staff of my President, and said, This is unforgivable. We need a new Attorney General. Where is my friend across the aisle who will step up and say, the rule of law is too important?

We have Justice Kagan, who is ignoring law 28 U.S.C. 455 that says, You must disqualify yourself in any case in which your impartiality might reasonably be questioned. It must be reasonably expected that either she ignored the law, did not do her job as Solicitor General, was totally negligent, or she did her job, and she should not have sat on this case. She should have disqualified.

I beg and plead for my colleagues across the aisle to step up, as I did when the Attorney General was responsible for presiding over an injustice, and call for her resignation. It is contemptuous of Congress.

SOME DAYS ARE BETTER THAN OTHERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, U2 has a song, "Some Days Are Better Than Others." The lyrics go something like this:

Some days are dry. Some days are leaky. Some days come clean. Other days are sneaky. Some days take less, but most days take more. Some slip through your fingers and onto the floor.

Well, Mr. Speaker, today it is certainly threatening to slip through onto the floor. The House is apparently preparing for an unprecedented floor vote to hold a sitting Attorney General, the Nation's chief law enforcement officer, in contempt. The path that has led us to this sorry day is so long, so bizarre, so tortuous, so fantastical, so unbelievable that it stretches the imagination of individuals to try to make some sense out of our actions.

The Oversight Committee started out investigating the so-called "gun walking" which was initiated under the Bush administration. The Department of Justice produced thousands of pages of documents. The Attorney General testified nine times, and the committee found no wrongdoing by the Attorney General.

So the committee majority turned its attention to a February 4, 2011, letter sent by the Department of Justice to Senator GRASSLEY, initially denying allegations of gun walking. The DOJ acknowledged the errors in the letter

to Senator GRASSLEY and provided more than 1,300 pages of internal documents showing how the letter came to be drafted. The documents demonstrated that the staff did not intentionally mislead Congress but relied on assurances from ATF leaders and officials in Arizona who ran the operation.

Did the committee call the head of the ATF, Ken Melson, to testify as to how this happened, as Democratic members of the committee requested? The answer is no. Did the committee call former Attorney General Mukasey, who was briefed on the botched effort to coordinate arms interdiction with Mexico in 2007? The answer is no.

Instead, the majority members demanded more internal deliberative documents from the Department of Justice after the Grassley letter had been sent. Instead, the committee leadership made an ever-escalating series of allegations regarding the involvement of the White House, documented in YouTube videos and news clips viewed on the Internet, which were subsequently withdrawn. The committee leadership has refused the Attorney General's offer to resolve the conflict.

The President has now claimed executive privilege over a very narrow group of documents from the Department of Justice in response to Chairman ISSA's threat to hold the Attorney General in contempt of Congress. This is the first time the President has claimed executive privilege, in sharp contrast to recent previous Presidents who used the claim on numerous occasions in similar circumstances.

Should the House continue to pursue this irresponsible action, it is likely that it would lead to many years of judicial action and would, of course, further poison the highly charged partisan atmosphere leading up to the elections and critical decisions regarding the Federal budget and all of the other things that we really seriously need to deal with.

So I join with others who are asking the Speaker, who are imploring this House not to take such an irresponsible vote, not to take an irresponsible action, but to sit with the Attorney General, and let's resolve the conflict between the House and the executive branch. That's what reasonable people would do.

DARK MONEY DONORS, SHOW YOURSELVES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GRIJALVA) for 5 minutes.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Speaker, money has taken over our political process. Big corporations and high-rolling political schemers tell us everything is still mom and apple pie, and there's nothing to worry about.

But some of us have seen the effects of these hidden million-dollar dark money donations. We've seen the ads that tell you what to think and who to vote for, without telling you who's

talking. We've seen the multimillion-dollar lawsuits that help elite corporate interests, without explaining who's paying the bill. We've seen more and more elections bought and paid for by the only people who can afford it. And those people are not us.

It's time to start naming names and asking why these people won't tell us who they are. We must start to fight back and ask them what they have to hide.

A front group called the National Federation of Independent Business is suing to block the Affordable Care Act. The president of the group says he's doing this to help small businesses. When I and my colleague Representative KEITH ELLISON wrote him a letter, asking him who his members are, he refused to answer. We asked him who gave him several recent million-dollar-plus donations that have helped fund the lawsuit; he refused to answer. We asked him why Karl Rove's Crossroads GPS political group gave him \$3.7 million just when he initiated the lawsuit; he refused to answer. And he thinks that's good enough. Well, it's not.

NFIB has never liked answering questions. In 2006, according to an article in the Nashville Scene, the organization claimed 600,000 member businesses nationwide. Today on its Web site, it claims about 300,000. But when we asked NFIB to disclose where its money comes from, instead of providing us the courtesy of a written response, the group told the press that its membership has been growing by leaps and bounds since the lawsuit began. It described shrinking by 50 percent as big, new expansion, and it said new members had made small donations that covered the cost of this complex lawsuit before the Supreme Court.

In other words, NFIB won't tell us the truth about who it represents or how big it is. What does it have to hide?

Our democracy has always been about people. It's been about individuals and families making choices about who represents their interests. It's about what kind of country we want to live in, not about what kind of country the very wealthy want to choose for us.

Today, as we prepare for the Supreme Court ruling on the Affordable Care Act, millions of Americans with pre-existing health conditions, with sick children, with long-term medical needs, and with no insurance stand together on one side. A front group with bottomless pockets that won't explain its motives sits on the other.

Mr. Speaker, this is not what our democracy is supposed to be about. Our Founding Fathers did not believe wealth makes a man more important than his neighbor. They didn't believe money is more important than the dignity of the individual. They didn't believe that any company or any organization is entitled to a special set of rules. And they certainly didn't believe that an incorporated business entity is the same thing as a human being.

There is no reason we have to accept the choices that the very, very wealthy few in this country are making for the rest of us. Today we stand up to be counted, and we demand that dark money donations come to light; that anyone who wants to influence our democracy step forward and state his name for the record and be honest and transparent with the American people.

□ 1110

Democracy is not for sale, and an election should not be an auction. I'm proud to be on the floor today and say that I am on the side of people that want disclosure, want fair elections, and are tired of the influence of dark money in our collective democracy.

I challenge those front groups to "put up" or "shut up." Tell us who's funding you and what you really want. It's about 4 months and a little more time until America elects a new Congress and a President. Let the voters decide. They know where I stand. And we want these front groups to tell us where they stand, where they get their money, who they are, and who they represent.

The American people in this great democracy of ours should make the choice whether we like it or not. The influence by a very few secretive groups that are fronting for others should not be the ones that decide who represents the American people, who will run this country, and who will set the priorities for this country.

IN OPPOSITION TO THE HOLDER CONTEMPT RESOLUTION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA) for 5 minutes.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong opposition to this resolution to hold in contempt Attorney General of the United States Mr. Eric Holder. This contempt resolution does no good in moving along the investigation of the gun-walking operations across our borders nor in the investigation of the death of Border Patrol Agent Brian Terry, whose killing was associated with the recovery of two firearms linked with Operation Fast and Furious.

Last year, the House Oversight Committee initiated an investigation into allegations of this operation in the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms and Explosives, or ATF, field division in Arizona. Over the past year, the committee has extended its investigation by requesting thousands of pages of documents from the Department of Justice and interviewing about two dozen officials. In response, the Department has made extraordinary attempts, in my opinion, to accommodate these requests by submitting over almost 8,000 pages of documents. Attorney General Holder has also testified before the committee about nine times on this matter.