

Well, today, it appears that officials at the Internal Revenue Service had the last laugh. On Friday, the IRS admitted to the political profiling of conservative groups and that senior-level officials were aware of these actions as far back as 2011.

This, on top of new revelations in the ongoing Benghazi terrorist attack investigation, one could say it's been a bad week for the White House. But it doesn't stop there. Yesterday, it was reported the Justice Department used a secret subpoena to obtain 2 months of phone records for Associated Press reporters and editors without notifying the news organization.

It has been a bad week for the White House, Mr. Speaker, but an even worse week for the Constitution, which is no laughing matter. The American people deserve answers from the White House concerning these abuses. The constitutional protections of free Americans and a free press—the foundations of our democracy—are at stake.

BENGHAZI

(Ms. NORTON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, Republicans are trying to tar anyone in sight with Benghazi. Next they're going for the former Joint Chief of Staff and a former Ambassador who did the investigation. But their investigation mandate was not talking points. It was:

Whether the attacks were security related; whether security systems and procedures were adequate and implemented properly.

They have found that they most definitely were not, resulting in four tragic deaths. Talking points say a lot about bureaucratic in-fighting. We have yet to get to the real investigation of the causes and most especially how to prevent another Benghazi. That is our mission. Let's get to it this week.

STATE SECRETS VS. FREEDOM OF THE PRESS

(Mr. POE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, when I went to the Soviet Union in the 1980s, the Communist leaders told me that they believed in and had a free press and they also had free speech. However, I also learned that Soviet law prohibited these freedoms when they jeopardized state secrets—or national security, as we call it in America. The state-secret provision was so broad the Soviet press and speech were gagged and shackled. They certainly were not free.

Now we learn that our Department of Justice improperly seized without notice phone records of over 100 Associated Press journalists—all in the name of national security concerns.

To me, this is a clear violation of the spirit and letter of the First Amendment. These actions border on the Soviet method of legalizing these freedoms but never allowing them. So it's time to revisit U.S. law and require in all cases judicial review where these types of records are seized.

We cannot allow our government to arbitrarily abolish the First Amendment in the name of "state secrets."

And that's just the way it is.

STUDENT LOAN INTEREST RATES

(Mr. PETERS of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PETERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring further attention to the fact that unless Congress takes definitive action, student loan interest rates will double on July 1. With that in mind, I proudly support H.R. 1595, introduced by Congressman JOE COURTNEY, and other bills that would keep student interest rates frozen at their reasonable rates for the next 2 years.

Right now, college tuition is spiraling beyond what many students and their families can afford. In many instances, students are being forced to leave school because they are accruing so much debt. At UC-San Diego or the University of San Diego or Point Loma Nazarene, all of which are in my district, students are relying on us to keep loan rates low.

My own education was made possible by student loans and work-study, and we must ensure that today's generation of students has the same opportunity to attend college that I and so many of us had. I ask my colleagues to support H.R. 1595.

THE BUCK STOPS HERE

(Mr. GRIFFITH of Virginia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GRIFFITH of Virginia. Well, we once had a political party known as the Know-Nothings. We now have a President who wants us to believe that he knows nothing. He wants us to believe that he knows nothing about who decided to blame the terrorist attacks in Benghazi on a video. He wants us to believe that he knew nothing about the IRS scandal until he read the same press reports that you and I have read. He wants us to believe that he knows nothing about the Department of Justice subpoenaing 2 months of the Associated Press' phone records.

What has happened to the days in America when Democratic President Harry Truman proudly placed a placard on his desk that said: "The buck stops here"? Perhaps, sadly, we have returned to the days where the question to the President of the United States ought to be: What did you know and when did you know it?

□ 1920

LIMITING CONGRESSIONAL TERMS

(Mr. O'ROURKE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. O'ROURKE. Today I joined JIM BRIDENSTINE in filing a bipartisan constitutional amendment that would allow Congress to decide whether and how to limit the terms of its Members. Our measure would not prescribe the number of terms a Member would serve; but by giving Congress the power to ultimately decide, I believe it will foster a productive conversation about how to make Congress more responsive to the needs of the American public.

Many in our country feel that Congress is focused on reelection to the exclusion of solving our country's problems. They are rightly concerned about the enormous powers of incumbency and the corrupting influence of money as well as the uncompetitive, gerrymandered districts where the Representative chooses his constituency and not the other way around.

We owe our constituents institutional reforms that address these concerns. Enacting comprehensive campaign finance reform, fixing the congressional redistricting process, and moving forward with sensible term limits can improve how Congress works.

I urge all my colleagues to join in this reform agenda.

CELEBRATING NATIONAL POLICE WEEK

(Mr. PAULSEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PAULSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay special tribute to those men and women who have answered the call of duty to serve their community, to those who place their lives on the line each and every day for their neighbors. This week we celebrate National Police Week, and I want to thank the police officers in my community who exemplify what it means to "serve and protect."

Minnesota is proud to be home to some of the most dedicated and professional police departments in the country. I have the distinct honor to meet regularly with local police officers and leaders during my law enforcement roundtables, and I can tell you we are privileged to have such committed officers patrolling our streets.

I want to especially recognize the officers that are currently aiding in the search for Mandy Matula, an Eden Prairie woman who has been missing. I pray for her swift return. And thank you to the law enforcement, also, for whose perseverance recently brought closure to the families of Danielle Jelinek and Kira Steger Trevino, who were victims of domestic violence.

Mr. Speaker, as we go about our busy lives, let's take time this week to

thank the police officers in our communities and keep the memory of those who've lost their lives in our thoughts and prayers.

YOUNG PEOPLE IN MEMPHIS CHOOSING OCCUPATIONS THAT HELP OTHERS

(Mr. COHEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, there was a recent survey of about 9,000 outstanding high school and college students and graduates asking them where they would like to work. They had 200 companies that were all in the Fortune magazine list of top companies. I'm proud of that group of students from ages 15 to 27. Their number one choice was St. Jude Children's Hospital in Memphis, Tennessee. It speaks well of that group of young people that they want to work to help others and to find a cure for cancer—and to work at St. Jude, which is such a wonderful institution in my home city of Memphis.

Eight of the 25 sites that were selected by these young people were in the health care field. I think it's admirable and commendable that so many young people want to help others and do it through efforts in the health care industry, not necessarily in ways to enrich themselves.

I'm proud that they chose St. Jude, and it wasn't just because of the Grizzlies.

IRS TALKERS

(Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, it is humbling for me every single day to walk onto this House floor knowing that I represent the former district held by Abraham Lincoln in central Illinois. In 1863, during his Gettysburg Address, President Lincoln spoke of our democracy by saying that it is "a government of the people, by the people, for the people." Yet what we have seen over the last 48 hours is nothing close to a government for the people.

Does a government of the people target specific groups of individuals, especially groups that oppose the President's viewpoints? Does a government by the people obtain the phone records of reporters in what appears to be a violation of First Amendment rights? And does a government for the people refuse to accept responsibility and instead place blame wherever they can? The answer, of course, is no.

Public trust in government is at an all-time low, and partisan actions by this administration will continue the deterioration of that trust. We have been called to Washington by our constituents to work together in a bipartisan fashion for the best interests of our country. So I ask that we put poli-

tics aside, Mr. Speaker, lead by example, and work together to keep the trust of the American public.

AFFORDABLE CARE ACT FIXES

(Mr. BARBER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BARBER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about commonsense actions we must take to fix the health care law. I wasn't in Congress in March of 2010 and I didn't vote for the Affordable Care Act, but I'm here today to ensure that it meets the needs of small businesses and middle class families.

That's why I've spent a lot of time listening to small business owners and staff, to seniors, and to hospital employees and physicians in Arizona about their concerns. That is why I have cosponsored legislation to repeal the medical device tax, the annual tax on health insurance, and the Independent Payment Advisory Board. These actions will protect families and small businesses from premium hikes, and protect access to health care for seniors and all Americans. This is why I'm working with the citizens of Green Valley in my district to keep health care affordable by protecting the tax deduction for medical expenses.

These are but a few examples of how we can come together to fix this law. I will continue to work with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to find additional ways to do so.

MILITARY SEXUAL ASSAULT

(Ms. KUSTER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. KUSTER. Mr. Speaker, sexual assault in the military has reached a crisis point. A recent report from the Department of Defense found that the number of servicemembers who have experienced unwanted sexual contact has increased by more than 30 percent over the past 2 years, from 19,000 to 26,000 people.

These numbers are staggering, but they're more than just statistics. Behind every number is the story of a member of our armed services who stepped forward to serve our country. They're people like my constituent, Judy Atwood-Bell, a Hudson, New Hampshire, resident who enlisted in the Army at age 17 to further her education and live the American Dream. At 19, Judy was raped by a fellow soldier and suffered sexual harassment in silence throughout her career. After 20 years of service, she sought help and was eventually diagnosed with PTSD related to military sexual trauma.

Our military leadership, the chain of command, and the Veterans Administration failed to protect Judy and thousands of victims like her who suffered from sexual assault. We owe it to Judy and every other survivor to come together in a bipartisan manner to confront this epidemic head on.

REPUBLICAN FRESHMAN CLASS ON THE NEED TO REPEAL OBAMACARE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. JOYCE). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. MESSER) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MESSER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the subject of my Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Indiana?

There was no objection.

Mr. MESSER. Mr. Speaker, I rise for another in a series of Republican freshman class Special Orders, this time to focus on the need to repeal ObamaCare in a vote in this Chamber later this week.

The President and many of our colleagues on the other side of the aisle proudly refer to this health care law as "ObamaCare," but we should neither be proud of the process that led us to this point nor the resulting policy mess.

The 2,800-page bill was crafted behind closed doors and rushed through Congress in 2010 with limited debate and without amendments. The predictable result is a flawed product that expands the Federal Government's role in health care, raises taxes on employers, and mandates benefits that will increase health care costs for most. Remarkably, there already have been more than 20,000 pages of regulations issued regarding this bill's implementation.

□ 1930

I would like to start by recognizing my distinguished colleague, the gentlelady from Missouri, for her remarks on this important issue.

Mrs. WAGNER. I thank the gentleman from Indiana for yielding and for organizing these Special Orders this evening.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 45, a bill that will repeal the President's devastating health care reform law, commonly referred to as ObamaCare. When promoting the health care reform legislation to the American public, the President and members of his party told people that if you liked your health insurance then you could keep it, that the penalty Americans have to pay under the individual mandate was not a tax, and that those with preexisting conditions would have access to health care. Well, as many of us suspected then, these claims were nothing more than blatant lies.

In fact, the Congressional Budget Office recently said that 7 million people will lose their job-based health insurance due to ObamaCare. The Supreme Court has affirmed what we already