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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mrs. HARTZLER).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
May 16, 2013.

I hereby appoint the Honorable VICKY HARTZLER to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 3, 2013, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes each, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

FREEDOM UNDER SIEGE

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

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Madam Speaker, just a week after the President extolled the benign virtues of Big Government and told university students to ignore those who warn of its dangers, Americans woke up to headlines that this government has been targeting groups and individuals that it doesn't like for intimidation and harassment.

I appreciate the President's sudden interest in getting to the bottom of

this. But I must remind the House that more than a year ago, I and other Members rose on this floor to warn of these tactics directed at Tea Party groups by the IRS. At the time, the administration responded by saying that this was just a natural backlog. Well, we now know that was a deliberate and premeditated lie.

It now appears that nearly 500 conservative groups were subjected to invasive review and intimidation. The IRS demanded the names of every participant at every meeting these groups held over a period of years, transcripts of every speech given at those meetings, what positions they had taken on issues, the names of their volunteers and donors and, in some cases, their family members and associates, and copies of privileged communications they had with elected officials. In some cases, the person filing the request was then subjected to a personal income tax audit.

There is no way to estimate the number of additional groups that were discouraged from organizing because of these tactics. Meanwhile, it appears that leftist groups had their applications routinely approved. The impact this had on the 2012 election is incalculable.

We are also learning that these tactics extended well beyond a few low-level rogue employees in Cincinnati. Lois Lerner, the official in charge of tax exempt organizations for the IRS, was awarded more than \$42,000 in bonuses while she was directing what the President now calls outrageous behavior. Highly intrusive and unwarranted demands for information also originated from the Washington, D.C., office and at least two satellite IRS offices in California.

Dr. Anne Hendershott, a Catholic sociologist, professor, and writer, came under a personal income tax audit after she exposed a George Soros front group masquerading as a grassroots Catholic

organization. She said the questions put to her during a grueling audit were largely political. And this occurred from the New Haven, Connecticut, office.

It appears that evangelical groups were also targeted, as were Jewish groups supporting Israel.

Nor was this misconduct limited to groups applying under section 501.

There is now reason to believe that IRS officials leaked confidential tax information to top officials in the Obama campaign and to liberal groups such as ProPublica and The Huffington Post, which may then have illegally published that information.

During the campaign, Austan Goolsbee and HARRY REID referenced confidential tax information involving Charles and David Koch and Mitt Romney, only to back off when they were pressed for their sources.

Nor does this conduct appear to be limited to the IRS.

Shortly after businessman Frank Vandersloot was attacked by the Obama campaign for his support of Mitt Romney, he came under audits by both the IRS and the Labor Department.

The Competitive Enterprise Institute has just released a damning survey of fee waivers granted by the Environmental Protection Agency under the Freedom of Information Act. Left-leaning groups had their fees waived 92 percent of the time. Conservative groups just the opposite—about 7 percent of the time.

And this week, it also became clear that the FBI is using general warrants, banned by the Fourth Amendment, to rifle through the phone records of AP reporters with a clear intention to intimidate whistleblowers and to obstruct the operation of a free press.

We are seeing a pattern of conduct throughout this administration that is absolutely toxic to a free society: government using its powers to intimidate

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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private citizens who are simply trying to take part in the public policy debate.

Madam Speaker, this cries out for a full investigation by the Congress, and I utterly reject the notion that the ritual naming and firing of a few hapless scapegoats is sufficient. Every government employee who abused their power needs to be identified, exposed, disgraced, dismissed, and debarred from ever again holding a position of authority or trust within this government.

When the Constitution was read by the New York Convention, Alexander Hamilton said:

Here, sir, the people govern; here they act by their immediate representatives.

Madam Speaker, the most cherished liberties of the American people are under attack, and we, their immediate representatives, have a solemn obligation to act in the defense of their freedom, their country, and their Constitution.

CLIMATE CHANGE

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Madam Speaker, a few days ago, the world's atmosphere passed 400 million parts per million level of carbon, higher than anything we have seen in the atmosphere for over 3 million years. This puts in stark focus the climate crisis and the indifference we are seeing from congressional leadership on this problem.

In the last 24 hours, all you needed to know about the state of play for climate science and dealing with global warming was in two articles in the newspaper. Yesterday, the business section of The New York Times by Eduardo Porter discussed how the reinsurance industry is entirely comfortable with the climate science, predicting more rapid extreme weather events and dire consequences.

They in the insurance industry, after all, don't have the luxury of debating science when they must deal with facts on the ground. This is dollar and cents for a vast industry trying to help people cope with the consequences of natural disaster. As a result of the market discipline, they have had to embrace reality, accept it, and plan for it.

It was poignant that Porter observed and probed their lack of engagement in government policies, at least in the United States, that would help minimize future damage. Remember, this is even as the scientists told us we have had the highest concentration of carbon for 3 million years.

In today's Washington Post, there is a front-page story about fish populations that aren't waiting for their habitat to make it impossible for them to live. Species all over the globe are moving. They are migrating to cooler climates. In a process that has been taking place for decades now, fish are sorting themselves out and leaving

areas that no longer sustain their quality of life, their ability to reproduce, and to thrive. They have steadily been moving to areas where the effects of climate change are not so pronounced.

Isn't it interesting that fish without fancy scientific instrumentation or computer analysis or, dare I say it, political focus groups have reacted to facts in the sea and move to where they can function, where they can live, where they can escape for the time being, at least, the impact of climate change?

They are also escaping from the people who depend on these fish for their living in the previous habitat. But that is another story about the devastation that local communities are facing because of the climate change consequences.

□ 1010

Isn't it time that the political process starts responding to a problem that even fish can figure out?

What is it going to take for people in this body to wake up to their responsibilities and act with the same insight as aquatic species that don't have graduate degrees in computers but, mercifully for them, don't have political blinders and ideological fervor, wasting huge amounts of time on pointless activities like debating whether to repeal ObamaCare for the 37th time?

Hopefully, insurance companies and the people who depend on these aquatic creatures will lend an air of reality to the discussion of climate change that is almost nonexistent here on Capitol Hill, maybe reaching the point where it is no longer a debate because it's really past time for a debate.

It is time for us to take action like our friends in the ocean. If Charlie the Tuna can figure it out, why can't the Republican leadership in Congress? Let's maybe spend a little time debating with the Safe Climate Caucus this existential crisis of climate change and global warming.

NATIONAL EXCHANGE CLUB BIRTHDAY

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

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Today, I have the distinct honor of wishing a belated "happy birthday" to an organization that I am a proud member of back home in Texas 14.

I want to take a moment to say thank you to the Exchange Club of Pearland of which I have been a member for a number of years. They've done a lot of good work in the community, and I look forward to the expansion of their club and the work they will continue to do to better that community.

I would also like to welcome the newest chapter in Friendswood, Texas, where I currently reside. I look forward to working with them in promoting American exceptionalism and in helping to serve our community.

For those of you who might not know, the National Exchange Club is a service organization with over 700 clubs and 21,000 members throughout the United States and Puerto Rico. On March 27, 2013, they celebrated their 102nd birthday. From a handful of members in Detroit, Michigan, at the turn of the 20th century, Exchange has developed into an outstanding national service organization comprised of tens of thousands of men and women who serve their local communities and advance their motto of "Unity for Service."

Exchange-sponsored activities are designed to benefit, award, and develop our Nation's youth, promote crime prevention, serve senior citizens, and recognize military and public safety service providers. Exchange also promotes Americanism, and its national project is the Prevention of Child Abuse program. In addition to these programs, the National Exchange Club has been at the forefront of significant developments throughout American history, including the early days of aviation progress. The spirit of patriotism, along with a desire to heighten the awareness of our rich religious heritage, placed Exchange in a position of leadership with other organizations that led to the addition of the words "under God" to the Pledge of Allegiance in 1954.

As Reagan said, "If we ever forget we are 'one Nation under God,' we will be a Nation gone under."

The Exchange Club is America's service club, an organization that promotes American exceptionalism. I am a believer in our country's exceptionalism, and I will never apologize for it.

Think about this for a second, folks. Whether it's a hurricane, whether it's a tsunami, whether it's an earthquake, whatever it is, when the world has a catastrophe and dials 911, who is it that answers? It's America, isn't it? It's the red, white, and blue. It's the land of the free, the home of the brave.

For a safe world, we need a strong America. For a strong America, we need a safe America. The Exchange Club works ever so hard to keep America strong and safe.

So, to them, I wish a very happy birthday, especially to the Pearland club and the Friendswood club. I say thank you for all of your hard work.

I am RANDY WEBER, and that's the way I see it from where I sit here in America.

DEBT CEILING

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

Mr. CONNOLLY. Madam Speaker, the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office's latest forecast says this year's Federal deficit will shrink by 41 percent compared to last year's. That point bears repeating. The deficit is shrinking—and dramatically—thanks to the bipartisan actions taken by this