

Langevin	Nolan	Serrano
Larson (CT)	Norcross	Shea-Porter
Lawrence	O'Rourke	Sires
Lee	Pallone	Slaughter
Levin	Panetta	Smith (WA)
Lewis (GA)	Pascall	Soto
Lofgren	Payne	Speier
Lowenthal	Pelosi	Swallow (CA)
Lowey	Pingree	Takano
Luján, Ben Ray	Price (NC)	Thompson (CA)
Lynch	Quigley	Thompson (MS)
Maloney,	Raskin	Titus
Carolyn B.	Richmond	Tonko
Matsui	Rosen	Tsongas
McCullum	Royal-Allard	Veasey
McEachin	Ruiz	Velázquez
McGovern	Rush	Visclosky
McNerney	Ryan (OH)	Waters, Maxine
Meng	Sánchez	Watson Coleman
Moore	Sarbanes	Welch
Nadler	Schakowsky	Wilson (FL)
Napolitano	Schiff	Yarmuth
Neal	Scott (VA)	

NOT VOTING—8

Bridenstine	Kennedy	Sewell (AL)
DesJarlais	Pocan	Walz
Gutiérrez	Scalise	

□ 1709

Ms. MOORE changed her vote from “yea” to “nay.”

So the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. SCALISE. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted “Nay” on Rollcall No. 674 and “Yea” on Rollcall No. 675.

ISIS IN AFRICA

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, as ISIS loses ground in Syria and Iraq, we must remain vigilant. There is a growing terrorist threat in Africa. Between January and September of 2016, the African continent suffered at least 1,426 incidents of terrorism-related violence.

Terrorism is a major challenge to peace, security, and development in Africa. Recently, the threat has grown to directly impact U.S. servicemembers serving in Africa.

Last May, a Navy SEAL was killed in an operation against al-Qaida affiliate al Shabaab, the first U.S. servicemember killed in action in Somalia since the 1993 infamous Black Hawk Down incident. Last month, an ambush by Islamist militants in Niger left four U.S. Green Berets killed. Recently, the U.S. conducted its first airstrikes against ISIS in Somalia.

Mr. Speaker, the writing is on the wall. The terrorist cancer in Africa is metastasizing. It is on its way to becoming a full-blown threat to African and American interests.

Having been displaced by war in Syria and Iraq, ISIS is finding a new home in Africa to carry out its reign of terror, and we must be mindful and vigilant.

And that is just the way it is.

□ 1715
RECOGNIZING MONTEREY COUNTY AND SANTA CRUZ COUNTY FARM BUREAUS

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

Mr. PANETTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Farm Bureaus of Monterey County and Santa Cruz County.

This year, those farm bureaus will mark 100 years of serving our agriculture communities across the central coast of California. We know that those in agriculture are consistently evolving as they constantly contend with Mother Nature, mandates, immigration, and the ever-changing market.

Fortunately, the local farm bureaus' leadership and consultation has always been there to help our over 600 farmers stay competitive and keep our communities strong. The farm bureaus are an essential ingredient as to why our number one industry on the central coast is agriculture and why my home can claim the title of being the berry bowl and salad bowl of the world.

I thank and recognize the Santa Cruz County and Monterey County Farm Bureaus for their past, present, and future work for our agriculture industry and for our communities that feed our families throughout our Nation and the world.

RECOGNIZING FORMER GEORGIA STATE REPRESENTATIVE JOHN YATES

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

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remember the life of former Georgia State Representative John Yates, who passed away on December 11 at the age of 96.

Representing Griffin, Georgia, just south of Atlanta, he was first elected to the Georgia General Assembly in 1988, and over time became one of the most inspiring officials in the State.

When he retired from government, Representative Yates was the only World War II veteran serving in the Georgia General Assembly. He was drafted into the Army in 1942, and flew a Piper Cub airplane, a small plane with a top speed of less than 100 miles an hour. He flew 200 missions adjusting artillery fire on the enemy, including at the Battle of the Bulge, earning six Air Medals and four battle stars.

After the war, he went back to school to earn his college degree and embarked on a 35-year journey with Ford Motor Company, eventually becoming a depot manager.

Representative Yates served the State of Georgia with the most humble attitude and went to great lengths to help Georgia's veterans. Anyone who was lucky enough to know Representa-

tive Yates could learn from his attitude, knowledge, and experience.

Mr. Speaker, I had the honor and privilege of serving with Representative Yates. He was a great American, a true American hero, and a fine man. He will be missed.

CONDEMNING THE SLAVE TRADE IN LIBYA

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

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, by now, we have all seen the horrifying video of a slave auction in Libya. It is outrageous. Migrants and refugees, most of them Black Africans, are being preyed upon, held in detention camps, and bought and sold like property.

Mr. Speaker, the United States cannot stand by as an idle spectator to the plague of slavery in Libya. People are not property.

Last week, members of the Congressional Black Caucus and I met with Libya's Ambassador. She agreed that the Libyan Government will conduct a transparent investigation, but they do not have the capacity to do so. That does not absolve the United States of its responsibilities.

We must immediately investigate allegations of slavery and forced labor in Libya. We need to impose sanctions if Libya fails to end slave auctions and forced labor. We must ensure the U.S. Department of State and the U.S. Agency for International Development are adequately staffed to respond to the situation in Libya.

Mr. Speaker, Congress should adopt the bipartisan H. Res. 644, which will do all these things and more.

ATTACK ON RULE OF LAW AND DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ARRINGTON). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. GAETZ) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. GAETZ. Mr. Speaker, I take the floor tonight, along with many of my colleagues, to fight back against an attack on the rule of law and our democratic institutions.

Right now, the investigations into Donald Trump and the prior investigation into Hillary Clinton have been infected with the virus of severe bias.

Hillary Clinton went under investigation for the mishandling of classified information and her dealings through the Clinton Foundation, which was essentially investigated by her own fan club. Meanwhile, Robert Mueller obtained his team by fishing in the never-Trump aquarium.

Only through the antidote of transparency can we end this erosion of the rule of law and restore the American people's confidence in the institutions that we must trust to live in a civilized society.

The people in this country have a right to know what has happened within the FBI, the Department of Justice, and within Robert Mueller's team as he probes the President and his transition. But there is so much in hearing after hearing that members of the Judiciary Committee, the Intelligence Committee, and the Oversight Committee have been told we don't have a right to know as the Representatives of the people.

Let's begin with the tarmac meeting between Loretta Lynch and former President Bill Clinton.

We as the American people apparently don't have a right to know what was truly discussed. In information and reports that have been submitted to the Congress, there is extensive redacted information. So we don't get to see the substance of those communications between Loretta Lynch and former President Bill Clinton. It is deeply troubling.

We also don't get to know what the informant would tell us who had information about Russia's attempts to impair the United States' uranium assets through the now infamous Uranium One deal.

We know that there was an informant. We now know that informant wanted to come forward and give information about bribery and kickbacks that undermine America's interests.

Unfortunately, people at the Justice Department who still remain in substantial positions of power went and sought a gag order so that the Congress wouldn't learn what was happening and so the American people wouldn't learn what was happening.

Then we learn that an inspector general who wanted to raise the flag of concern regarding the deeply troubling conduct of Hillary Clinton was essentially shut down.

Mr. McCullough has now given interviews upon his departure from the intelligence community indicating that he went to James Clapper. He said that these mishaps, these potential violations of law, were serious and that they put America's national security in jeopardy. What he heard back from Mr. Clapper was that these revelations would create heartburn for the Clinton campaign.

It is ludicrous, when we have got potential bribes and kickbacks, and we have got the Clinton Foundation functioning essentially as a passthrough money laundering operation, that we wouldn't have all of the information that an inspector general would bring forward.

Mr. McCullough gave interviews where now he said that his family, his job, his agency, his mission was threatened by people in the deep state. That is not the America we need to live in. Transparency is the antidote to this type of corruption and this type of truly intolerable conduct.

Here is what we do know. We do know that the Democratic National Committee was off paying for a sala-

cious and false dossier from the Fusion GPS company about the current President, Donald Trump. We don't know whether or not the FBI contributed funds toward that cause.

Think about that for a moment. When we asked the Attorney General and the FBI Director, were taxpayer funds used to go and obtain a dossier to discredit the President both before and after his election, we were told that we don't have a right to know and that the taxpayers don't have a right to know if their money was used in this way. It is troubling.

We also know that Nellie Ohr, the wife of a top Department of Justice official, Bruce Ohr, was actually getting paid by Fusion GPS, the company that ultimately produced this false dossier.

If that is not a conflict of interest, if that doesn't impair the credibility of this investigation, I don't know what does.

We also don't know who is in charge. We asked questions to the Attorney General regarding the nature of his recusal. Can the Attorney General appoint a second special counsel to evaluate the Clinton Foundation?

We got contradictory answers.

So as we prepare for the Deputy Attorney General Mr. Rosenstein's testimony before the Judiciary Committee tomorrow, we don't know if it is Mr. Rosenstein who can appoint a special counsel. We don't know if it is the Attorney General who has the power to do that.

We do know that the American people want it. Harvard University released a poll that said over 60 percent of the American people believe there should be a second special counsel to investigate Clinton and the Clinton Foundation, largely as a consequence of this intractable bias that we continue to see in the intelligence community.

So let's look at that bias as it is applied to Mr. Mueller and his team.

We have no idea how Bob Mueller picked the members of his team. I asked FBI Director Christopher Ray: Did people get on the Mueller team because they hate President Trump? Was there any vetting? Was there any review? Did we look at political contributions, political activity or activism from these folks?

The FBI Director would not answer my question.

So here we are, unclear as to whether or not the standard to investigate the President was a preexisting bias against him.

Mr. Speaker, I don't believe that it is a coincidence that the Mueller team is populated by people who bring that bias with them and who seemingly have acted upon it.

Mr. Weissmann, who is Mueller's number two, attended Hillary Clinton's election night party. Are you really telling me we couldn't find a number two in the Mueller investigation who wasn't at Hillary Clinton's election night party? For goodness sake.

We also know that Mr. Weissmann sent emails to Sally Yates, praising her for directly defying an order from the President. That should have disqualified Mr. Weissmann, but we don't know if that was, in fact, the qualifying factor that led him to be on this team.

Aaron Zebley is also a member of the Mueller team. He represented Justin Cooper, who set up the Hillary Clinton email server. Could we not have found people for the Mueller team who were not involved in setting up an email server for Hillary Clinton?

He also used a hammer to smash BlackBerrys, destroying evidence. Mr. Zebley may be a witness, yet he is on the Mueller team.

Jeannie Rhee. She defended the Clinton Foundation against FOIA requests and now is involved in persecuting the President. In fact, over half of the members of the Mueller team have financially contributed to the campaigns of Barack Obama or Hillary Clinton, or both, and none of them contributed to Donald Trump.

I don't think it is a coincidence. I think it is ridiculous that the Congress doesn't have any information about how these people were selected, how they were vetted, how they were approved.

But it is not just the Mueller team. It is also the Department of Justice. Bruce Ohr, the head of counter intelligence, meets with Christopher Steele, who is the author of the dossier during the campaign. Then after the campaign, he meets with Glenn Simpson.

All the while, Bruce Ohr, working at the Department of Justice, has a spouse getting paid by the very people developing these lies about the President to discredit him. It is smoking-gun evidence of bias and conflict of interest.

But it is not just the Mueller team and the Department of Justice. It is also the FBI. Andrew McCabe is the current Deputy Director of the FBI. When he was the assistant agent in charge of the Washington field office, he was sending out emails just weeks before the 2016 election saying that the Hillary Clinton investigation would be given special status, that it would be handled by a small team at headquarters.

What that means is that Hillary Clinton got different treatment than any other American who would have been charged with the mishandling of classified information in the Washington, D.C., area.

Absolutely outrageous. That special treatment didn't lead to a more rigorous review. We know now that James Comey was drafting the exoneration statement before even interviewing key witnesses, including Hillary Clinton herself.

□ 1730

Then you have Peter Strzok, also at the FBI. Mr. Strzok has now been discredited and demoted because he was sending 10,000 text messages back and

forth with his mistress about how much he loved Hillary Clinton and hated President Trump. I don't think it is a coincidence that Mr. Strzok is the person who went in and changed the term "grossly negligent," which is a crime, to "extremely careless," in the exoneration statement about Hillary Clinton.

The Attorney General needs to do his job. He needs to appoint a special counsel to investigate Hillary Clinton because she was never investigated in earnest in the first place. He needs to tell Robert Mueller to put up or shut up.

If there is evidence of collusion, let us see it. We are almost a year into this investigation, and the only thing I see is a bias that continues to erode our institutions and our rule of law, and this Congress should stand for it no more.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PERRY).

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Speaker, I thank my good friend, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. GAETZ), for bringing this issue to the floor.

Mr. Speaker, this can all be cleared up, pretty quickly, with a little bit of transparency and with a little bit of sunlight. It comes down to the issue of: Do we have impartial justice in this country or don't we?

We are all familiar with Lady Justice. She has a blindfold over her eyes, she is holding the scale, and the scale is straight across. It is not leaning one way or the other. But, in this case, it seems—and I am going to say that kind of tongue-in-cheek—it seems like it is, like the scale is not right across, Mr. Speaker. It is heavily on one side, and the other side is way up in the air.

And let me just make a couple of points:

Deputy Director McCabe refers to the Clinton email investigation as "special."

Why is it special?

Where is it on that scale?

Is it up high or is it down low?

Why is it called special?

Why did Secretary Clinton have a team from headquarters investigate her, as opposed to the Washington field office?

Think about this:

If the FBI called you, it wouldn't be for a meeting or an interview. It would be called your deposition. You would sit there with your lawyer, and you would answer questions. And it wouldn't be when it was convenient for you. It would be when it was convenient for the FBI.

Secretary Clinton gets to have a meeting with the FBI for an interview on a Saturday morning of a holiday weekend. Now, contrast that on the scales of justice with Paul Manafort. Paul Manafort gets his home broken into in the middle of the night and dragged out of bed while he and his wife are sleeping. Something doesn't seem right to me.

You talk about the meeting on the tarmac. The FBI, in their emails, it

was revealed that they wanted to get the agent that divulged the fact that that meeting occurred out on the tarmac. They weren't interested in what the meeting was about just days before Secretary Clinton was going to be deposed before this House of Representatives and be questioned and interviewed about her role in Benghazi.

Why does that happen?

It seems like the scales of justice, once again, are tipped.

Peter Strzok. He interviewed Heather Samuelson, Cheryl Mills, Bryan Pagliano, and Paul Combetta, and they all got immunity. They all got immunity.

Who gives somebody immunity without anything in return?

Okay, they got immunity. We get it. We want to know what was on the other side of that equation. I mean, this is not to apologize for, or to stick up for, Mike Flynn or for Paul Manafort. If they have committed crimes, that needs to be dealt with appropriately. Lying, period, is never appropriate.

But they didn't get this deal. These folks did get the deal. And, at the same time while they got the deal, we know via their email and interviews that they actually did lie to the FBI. Some of these folks lied to the FBI, yet Michael Flynn pleads guilty, and these guys and gals get immunity.

Do the scales of justice, Mr. Speaker, seem like they are a little bit askew?

Mr. Combetta—if that is how you pronounce his name—we know that he was out there searching for ways on the internet about how to scrub a computer. Nothing to see here, right? That seems a little odd, doesn't it?

Cheryl Mills, she got immunity, allegedly, to give up her laptop. So she got immunity; we got that. She can't be prosecuted. We got the laptop. Shouldn't the American people know what was on the laptop? Why is that information not available? Why is it that this Congress, this jurisdiction of oversight, as applied in the Constitution, has to beg and cajole the FBI and the Department of Justice to provide documents so that we can see what happened, so that we can know, so that the American people and their representatives can know how this dossier—if you want to call it that—was constructed and how it was used? Why must we beg for that information, and why can't we get it?

Mr. Speaker, this can all be cleared up; just provide the information. There doesn't have to be another special prosecutor. Mr. Mueller can continue with his investigation and find the truth because we all want the truth. We want the truth that is impartial, not something that is fabricated because we now have an FBI that is pursuing individuals, as opposed to crimes.

The American people need to know that this isn't a tin horn dictatorship and that we don't have government officials using the power of the Federal Government to work against their po-

litical rivals. They need to know that they can trust their FBI, and right now it doesn't seem like they can have confidence in that.

It seems like if you are on the wrong side of the scale, Mr. Speaker, it is a bad day for you. But if you are connected and you have people working for you like—oh, I don't know—Peter Strzok, Bruce Ohr, and his wife now, Andrew Weissmann, or Jeannie Rhee, I mean, as the days go on, we just keep on finding out more and more and more. And we don't find it out because they are offering it. We find it out because we have to pull it from them and just beg them and require them to come in here and force the information out of them. That is not how this is supposed to work.

We need to have confidence in our FBI, and we need to have confidence in our Department of Justice. American citizens need to have confidence in their judicial system to know that the blindfold is still on Lady Justice, that the scales are even, that we are all going to be treated evenly, and that crimes are going to be investigated, not individuals. And that there is not going to be some kind of a witch hunt or a lynch mob mentality at the Federal Government level against people with whom the political ruling class disagrees.

If it requires another special counsel, so be it. If not, it would be great if we could just clear all of this up by providing the information that this House of Representatives and the American people demand. There is no reason to keep it. It is not classified; it is not sensitive. It is information that all of us need to know so we know how our Federal Government is operating and who is being truthful with us. And then we can have confidence in the fidelity of our FBI and our Department of Justice.

Mr. GAETZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JODY B. HICE).

Mr. JODY B. HICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Florida (Mr. GAETZ) for yielding.

I am greatly honored to be here to participate in this important discussion. We all want transparency, and for that to be in our government is critical to all of us. I am honored to be on the Oversight and Government Reform Committee where this is part of the responsibilities entrusted to us.

But after repeated scandals and misconduct, it is patently obvious to me that former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton plays by her own rules, and simply does so because of her own status, her own positions of power and influence in the government, and has been in those roles for decades. She has been getting a free pass to follow or ignore the law as she chooses, whereas it seems, on the other hand, as has already been discussed this evening, President Trump and his administration seems to get a special counsel just for sneezing. It is insane what is going

on, and we, as Americans, must prioritize equal justice under the law.

Lady Justice must remain blind, and her scales must remain balanced. This is a fundamental principle for all of us as Americans—something we cherish and something we hold on to—and we are watching it change right before our eyes. It seems as though Lady Justice is peeking underneath that blindfold, and that is simply unacceptable.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored that we are coming to draw attention to this horror and this change that is taking place. The principle of blind justice is one of the most basic fundamental principles that we have in this country, and without it we are watching individuals like Mrs. Clinton and her allies act above the law and get away with things they simply ought not be getting away with. And the truth is, a breach of justice for one is a breach of justice for all of us.

Let me give you a quick example. Back in August of 2016, The New York Times reported on generous foreign donations to the Clinton Foundation, and this was done while Hillary Clinton was Secretary of State. That, in itself, ought to raise some red flags, shouldn't it? Foreign countries. And then we find out that many of these foreign countries had already tremendous human rights violations: Kuwait, for example, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and several others, just to name a few, yet they are giving tons of money to the Clinton Foundation, while she is Secretary of State.

And then the Clintons say: Well, we were open; we disclosed all of the information about who was giving what. They tried to convince us that they went above and beyond to disclose their donors, but they did not do so.

For example, we found they failed to disclose \$2.35 million in donations from a family foundation that was linked to the mining company, Uranium One, which we happen to be talking about tonight.

Well, who is Uranium One?

Of course, we know by now that this is a company that was taken over by Russia's state-owned nuclear energy firm, Rosatom, another decision that was signed off by Secretary of State Hillary Clinton.

The dots are pretty easy to start connecting. We, at least, have some red flags here.

Furthermore, there was a whopping \$145 million given to the Clinton Foundation by Uranium One's owners. I don't know about everyone else here, but I would certainly know it if I received over \$100 million from Russian donors. Talk about Russian collusion. Shall we talk about it? Let's have this discussion. That is the whole point of what we are talking about here this evening. I would also be very concerned that someone receiving this kind of money was free of bias or coercion when they are getting this type of money.

But let me land the plane here. There is a full-fledged investigation going on

here into President Trump's interactions with Russia, but where is the investigation on Hillary Clinton's activities with the Russians?

The Obama administration attempted to sweep this situation under the rug. They let her off the hook. That is a disgrace. It is in complete disregard for our Nation's laws. And, perhaps, that in itself ought to be something else that is looked into: the Obama administration's role in all of this.

I am grateful that Attorney General Sessions is taking these allegations seriously. I am hopeful that we can get to the bottom of this and ensure that justice is served.

The FBI must investigate this thoroughly. We must have transparency to make sure that Hillary Clinton is held accountable and reaffirm that no one is above the law.

Enough is enough. We have got to go into this further.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the good gentleman from Florida (Mr. GAETZ) for his leadership on this.

Mr. GAETZ. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. JORDAN).

Mr. JORDAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, did the Comey FBI and the Obama Justice Department coordinate with the Democratic Party to go after the Republican Party? Did the FBI and the Justice Department work hand in glove with the Clinton campaign to go after the Trump campaign? That is the fundamental question. That is the fundamental question.

And think about what we have learned in the last several weeks:

First, we learned that the DNC and the Clinton campaign paid for the dossier. The DNC and the Clinton campaign, which we now know are one and the same, paid for the dossier. They first paid their law firm, who then paid Fusion GPS, who then paid Christopher Steele, who then paid Russians. This is a great irony.

We have Special Counsel Mueller investigating possible coordination between the Trump campaign and Russia to influence the 2016 Presidential election, yet we know, just as sure as I am standing on the House floor tonight, the Clinton campaign paid Russians to do what? Influence the 2016 Presidential election.

They paid for the dossier. It has been reported—and I think it happened—but it has been reported the dossier became the basis to secure warrants at the FISA court. In other words, they took this dossier, this disproven dossier, fake news, National Enquirer, garbage dossier, they dressed it all up, they spruced it all up, they took it to the FISA court and then got a judge to say: Okay, that is enough to spy on Americans.

That is what has been reported. And all of the evidence points to that actually taking place.

So they used this dossier, this disproven dossier, to spy on Americans.

And then what have we learned in just the past 5 days?

□ 1745

Bruce Ohr, the Associate Deputy Attorney General; Bruce Ohr, four doors down from Mr. Rosenstein; Bruce Ohr, the top guy at the Justice Department, in 2016, during the campaign, is meeting with the guy who wrote the dossier, meeting with Christopher Steele.

Bruce Ohr, the top guy at the Justice Department, the Associate Deputy Attorney General, and four doors down from Mr. Rosenstein is also meeting with Glenn Simpson, the guy who founded Fusion GPS, the people who paid for the dossier.

So you have got Bruce Ohr, the top official at the Justice Department, hanging out with the guy who wrote and the guy who paid for the dossier during the campaign.

Here is the kicker. I mean, you can't make this stuff up. Here is the kicker. At the same time that Bruce Ohr is meeting with him, we learn that Bruce Ohr's wife is being paid by Fusion GPS, working for the people who paid Christopher Steele to write the dossier that we believe was taken to the FISA court to secure warrants to spy on Americans associated with the Trump campaign.

We know all that happened. That is all public. We know that is the truth. Now, what Mr. GAETZ is saying—and this is why I appreciate the work that Mr. GAETZ and my colleagues are doing on this—and what we are saying: Look, give us the documents. Answer our questions, for crying out loud. And if you won't, then appoint a special counsel—a second special counsel so the American people can get the truth.

Because if this, in fact, happened—and I think it did—where you had the Justice Department, the FBI working with one campaign to go after the other campaign, working with the Clinton campaign to go after President Trump's campaign, then that is as wrong as it gets. That is something that should never take place in the United States of America.

That is why this is so important. That is why the work that Congressman GAETZ and other colleagues are doing is so important.

Again, if you are not going to do the job, Justice Department, at least appoint a second special counsel so we can get answers and we can hold people accountable who did this in this great country.

Mr. GAETZ. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. JORDAN) for joining us on the floor this evening. I particularly thank him for his work in the Judiciary Committee and the Oversight Committee. The gentleman is correct. We just want our questions answered. We just want to know: Did these things occur that would seem to evidence collusion on the part of the Democratic Party and the Clinton campaign with Russians to influence the outcome of the election?

But our own Justice Department and our own FBI won't answer those questions. Tomorrow we have Mr. Rosenstein before the Judiciary Committee. I hope he does give us answers.

Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BIGGS), a fellow member of the Judiciary Committee.

Mr. BIGGS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Florida (Mr. GAETZ) for leading this Special Order tonight, and I am grateful for his work on this very important issue.

Mr. Speaker, I will tell you that I am very appreciative of my colleagues who also continue to work on this very important task, because this reminds me of playing a basketball game where you get there and there is a five-on-five game, except for it is not really five-on-five because the other team has got the referees on their side, they have got the scorekeeper on their side, they have got the statistics on their side, they have got the person that runs the clock on their side.

That is really what has happened here. We know that is what has happened here because of the conflict of interest and bias that has taken over and controls the Robert Mueller special investigations team. That is a team that is biased. He has got conflict of interest. Nobody is going to get a fair shake from that team.

Why is that?

Well, let's just think about this. A couple of weeks ago, we had the FBI—excuse me—Attorney General Jeff Sessions come in. He is a great guy. I asked him specifically: Do you have any procedure to vet conflict of interest or bias on Mueller's special team or in the Department of Justice?

He said: No, we don't. We don't have that.

He doesn't have a question there. He doesn't have a process. He says: It is up to each individual to determine if they have got that conflict of interest or bias.

Well, we had Director Wray in last week. I asked him the same question. He said basically the same thing: No, we don't have a process.

Mueller doesn't have a process. In fact, it is as if the process is you need to have a conflict or bias in order to get on Mueller's special counsel team. That is what this is stacked up to be.

Well, that is where we are today. And tomorrow, when Deputy Rosenstein comes in, I am looking forward to asking him the same questions because there is conflict and there is bias. My colleagues have all iterated that tonight. It just happens over and over and over again. To get on that team, you have to have a conflict or bias.

Well, so what else is important? What else has come out of these hearings?

Well, I tell you what else has come out. I said to Director Wray: Look, we know there is a problem here. Attorney General Sessions told us that the responsibility of the person involved is to

make sure they don't have a conflict. We know that there is a huge cloud that sits right there.

Well, this is outrageous. No firm in the private sector would ever allow that to go on. But here we have this—it is like a drip, drip, drip from a faucet. Every day or two, here is another conflict of interest that comes out. Maybe Mr. Strzok, maybe Mr. Ohr, maybe Mr. Ohr's wife, maybe Mr. Weissmann, maybe Mr. Zebley, maybe Mr. COOPER, maybe Jeannie Rhee. It just goes on and on.

You know what? This is ridiculous. So I asked Director Wray: Look, you have got the inspector general looking at the Hillary Clinton investigation right now and all these other investigations. What will you do if he says there was irregularities in the Hillary Clinton investigation?

He said: I would try to "unring the bell."

Think about that. He says he is willing to unring the bell. I asked him what he meant. So he talked about personnel decisions. Maybe someone needs to be let go, disciplined, retrained, whatever. Maybe they will come up with a process to vet conflicts of interest and bias investigations.

But I pressed him a little bit harder. I asked him: When you get to unring the bell, if you have irregularities in the Hillary Clinton investigation, will you commit to reopen the investigation?

Now, he didn't commit, but he indicated very strongly he would reopen that Hillary Clinton investigation.

That is what needs to happen now. We know that there were irregularities. We know that that is what the inspector general is going to find. And I tell you this: We have got to stop making this administration play a stacked team when the other team has nothing but biased and conflicted investigators who control the clock, who control the score, who control the statistics, who control the referees. That is what you have going on here, and it must stop, and it must stop now.

With that in mind, if Attorney General Sessions, if Director Wray, and if Mr. Rosenstein do not provide the information Congress has asked, they should be held in contempt.

Mr. GAETZ. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. BIGGS) for his leadership on the Judiciary Committee. He is absolutely right. We have to get answers to these questions. And if we don't, then Congress can never have confidence in the outcome of any investigation. And if we can't have confidence, then our constituents, the American people, certainly can't either.

Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT), another member of the Judiciary Committee.

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, I do appreciate the concerns of my friends here in Congress because this is just incredible.

You know, many of us have read, understood what happened during Watergate, and we thought surely there have been enough things put in as checks to prevent an administration from totally co-opting the Department of Justice. No one President should be able to have an administration that is powerful enough that it could be a self-sustaining party where all of the powers, whether it is the IRS that has people in key places that prevent people from guilt giving, for example, proper tax status to opponents of an administration so that they stand a better chance of being defeated in running for a second election.

It happened in the Obama administration. And to the great embarrassment or what should be embarrassment of the Obama administration, of the IRS, and of the United States Congress, nothing was done. It appears crimes were committed. Nothing was done.

We are just astaghast.

How could this happen?

Surely the DOJ would jump into the IRS and correct this and stop this so that the IRS could not be weaponized as a political tool. I mean, Nixon may have dreamed of that at some point, but we are not aware of it.

I mean, it is just hard to believe that anybody would anticipate using the powers of government in such a flagrant form as we are finding out almost every day now. New allegations, not just—not allegations; new facts show that corruption and political animus and anything but justice was being conducted for a number of years in the Department of Justice.

You know, as an assistant district attorney in east Texas, as a judge getting to know and hearing so many different Federal agents testify, most people felt like, gosh, if the FBI comes in, these are the guys in the white hats. But much of America has seen what can only be styled as real corruption that has turned those white hats into a stinking brown for some of the top people.

We heard Christopher Wray, the FBI Director, saying: You know, I think of the FBI and I think about these thousands of great Federal agents across the country who care about their country and protecting people's lives and protecting the law.

Well, yeah, I think about that, too, until my mind comes back here to Washington, and not just a swamp, but areas that have become a cesspool. It is unbelievable to think—I mean, I saw "All the President's Men" the other night about Watergate and Deep Throat. And as I watched, oh, my gosh, you mean somebody in the White House may have had contact with somebody that may have had funds that could be used?

I mean, you look at what is coming out in the news every day and it makes that look like Keystone Cops—nothing compared to the extent that this administration used the Justice Department.

And going back to the IRS, what did Rosenstein or all these other great Justice Department officials do for us in cleaning up the mess at the IRS?

Nothing, nothing, nothing.

What did Eric Holder and Loretta Lynch do to clean things up?

Well, they just kept dumping more and more dirt in that washing machine.

Just when you thought it couldn't get any worse, then you find that a reporter sees the husband of someone being investigated in a clandestine meeting, in an area they thought nobody would notice.

And what do they want to do at the Justice Department?

We find out they want to go after that reporter. They want to go after that reporter because this reporter actually was reporting some things that might help get some things cleaned up.

They say: We don't want things cleaned up. We want to keep our little cesspool tight and friendly, where we know all the players and all the swamp rats.

We have got to have a massive clean out of what has been happening, but it is not happening.

□ 1800

Then we find out, gee, there was this investigation regarding Russia trying to violate the law, pay bribes, pay payoffs, anything they could do to corner the market on uranium and get United States uranium in their own control. And, gee, who ends up having their fingerprints on that? A guy named Rosenstein.

In fact, then you see one of the people involved in the investigation of corruption and uranium and payoffs, well, there is Rod Rosenstein's name. Now, he has an assistant sign for him asking the judge to seal the records so we can't know exactly what all was done by the FBI.

It is kind of like we find out there is someone, the undercover agent that the FBI was using, that the Justice Department was using, and they get an agreement, a nondisclosure agreement. I mean, the only reason I can think of they would want a nondisclosure agreement at the FBI is so that the informant wouldn't turn around and talk about how dirty they have been. I mean, why would they get a nondisclosure agreement?

I might expect the guy who was the informant demanding a nondisclosure agreement from the FBI and from the Justice Department: You can't talk about what all I did; you can't talk about the things I did because the people I was working undercover for you on, they might try to kill me, so I demand a nondisclosure agreement from the Justice Department, from the FBI, so you won't disclose things that will get me killed.

But, no, that is not what happened. Under the Obama administration, Loretta Lynch "Injustice Department," we have a nondisclosure agreement

that the person who risked his life couldn't disclose what was going on. Sounds like somebody, to me, at the FBI and the Justice Department had a pretty dirty conscience and they didn't want to be outed. And at every turn: Oh, well, that was sealed. Oh, well, that is a nondisclosure agreement. Oh, you can't have access to that.

The FBI and the Justice Department and people that we have been questioning have really kind of gotten themselves in a position where they are above the law. They are above Congress. And in this country, the branch that the Founders thought would have the least control ever—that was the judiciary; they are small; they don't really have any power—they are legislating and running the executive branch from under their robes.

At the same time, you have got the executive branch and the Department of Justice that has become a new playground for people who want to write like Kafka, ginning up charges, knocking down doors in the wee hours of the morning: Oh, were they a threat?

Well, no, not really, but we just need to intimidate them. It is what we do in the Justice Department nowadays. We are the Department of intimidation.

I am telling you, Mr. Speaker, there has got to be a material change. There has got to be. There are too many people currently in the Justice Department and the top of the FBI—not these fine young agents across the country who have given everything they had, even though Mueller removed their ability to have wise counsel because he got rid of the long-toothed people that had the experience and the wisdom to know how to bring these agents along. He purged the training materials so FBI agents could not know how to discern if somebody had been radicalized.

There is just so much, that almost needs to start from scratch; and we are having to deal with the players like Rosenstein who have been in that system as they were part of the process while it was corroding and, really, infesting.

I thank my friends for caring enough about what is going on to stand up and raise Cain. But, like I said, you know, just when you think, well, that has got to be the final shoe dropping, then we have this story that the wife of the demoted DOJ official actually worked for the firm that put together, was behind, the anti-Trump dossier that we believe may very likely have been used in order to surveil the Trump campaign, in order to use the DOJ, working in collusion with not only Russia, but also the Hillary Clinton campaign, in order to elect a candidate who had no chance otherwise.

Well, a funny thing happened on the way to using the DOJ and Fusion GPS and the Russians in order to get Hillary Clinton elected—she didn't get elected. But that certainly doesn't owe anything to Nellie Ohr or Bruce Ohr or these people who have been occupying the Department of Justice as it tainted

and turned from, what Christopher Wray says, an F that stood for "fidelity" to, now, an I that stands for "infidelity."

Let's get back to fidelity in the Justice Department. Let's get back to an incorruptible Justice Department. I am hoping and praying we are heading that direction, but I am just not seeing it yet.

Mr. GAETZ. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas. His perspective as a former prosecutor and former judge certainly sheds a tremendous amount of light on the stark days that we found ourselves in with this biased effort against the President of the United States.

I would also like to thank the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. JORDAN), the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PERRY), the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. JODY B. HICE), and the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. BIGGS) for their contributions not only to this Special Order, but to this critical discussion we are having in the country.

I will conclude with this, Mr. Speaker. Tomorrow, the Deputy Attorney General will raise his right hand and swear to be truthful before the Judiciary Committee, and we will ask these tough questions about coordination with Democrats and the DNC and, potentially, the FBI to gin up this false information about the President.

We will ask why a senior official at the Department of Justice had a spouse who was working for the company that was trying to discredit our President both before and after the election. And I hope he doesn't give the same answers that we heard from the Director of the FBI, Mr. Wray.

Mr. Wray said in response to almost all these questions: Well, we have got an inspector general. Inspector generals sniff around all these things, and if there is something wrong, we will make reforms after we hear back.

The time is now. The danger to our country is clear and present if we allow our duly-elected President to be undermined by these unfair and biased tactics. So I am hopeful that we will move past the jargon and just give straight answers to the American people to these very legitimate questions that so many of our constituents are asking.

We should also remember that the inspector general process is far from perfect. We heard from an inspector general, Mr. McCullough, who said that, when he brought forward claims, he was threatened, his family was threatened, his job was threatened, his agency was threatened, and that he did not have an opportunity to tell the American people the truth.

Mr. Speaker, the American people deserve the truth. The truth is that there was no collusion between the Trump campaign and Russia. If there was any collusion, it was the Democrats, it was the DNC, and it was this nexus between Mr. Ohr and his spouse working for the very people who were engaged in these devious tactics.

We deserve better, and we are going to be demanding better tomorrow in the Judiciary Committee.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

WHAT IS HAPPENING HERE IN CONGRESS?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentleman from California (Mr. GARAMENDI) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, one of the tasks of having the second Special Order Hour is to find myself sitting here in this Chamber listening to the most absurd, ridiculous conversation that I think I have ever heard anywhere. My esteemed colleagues were here for the last hour in a different world, in a completely different universe, not of this world, but a different universe. And I am thinking: What in the world are they saying?

By my recollection, every one of our intelligence agencies said that Russia was involved in the campaign and developing information that was supporting the current President. I am thinking: I think that is what I heard over the last 9, 10, almost 14 months now. And yet my colleagues are up here and in a different world.

I will tell you what it is all about. This wasn't the subject matter that I was going to talk to tonight, but it was really about another scam, another scheme that is being perpetrated. This is all about, this last hour's discussion was all about somehow turning the table so that Special Counsel Mueller is demeaned, his work is somehow not authentic so that the investigation that is coming closer and closer to the Oval Office is discredited, setting the stage for what may very, very well be an extremely important task that this House has.

As that investigation continues, we will hear even more shrill discussions from the President's supporters tearing down that investigation, undermining the integrity of it, so that when that task comes to the House of Representatives in an impeachment resolution, they will simply say: Well, his entire investigation is discredited and, therefore, we are not going to proceed.

The American public isn't buying it, gentlemen. The American public is not blind. They are not deaf. They are listening, and they are understanding that an honest investigation is underway, based upon what our intelligence agencies discovered, based upon the fact—the fact—that the Russians did hack the DNC and did hack the chairman of the Hillary Clinton campaign and then weaponized those emails that were stolen. That is a fact, gentlemen, and you cannot wash away that fact.

And from there, we now have a special prosecutor, a special counsel in place who is carrying on an investigation, and indictments have come for-

ward and penalties have been assessed and people have pleaded guilty.

All of that is the fact, and it is pointing closer and closer to the White House; and, therefore, I understand, gentlemen, I understand why you are so upset. I suppose if I were somehow to stand here and be an advocate for the President, I might be upset, too, because the net is drawing tighter, because information is coming clearer.

So come to the floor, do what you can, do what you can to undermine the investigation; do what you can, through your falsehoods, through your incorrect interpretations of plain facts, to undermine the integrity of an investigation. I understand why you would be intent upon doing so.

But the purpose of this evening isn't that. It is something that will affect America for the next two decades, at least. The purpose of this hour is to talk to the American people about what is happening here while these foolish floor discussions are going on.

What is happening here in Congress at this moment, this week, is one of the biggest transfers of wealth ever in America's history; the transfer of wealth from the working men and women of America, from the poor, from the elderly, to the superwealthy of America.

What is happening here in Congress now, in a conference committee, is the drafting of legislation, tax legislation, that will dramatically affect the American economy for decades.

□ 1815

Transferring wealth, benefits that the elderly receive in Medicare, transferring benefits that the poor receive in food stamps, in Meals on Wheels, in Medicare, Medicaid, children's health programs; transferring those necessary benefits that these men and women need to survive, to be able to live; transferring those benefits to the superwealthy in a tax proposal that gives to the largest American corporations and to the top 1 percent, over \$5 trillion over the next decade, that is what is happening.

Here is a fact: American corporations that have already seen their share of burden to finance this government, to educate the Americans, to keep our military, to deal with national security, they have seen their share of the Federal revenues drop from some 20 percent—actually, 30 percent in 1939, 15 percent in 1960, down to somewhere in the 5 to 10 percent range. At the same time, the burden is shifted to the middle class. That is what is happening.

Here is what should be happening. Here is the way we ought to look at it. On The Mall here in Washington, we have the FDR Memorial. Etched in the marble is this: "The test of our progress is not whether we add more to the abundance of those who have much; it is whether we provide enough for those who have little."

I presented this upside down almost on purpose because that is precisely

what our Republican colleagues are doing. They are taking that value and turning it upside down. Instead of doing more for those who have little, they are doing much for those who already control the greatest amount of wealth ever in the handful of a few people since the 1400s, when the Spanish Empire was ripping off the Western Hemisphere. That is what is happening.

Of all of this money, the top 1 percent and America's biggest corporations are gaining, and the rest of Americans, over the next 5 to 7 years, are going to pay for that. We have to stop this tax cut. We have to stop it because it is terrible public policy.

American corporations don't need more money. It was reported today that Apple—the world's largest, most valuable corporation, Apple, in my State of California—is sitting on \$2.5 trillion of cash today in the United States, and another \$2.5 trillion of cash outside the United States, and they want their tax rate reduced. They are almost paying nothing now because they are able to escape American taxes.

They say: Lower the corporate tax rate so that there will be investment in America.

It ain't so. In the last 20 years, there has been a cataclysmic change in the way in which corporations use their profits.

In the 1970s, 50, 60 percent of the after-tax profits of corporations went into building their business, building new equipment, new manufacturing plants, adding employees, increasing wages. The remaining 40 percent or so went to dividends.

Where are we today?

Less than 10 percent goes to increasing a company's manufacturing, the company's employment, wages for workers.

Where does the rest of it go?

It goes to stock buybacks and to dividends. It goes to the shareholders.

And who are the shareholders?

The top 1 percent.

This is the scam of all times. They say we have got to reduce the taxes on corporations so that they will employ more Americans. If only they would. If only they would.

I am sure you have heard of AT&T. Do you know what the effective tax rate of AT&T is?

Not 35 percent, not 30 percent, not even 20 percent, as this tax bill would set as the maximum rate of corporations. The effective tax rate for the last 10 years for AT&T has been 8 percent. Eight percent.

And during that time, did they use that after-tax profit to add employees, to increase wages?

No. They laid off 80,000 American workers.

What did they use that money for?

Stock buybacks, corporate executives, \$124 million to the CEO just 2 years ago.

I could go on and on, but I would like to bring to this debate Mr. CICILLINE,