

The weapon pictured next to me is a Barrett M-82 .50-caliber anti-personnel and -materiel rifle. There are Members of this body who have spoken on how this weapon should be illegal because, conceivably, it can take down an airplane.

Why do I digress?

Because that weapon was recovered in the hideout known to be used by the most notorious murderer in North America in the last 100 years: El Chapo Guzman.

The United States Government watched while a weapon that some Members of this body would suggest can take down an airplane was trafficked to a man who is trafficked in death to the point where the next slide I show will blow any thinking person's mind.

Many of the 160,000, roughly, deaths of civilians in Mexico can be traced directly back to this man. And we know, because it was recovered, that at least one of the military-style weapons that he received came from us.

So, 7 years ago today, an American hero named Brian Terry, who had served as a law enforcement professional, as a marine in Iraq, and on the elite border tactical squadron, set out to protect America, but to also protect those who sought to enter it, whether legally or illegally. And, when he did so, he did so understanding fully, as those who take an oath to defend this Nation do, that some things in this world are worth standing, fighting, and dying for. And, tragically, 7 years ago tonight, Brian Terry made that sacrifice.

I had no intention of standing and speaking on this today until H.R. 4433, the Securing DHS Firearms Act of 2017, came before the Homeland Security Committee yesterday, but it struck me as ironic. Not only did I serve in uniform as a combat arms officer for nearly 6 years, but I spent just under 10 years as a prosecutor, and I have a passion for a number of things, but foremost among these is justice.

So while it gives my heart some condolence, I can't begin to imagine the feelings on the 7th anniversary of the family members of this American hero, knowing that, while the people who pulled the trigger have been convicted, the weapons that they used were provided to them by the very Nation that he died to protect.

Mr. Speaker, with that, I would submit this: I have faith that in life or after life, there will always ultimately be justice.

I will tell you this: In the case of those who, with intent, put the firearms into the hands of the individuals who took the life of this American hero, I hope that justice comes in this life and not the next.

So, while we move about our business of promulgating laws to dictate to the DHS that they should have a policy to address the loss of firearms, I hope we don't take our eye off the ball of the very firearms that we intentionally

trafficked, like the two that were recovered from the scene of the murder of Brian Terry, and that we will continue until we find it to seek justice for this man and act in a manner such that there are no more Brian Terry tragedies going forward.

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

ROBERT MUELLER INVESTIGATION

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

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I am here to discuss a very serious issue, which are the mounting threats and criticism of Robert Mueller's investigation into criminality taking place in the course of the Presidential election with interference by the Russians and possible collusion with various Americans working with him.

But I want to start by putting this in a general context, Mr. Speaker. Tom Paine said: "In the monarchies, the king is law; but in the democracies, the law is king."

We place everything on the rule of law here in the United States of America. It is how we control the people who occupy the highest offices of government and control vast amounts of resources that belong to the people of the United States.

In the monarchies and in the dictatorships, the people have no control over those who occupy government; but in the democracies, in the constitutional societies, we exercise control over the people who lead the government to make sure that they don't abuse their power for improper purposes: for private gain, for the enrichment of particular classes, or for the perpetuation of their own political power.

Now, when we took office at the beginning of this year, Mr. Speaker, we received an Intelligence Committee report, signed by 18 intelligence agencies: the FBI, the CIA, the NSA, the Defense Intelligence Agency, and on and on.

They all told us the same thing, which is that Vladimir Putin had attempted to interfere and had interfered in the American election through cyber espionage and cyber sabotage in an effort to determine the outcome of our election. That took place. We knew that way back when we first took office.

Now, in the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, which I serve on, and in the House Judiciary Committee, which I serve on, we were told—and we have been told for months going all the way back to the beginning of the year—that we don't need to investigate this assault on the sovereignty of the American people in our own election because there is an excellent lawyer and law enforcement official in charge of the

special counsel investigation: Robert Mueller.

Indeed, Robert Mueller is a man of extraordinary and, perhaps, singular qualification. He is a decorated war hero from the Vietnam war; a U.S. attorney, who had been the U.S. attorney for both the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the State of California; a former Director of the FBI.

And do you know what?

Robert Mueller is a registered Republican. He was named as special counsel by another registered Republican and another widely heralded and highly-qualified law enforcement official: Rod Rosenstein, who had been a career attorney in the Department of Justice, and then the U.S. attorney appointed by President Bush in the great State of Maryland, my home State; and who is presently the Deputy Attorney General of the United States, appointed by another Republican: Attorney General Sessions.

So Attorney General Sessions appointed Rod Rosenstein, who is the Deputy Attorney General, a Republican; and Rod Rosenstein appointed another Republican and a widely admired and highly-qualified law enforcement official, Robert Mueller, to take over as the special counsel.

□ 1315

Now, with all these Republicans in charge of the investigation and with the Republicans here in Congress saying, "no, we won't do any investigations of our own," despite past practice, we have to ask why Special Counsel Robert Mueller this week has suddenly come under withering fire by our GOP colleagues in the most ferocious organized attack on a Federal prosecution and prosecutor I have ever seen.

Well, the answer, alas, is obvious. They are attacking Special Counsel Robert Mueller and his fine team of lawyers and investigators because Mueller and his team are doing their jobs and justice is being done. There have already been two guilty pleas arising from this investigation: one from President Trump's former National Security Advisor, General Flynn, who pled guilty to lying to the FBI about Trump-Russia; and another criminal confession and guilty plea from the former foreign policy assistant, George Papadopoulos, who also took full responsibility for his criminal conduct in lying about Trump-Russia to the FBI.

And there have been sweeping criminal indictments handed down by the Mueller team, the special counsel, against Paul Manafort, Trump's former campaign manager, and his associate, Rick Gates.

Now, for all we know, this might be the end of it. The special counsel isn't talking. He is not leaking. He is doing his job. But it is also possible that the investigation is just getting started and that they are closing in on even higher targets: perhaps Jared Kushner, the all-purpose Trump aide and the

President's son-in-law, perhaps he is within the scopes of this investigation; perhaps Donald Trump, Jr.; and perhaps the President of the United States himself, Donald Trump.

And so the White House has issued its apparently desperate and cornered animal orders. The President cries chaos and let's slip the dogs of war against Special Counsel Mueller and the rule of law. This week, Trump has called the Mueller investigation—an investigation led by a Republican, who is named by a Republican, who is named by a Republican—he calls this investigation “the single greatest witch hunt of a politician in American history.”

And I don't want to hear from any of my colleagues, either, GOP on the other side. Well, you can't take seriously what the President says because he is disconnecting from reality or he is paranoid or he is delusional, unless you are willing to try to activate the provisions of the 25th Amendment. We must take the President's word seriously.

And, in the meantime, of course, our friends across the aisle, Mr. Speaker, are going along with everything the President says and everything that he does, and they are enabling his attempt to defame the special counsel, Mr. Mueller, and to attack the work of the FBI.

The President calls the FBI an agency in tatters, and an onslaught has followed in the media. On FOX News, a full-scale campaign against the FBI has arisen with lots of people comparing the FBI to the KGB, which is amusing because, if that were true, they would like the FBI—because Donald Trump's best buddy in foreign relations and FOX News' beloved kleptocrat authoritarian dictator abroad is Vladimir Putin, the former chief of the KGB. But they compare our FBI, the tens of thousands of men and women who have given their lives to law enforcement in our country, they compare the FBI to the KGB under a totalitarian government.

Newt Gingrich calls Mueller corrupt, Newt Gingrich who was officially reprimanded right here, Mr. Speaker, right where we stand today, by this body. In a vote of 395–28, he was reprimanded and disciplined for violating the rules of this body, and he calls the former FBI Director, Special Counsel Mueller corrupt in an effort to undermine and discredit the special counsel investigation.

And now this propaganda campaign comes to the official channels of the House of Representatives. Yesterday, Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein appeared before the House Judiciary Committee for an oversight hearing, and I was appalled and I was amazed at the way our GOP colleagues attacked him with a series of completely phony, overblown, and misleading accusations.

They are in full-scale assault mode now. They are in a frenzied wild goose chase to find anything possible to dis-

credit Special Counsel Mueller and his investigators in his team.

And guess what, they finally found their villain. This week they found their villain, and they pounced on him. It is an FBI agent named Peter Strzok, who was working on the Mueller investigation but was removed from it this summer when it was discovered that he had sent a bunch of text messages to his apparent girlfriend criticizing a number of politicians, including Donald Trump, whom he called an idiot, Mr. Speaker. I think he was watching one of the Presidential debates where he sent a text message to his girlfriend, writing: “OMG, he is an idiot.” That is the way I am reading the texts that were revealed to us yesterday.

Now, he was probably one of millions of people to send that exact same text across the country. It wasn't a very nice thing to say, but he said it. He also called BERNIE SANDERS, the Democratic candidate for President, the Vermont U.S. Senator, an idiot. He called Trump an idiot; he called SANDERS an idiot; and he had even more choice, unspeakable words for my friend, the former Governor of Maryland, Martin O'Malley, which I don't think I can repeat on the floor, Mr. Speaker.

All right. Mr. Strzok was speaking his mind in these private texts, but it raised the potentiality of bias in one of the agents working on the team. And so what did Mr. Mueller do when he learned of it? He fired him immediately. He got him off of the investigation, removed him from the investigation, and put him into a different part of the FBI. He removed him immediately from the investigation.

Unlike President Trump, for example, who took 18 days to fire General Flynn after learning that Flynn was a serial liar about his connections with Russia.

So it took President Trump 18 days. Mr. Mueller fired the guy immediately because people make mistakes, they do the wrong thing, and Mueller said: I don't want him on my team. He removed him, and they put him somewhere else.

Now, that should have been the end of the matter; right? It sounds like the end of the story is not a big deal. But, on the eve of our hearing yesterday, we received a dump of hundreds of these private text messages between Mr. Strzok and his friend, Ms. Page, and they make, no doubt, for titillating, fascinating, engrossing reading as these two people make their observations about the Presidential campaign. It's like “Anna Karenina” or “House of Cards.” It is fascinating. It is the kind of trivial gossip that people get into sometimes in this town.

I was amazed to learn that the Department of Justice itself—not Mueller, not his team, but the Department of Justice—the formal public affairs channel had actually orchestrated this dump of text messages that were revealed in the course of an ongoing

Department of Justice investigation, inspector general investigation. They took this material from the middle of an investigation, called up a whole bunch of reporters and brought them in to show them these texts.

Why?

Well, nobody could really explain it. I asked Mr. Rosenstein yesterday, and he couldn't explain what really—he said: Well, it had been approved.

I said: “Was there any precedent for it? Was there any precedent for the Department of Justice revealing material that turned up in the middle of an ongoing investigation to reporters?”

He couldn't name any. It wasn't even in the press conference.

So that took place. That strikes me as very odd that there are people in the Department of Justice who apparently are cooperating with this effort to undermine the integrity and the strength of the special counsel investigation.

Well, the key thing to understand is that all of those text messages are totally irrelevant. The great text message love story saga, which was dumped on us, is an irrelevant distraction. Mr. Mueller got rid of Mr. Strzok, removed him from the team, end of story.

Of course, FBI agents, prosecutors are allowed to have a political party. Mueller's got one; it is Republican. Rosenstein's got one; he is a Republican. That is fine. You can be Republican. You can be Democrat. You are not allowed to have your political ideas affect your work to the point that you are biased.

So I take it Mr. Mueller figured that those text messages suggested the possibility of bias, not just against BERNIE SANDERS and Martin O'Malley, but also against Donald Trump, and they said: Okay. We will remove him from the team. He is gone.

But yesterday, that is all the Republicans wanted to talk about, this great trumped up, fake text message scandal—totally irrelevant.

The only one who, to his credit, tried to make it relevant was a Republican colleague who said this is fruit of the poisonous tree, and he repeated it numerous times. He intoned the words, “fruit of the poisonous tree.”

Well, I am a law professor, so I know what “fruit of the poisonous tree” means. It is a Fourth Amendment doctrine which says that, if you have got an illegal search or seizure by the government, you cannot use evidence that is obtained by virtue of an illegal search or an illegal seizure against someone in court. If the government tries to use it, then the so-called exclusionary rule is activated, and you exclude evidence that is derived from an illegal search or seizure.

But there is no illegal search or seizure, and there is not even an allegation of an illegal search or seizure. All they have got is text messages between two lovebirds, and that is it.

I asked Mr. Rosenstein yesterday, I said: Was there an illegal search or seizure? Is there an allegation of an illegal search or seizure?

No, none at all.

So what is the relevance of all that stuff? Nothing. They found one FBI agent who is removed during the summertime for trashing a bunch of politicians on both sides of the aisle. They find that guy. They talk only about the fact that he called the President of the United States an idiot, which we must concede hardly makes him an original critic of the President. Okay. They find that one guy, and then suddenly they want to use that to claim that bias infects the whole operation, the whole investigation.

And why are they doing that? Well, look, if they just want to put up a propaganda smoke screen, that is within their First Amendment rights to do so and within their rights under the Speech or Debate Clause. The problem is that there is mounting fear and anxiety that this is trying to set the stage for President Trump to fire Robert Mueller, perhaps the most admired law enforcement official and prosecutor in the country, that they are setting the stage to fire him with all this trumped-up stuff about a bunch of texts between some lovebirds. That is it. That is all they have got.

After all this time, that is what they are using to try to discredit Robert Mueller and his team, who, at the time of his appointment, they described as unimpeachable, beyond reproach, and so on. But now that he is doing his job and it looks like the momentum of the investigation is leading to the very top of the U.S. Government, they may be looking for a reason to fire him.

Well, this is an emergency, a constitutional emergency if this is going to happen. This is why we are blowing the whistle on it.

I am delighted to be joined by a great legislator, someone whose career is woven into the fabric of the U.S. House of Representatives. He is the minority whip of this body, and I am just delighted to yield now to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER).

□ 1330

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman for yielding and for taking this opportunity on the Special Order. I think, as an aside, I need to apologize to him for making him wait so long for this Special Order.

I also want to tell the American people, Mr. Speaker, that the gentleman who has taken this Special Order is probably the constitutional expert not only in this body, but one of the constitutional experts in our country. He is a great legislator himself. Although he is new to this body, he is not new to being a legislative leader at all. He has been a legislative leader in our State for many years. He is a wonderful teacher and somebody who has great political courage and is willing to stand and say that the emperor has no clothes. He is willing to call attention to the fact that our democracy is at risk, that our due process is at risk.

He used the phrase "trumped up." What an interesting phrase that is that

we have used for many years. I don't know that it has had as much relevance in years past as it now may have.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend, Mr. RASKIN, for leading this Special Order. Our system of government, as he has pointed out, is based on the rule of law. We are a government of laws, not of men.

What that means is that it is not personalities, not dictators, not kings that rule our land. It is the law, the law of our Constitution, the law of our legislators, and the common law that we pursue as interpreted by our court systems. Its foundation is the constitutional principle that all are equal under the law. No one is exempt.

The appointment of a special prosecutor earlier this year to look into the possibility of the administration or Trump campaign officials colluding with a foreign adversary or obstructing justice falls into a long tradition in our country of using independent counsel to investigate those in the most senior offices of our government.

Our Founding Fathers would say that is a check and balance; that is a protection against the usurpation of democracy.

The choice of former FBI Director Bob Mueller to be that independent investigator was an extraordinarily wise one; a decision greeted with support from across the political spectrum, precisely because Mr. Mueller is so widely respected for his independence and his commitment to the law above all else.

And, parenthetically, although it is not necessarily relevant, he is a Republican. He is not, however, driven by the politics of left or right or Republican or Democrat. He is a man of the law, a man who seeks the truth, a man who has dedicated his career to assuring that we remain a land of liberty under law.

We have already seen a demonstration of that commitment in the prompt firing of a subordinate investigator for an act that was not illegal, as the gentleman from Maryland, our constitutional scholar, has pointed out, but, however, threatened to impugn the objectivity of the investigation.

In other words, he removed somebody who he thought might undermine the credibility of this investigation because he is so committed to this investigation being objective and unquestionably fair. Mr. Mueller has made it abundantly clear that he will not tolerate any hint of bias in this investigation.

So far, it appears that his investigation is bearing fruit, having uncovered serious crimes and secured three indictments as well as guilty pleas from two key subjects. Guilty pleas.

This was not a question of: We had a trial and somebody convinced 12 people that he was guilty.

This was a case where the individual said: "I am guilty. I did what was alleged. I know that it is illegal, and I should bear the consequences."

That included, of course, the National Security Advisor—who was National Security Advisor, I think, for 25 days, or close to that number—Mr. Flynn.

As the investigation has advanced, Mr. Speaker, we have seen troubling statements from the President and his advisers seeking to sow uncertainty about the legitimacy of the special counsel's activities and undermine confidence in him.

But it is not so much the confidence in him that is critical. It is confidence in the law. It is confidence in the process. It is confidence that, in fact, we are a nation of laws, and whether we are President or peasant, we will be held accountable if, in fact, we break the laws.

What is being done to undermine this process threatens the independence of the investigation and those who are undertaking it. It is dangerous to our democracy and to our freedom.

Now, in recent days, we have heard calls by the President and his allies to launch a counterinvestigation of the special prosecutor's investigation. Those of us who know history know that that is so often the defense of those who seek authoritarian power, of those who believe they are above the law, of those who believe they can intimidate others so that they will never be held accountable for wrongdoing.

This preposterous suggestion has but one purpose: to cast a shadow of doubt over the findings of Mr. Mueller's inquiry by attempting to frame it in a partisan way.

In fact, Mr. Mueller was appointed by a Republican-appointed Deputy Attorney General. It is tactics like this one that we see so often overseas in countries ruled by dictators and those seeking to become dictators. This willful effort to erode confidence in any institution that must be seen as impartial is harmful because if nobody and nothing is impartial, if everyone and everything is tainted by politics and interest, then no one can possess the moral authority to hold accountable one who wishes to be entirely unaccountable.

That, Mr. Speaker, is the reason I think that the President has also attacked the fourth estate, the newspapers, the broadcasters, the people whose duty it is to bring facts to the people so that they, the people, can make a rational judgment in a democracy, for it is in their hands that the power ultimately resides; and if you undermine those who give them the facts, then you undermine their ability to make decisions.

This ultimately is what the special prosecutor's work is all about: accountability, ensuring that every person is held to the same high standard of behavior under the laws of our Nation.

So, Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues in both parties—this is not about party. This is about country. This is about patriotism. This is about the rule of law. If we lose that respect

for law, we will lose our country. It will be a different, lesser country.

I urge my colleagues, from both parties, from every ideological corner, let us not forget the most fundamental principle that binds us together as Americans and as public servants: That all are created equal; that all of us, all Americans, are equal under the law.

That doesn't mean we are the same, but it means, in the eyes of the law, we are equal as we stand to be held accountable, or to be held innocent, or not involved, or not owing somebody else for wrongdoing. We need to uphold it by our words and by our deeds.

The special prosecutor's work must continue unimpeded, and it must continue to be respected. Yesterday, in the Judiciary Committee, that was not the case. To defend the indefensible undermines respect for law.

I want to thank my friend again, Mr. JAMIE RASKIN, from Montgomery County, Maryland, for this Special Order. As I said, he is a great constitutional scholar and teacher, a great legislator. More importantly than that, he is an individual who loves his country and, throughout his life, has fought to make the country all that the Founding Fathers meant it to be.

I thank him for coming to this floor and for his efforts to ensure that Mr. Mueller's investigation can continue to be seen as impartial and with its objectivity unquestioned, and that is accountability, accountability and justice, and equal justice under the law. That is our bedrock. That is our touchstone. That is our guiding star. That is what Professor RASKIN, Congressman RASKIN, Citizen RASKIN is talking about today, and we all ought to thank him for that.

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER) very much for his kind words and for his patriotism. I thank him for also pointing out the critical importance of civic equality to this discussion because civic equality implies that none of us is above the law.

Of the many dangerous things I have heard uttered over the last couple of weeks with respect to this investigation, perhaps none is more sinister or disturbing than the suggestion that the President cannot be guilty of obstruction of justice because the President himself oversees the whole government.

Well, at that point, we may as well hang it all up and go back to monarchy because the governing principle of our Constitution is we have no kings here. We have no kings here. So I thank Mr. HOYER for that.

James Madison wrote that the very definition of "tyranny" is the collapse of all powers into one. We are trying to defend the separation of powers and we are trying to defend the rule of law against all of it being drowned in a political agenda.

Mr. Speaker, I am joined now by my very distinguished colleague on the House Judiciary Committee. I yield to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. COHEN).

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, I am a little late and I don't know exactly what has been discussed. I serve on the Judiciary Committee with the gentleman, and what we have seen in the Judiciary Committee is scary.

I am honored to be a Member of the United States Congress. I am honored to be an American citizen. I see a threat to the independence of the United States Congress in upholding its oath and looking out for the best interests of its people and to our country.

I have Republican friends, as the gentleman does, on the other side of the aisle, and I know that they, in representing their constituents, are not fond of the totalitarian Russian Government and philosophy that threatens NATO countries like Lithuania, and Estonia, and Latvia, and Ukraine, and Georgia, with the power of the Russian military.

They do not like democracy. They do not like America, and they do not like what we represent. They don't like freedom of the press. They don't like freedom of religion. They don't like freedoms of elections. They don't have really free elections. They say they do, but they kill their opponents or they put them in jail on trumped-up charges, and they count the votes. There is nothing good about Russia in regards of democracy, and even within their constitution after they formed a country after the Soviet Union fell apart.

Our Republican colleagues are like sheep, following the President in attacking the FBI; in attacking the Justice Department; in attacking heroic Americans who have risked their lives in the FBI, and heroic Americans like Robert Mueller, who served in Vietnam and risked his life and was wounded there, I believe. And they threaten them and talk to them as if they are complicit with the Clinton campaign and trying to do something to harm President Trump.

Mr. Mueller is a Republican, appointed first by a Republican, Bush, and then later by a Democrat, Obama. He is as fine a human being as I have come in contact with in my 11 years in Congress, and maybe as fine a human being as I have come in contact with in my 68 years on Earth.

□ 1345

Mr. Rosenstein said glowing things about him yesterday and how heroic he is and how strong he is, how dedicated he is, how patriotic he is, and how honest he is.

For the Republicans to be trying to take this man down and to take down others who serve in the FBI, the only reason they are doing this is because they are finding information in their charge that implicates the President of the United States in activities that are questionable as far as his oath of office and border on treason. Because of that, they attack the FBI, which is the top layer or the cream of the crop of law enforcement.

And the President goes out and talks about our wonderful first responders, but the top of the line he is against because they question him.

That is when your country no longer exists, when it is all about the leader, not about institutions, and not about other individuals who are doing their jobs in a proper manner.

FBI Director Wray said nothing but good things about Robert Mueller. I think Robert Mueller's job is in jeopardy from this President, who likes to fire people, which is what he did on television, and he still thinks he is on television. It is a big performance art. It is all about performance art, and the star is Donald Trump. He acts and he is the show; and the show goes on, and there is nothing else.

To fire Mueller is part of the show, to question what he has done in arresting Manafort and Gates, guilty pleas, I think, from one of the gentlemen he arrested—was it Papadopoulos?—and then a guilty plea from Flynn. They don't plead guilty unless they are guilty.

Mueller is doing his job. He is trying to protect America. I think he is the man of the year and will be the man of the year next year. He is the one person between us and a kleptocracy and group of oligarchs, but kleptocrats who are using their positions in government to benefit themselves financially and to build up their wealth.

This tax bill we are talking about is part of the same thing. It is oligarchs. No inheritance tax, meaning they get hundreds of millions of dollars—hundreds of millions of dollars—and the President goes and says to a middle class family earning \$75,000: You will have \$2,000 that you can spend any way you want, or you can even save it.

\$2,000 is tip change at Orange Julius to those people, the big money, hundreds of millions and hundreds of thousands and millions of dollars as the inheritance tax being repealed and the AMT being repealed and other changes.

And then they said: Oh, well, we only reduced the tax on the wealthiest from 39 percent to 37 because they weren't going to get to deduct as much of their State and local taxes, and it was going to hurt them more.

Well, there are people who aren't in the top bracket who aren't going to get to reduce their State and local taxes, and they gave them nada. They gave all of it to the wealthiest.

And that is what this is about. This is about the wealthiest people taking this country over and an oligarchy, and Trump is representative of them. It is about him. It is not about institutions. It is not about the Constitution. It is not about people. It is not about the First Amendment.

So many of the people who support him are good, hardworking, decent American people who don't want to be in bed with Russia and don't want to give up our democracy and don't want to give up our free elections to hacking and to internet social media games, and that is what we have had.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for having this Special Order.

Mr. Speaker, I have a bill I took over for Mr. CONYERS with Mr. WALTER JONES, a Republican, that says you can't fire Mr. Mueller without cause and gives a redress in court. SHEILA JACKSON LEE has another. We have to be aware and alert. And if this happens, the people have to let their Representatives know, and particularly the Republican Representatives know, that they won't stand for it and they won't have another Saturday Night Massacre, because Rosenstein said Mr. Mueller has done nothing to be fired. He probably would not fire him, which means Rosenstein will be fired, and that is the end of the rule of law, and that is what makes us different from other countries, makes us different from dictators and autocrats.

Mr. RASKIN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his leadership. I thank him for invoking the critical Watergate analogy, the Saturday Night Massacre with the firing of Archibald Cox and other Department of Justice officials who refused to cover up for the President's crimes and misdeeds. I thank him for his legislation that would try to empower the special counsel not to be fired without a court's say-so at least, to build another check and balance.

I thank him, also, for invoking what is also taking place in Washington right now, which is this massive assault on the American middle class through this so-called tax cut bill, this tax scam, which would actually raise taxes for tens of millions of Americans while transmitting billions of dollars up the income and wealth ladder.

Ever since we have arrived here, the whole government has felt like a money-making operation for a person, a family, a small group of billionaires in the Cabinet, a handful of people in the country like the Koch brothers and the Mercers. We cannot allow either this assault on the basic middle class economics of the country to go through or this assault on the Constitution and the rule of law, which we witnessed so vividly yesterday in the House Judiciary Committee.

I want to thank the gentleman for his service and for being one of the first to blow the whistle about what is taking place here.

GENERAL LEAVE

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

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

There was no objection.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to refrain from engaging in personalities toward the

President and Members of the Senate, whether originating as the Member's own words or being reiterated from another source.

LET HIS HOLINESS THE DALAI LAMA GO HOME

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN) is recognized for the remainder of the hour as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, this week, people all around the world are commemorating Human Rights Day, the annual celebration of the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Article 13 of the declaration affirms that everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and return to his country. I have that right. As a citizen of the United States, I can leave my country whenever I choose, and I have the right to return whenever I like. For me, this right is not theoretical. I exercise it every time I travel abroad and every time I return home.

But, Mr. Speaker, His Holiness the Fourteenth Dalai Lama, born and educated in Tibet, has not seen his homeland since he was forced into exile in 1959.

The Dalai Lama, the spiritual leader of Tibet, describes himself as a simple Buddhist monk. He was recognized as the reincarnation of the previous Thirteenth Dalai Lama when he was only 2 years old, and he was only 6 when he began his monastic studies. But well before he finished his education, at the young age of 15, he was called upon to assume political leadership after China's invasion of Tibet in 1950.

For the next 9 years, he worked to preserve Tibet's autonomy and Tibet's culture. But after years of growing resentment against restrictions imposed by the Chinese Communists, a full-scale revolt broke out in March 1959, and the Dalai Lama was forced to flee as the uprising was crushed by Chinese troops. On March 31, 1959, he began a permanent exile in India, settling in Dharamsala in northern India.

Since then, he has not returned to Tibet, or, more accurately, he has never been permitted to return. He has spent more than 60 years in exile.

Today, the Dalai Lama is 82 years old, a man renowned all over the world for his commitment to peace. He has consistently advocated for policies of nonviolence, even in the face of extreme aggression.

In 1989, he won the Nobel Peace Prize in recognition of what was then his nearly 30-year nonviolent campaign to end China's domination of his homeland.

In 2007, the Congress awarded him the Congressional Gold Medal, and at the time, then-President George W. Bush called him a man of faith and sincerity and peace.

Now, I have long believed that the Dalai Lama is part of the solution to

resolving Tibetan grievances. There was a time, from 1959 until 1979, when the Tibetan goal was independence. But since the 1970s, the Dalai Lama has been looking for a way to resolve the situation of the Tibetan people through negotiations. In the late 1980s, he proposed the Middle Way Approach as a path toward Tibetan autonomy within China.

His commitment to nonviolence and his recognition as the spiritual leader of Tibetans worldwide confers on him an undeniable legitimacy that would be of great benefit were China willing to restart the dialogue that has been suspended since 2010.

But the Chinese Government has not recognized or taken advantage of this opportunity to achieve a peaceful resolution. Instead, Chinese authorities continue to view the Dalai Lama with suspicion, disparage him, and accuse him of fomenting separatism. They seem to believe that, with his inevitable death, they will be assured of consolidating their hold on Tibet.

Well, I would not be so sure. Today, all around the world, we are seeing the consequences of repression of religious and ethnic minorities. For the Chinese, there is still time to recognize that inclusion and respect for human rights of Tibetans offers the best path to security.

So today, I call on China to follow a different path. I call on the Chinese authorities to affirm the right of the Fourteenth Dalai Lama to return to his homeland, whether to visit or to stay. I call on them to welcome him home, afford him the respect he deserves as a man of peace, and sit down with him to resolve Tibetan grievances so as to prevent the deepening of tensions and eruption of conflict.

Were China to take such a step, I believe the international reaction would be very positive. I would be among the first to recognize and congratulate an important gesture.

Mr. Speaker, we need to be in the business of preventing and transforming conflicts instead of being forced to respond to their consequences after the fact.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in calling on the Chinese authorities to allow the Dalai Lama to return to his homeland. The Chinese Government should allow His Holiness the Dalai Lama, who is revered all around the world, the ability to go back to his home, to go back to where he was born.

This is a time for bold action, and I urge my colleagues to speak out along with me in urging the Chinese Government to do the right thing. Now is the time to raise our voices—now, before it is too late.

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

HONORING THE LIFE OF CAPTAIN JOHN YATES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the Chair recognizes the