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ISSUES OF THE DAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) for 30 minutes.

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, there are a lot of big things going on. More things will be coming out. We have had an interesting day of it today.

Hopefully, the House and Senate—I think we are going to get a tax cut bill done. I think it is unfair to just call it a tax reform because it doesn't explain. We did tax cuts for everybody. We didn't change the percentage on the wealthiest Americans.

And I understand the thinking. Look, if we, as Republicans, change, we lower all the tax rates, then the Democrats will say: See, you're doing a big tax cut for the wealthy.

So I get it. But as the old saying in Washington goes: No matter how cynical you get, it's never enough to catch up; not in Washington.

Okay, so we didn't change the top percentage rate of tax on the wealthiest Americans. That is the only one we didn't change. And so what has happened?

Our friends across the aisle have said: See, this is a tax cut to help the rich. That is the one tax rate we didn't change, so it wouldn't have mattered.

I would love to have just seen—all right, we are getting rid of all of these tax rates. We are going to have one tax rate, and I would love it to be the tax rate that the Bible suggests in the synagogue or church; and that is 10 percent of your firstfruits. And why not 10 percent to the government after 10 percent of the firstfruits to the church or synagogue, if those are your religious beliefs?

Let's see. I forget which candidate, one of the candidates used to say: Hey, if 10 percent is good enough for God, why shouldn't it be good enough for the government?

But anyway, it was a nice thought. But we are still doing a little bit of social engineering by trying, apparently, in the tax bill, to give a lot of help to the folks who need it. There are some things that I hope will return.

I have heard from folks in my district, some accountants who have clients that, they do pay enough in medical expenses. If they don't get to deduct that, they are going to be bankrupt so, hopefully, that will be something that comes back and gets put in our version.

The last people we need to harm are the people who have got no other place to go. They are on Social Security, they are heading toward the end of life on this planet, and then the government stabs them in the back. I mean, that is what Bill Clinton did back in 1993. Not only did he put a tax on their Social Security in 1993, he made it retroactive. So it wasn't just taxing Social Security for the future, it made it

retroactive, and that was terribly tragic.

I wish we were making our tax cuts retroactive so that the working poor would get the help much quicker. But everybody in America is going to get some help with reduction, massive reduction of the largest tariff that any industrialized nation puts on its own goods when they are produced. It is called the corporate tax.

They make you think, oh, these greedy corporations, they are paying that tax. They don't pay that tax.

Just like Warren Barnett—Warren Buffett. Warren Barnett was a great trial lawyer. I don't know if he is still alive or not. I have heard him; he is an amazing guy, Democrat, amazing lawyer, really amazing trial lawyer.

But Warren Buffett, although he keeps saying publicly he wouldn't mind paying more taxes, his actions seem to indicate that they are paying massive amounts of money to lawyers to keep his company from paying the billions of dollars that I am told is owed. But anyway, we will see what happens there.

I am very hopeful that we are going to get a tax deal done, and we are going to bring it to the floor of this House, and we are going to pass it, and we will sing God bless KEVIN BRADY and the Ways and Means Committee, at least those who made it possible, made it happen. PAUL RYAN has been very helpful in moving that direction on the tax bill, so that will be a great thing if we can get it done.

I am also grateful to the chairman of the Judiciary Committee today for the hearing that he required that we have. We had the FBI Director, Director Wray, come over and testify in front of us, and I am optimistic, with Director Wray. Of course, I was optimistic with Director Comey when I first got to question him because I saw Comey, oh, this is great. Finally, we have gotten rid of Mueller and all the damage he has done to the FBI.

As I pointed out to Director Wray today, he took over a very weakened FBI from the one that he took over as FBI Director under Bush, because when Director Mueller took over as FBI Director—I have tried to figure out why he would do this, and the only thing I can figure is he wanted a bunch of young, "yes people" working for him; because it goes pretty common sense that people with the most experience are going to be in a position to tell you, as the new FBI Director, when you are choosing to go down a road that is going to create problems; because FBI agents who have been there for 25 years, like so many of ours were, had been, they are an oddity now, but that was because Mueller wanted young, fresh, saluting "yes men" who would salute the flag, salute him, and not be in a position to say: Well, Director, could I make a suggestion, sir? You know, we did exactly what you were suggesting back in 1996, or 1993, or 1988, or 1986. We did that back then, and here

is what happened. So if you would allow me, sir, I would recommend that we look at this, that, or the other.

Apparently, Director Mueller didn't want those kind of people in the FBI, so he started a 5-year, up-or-out program. So our thousands of FBI agents across the country, in the hundreds of offices that are apparently around—the 5-year, up-or-out program is basically this: if you are in a supervisory position anywhere in the world for 5 years, at the end of the 5 years, you either must get out of the FBI, or, the way it was interpreted by so many FBI agents, you are going to have to come ride a cubicle up here in Washington.

People all over the country and world who were working for the FBI said: I'm not taking my family to Washington, D.C., and, with all my training and experience, going to ride a cubicle somewhere. I need to be out protecting people, helping people.

As The Wall Street Journal pointed out in an article that wasn't—didn't seem like it was all that far into his 10 years—actually, it turned into 12, I believe, Director Mueller had, in devastating the FBI.

He made some huge mistakes, cost millions of dollars. Whether it was a software program, this program, that program, he had all these ideas, and there were plenty of people who had had enough experience in the different areas that, if he hadn't run them off, could have said: This is not a good idea, sir, if I could suggest—

He didn't want to hear from those people. He ran them off; thousands and thousands of years of law enforcement experience. He ran them off.

It would be interesting to see what the average age of the FBI agents were when he left, compared to when he started. And I realize, there are so many old goats that get long in the tooth, but you don't run them off because they are older. Those are some of the most valuable people you could have. The only reason you should run anybody off is if they have just been so cantankerous that it is a problem, they are not doing their job.

But he ran them off because they had been in a supervisory position for 5 years.

So you would see offices that had an agent in charge, 20, 25, 26 years of experience, and they would finish their 5 years and say: I'm getting out. I didn't want to get out. I wanted to serve my country, even though I make a lot less in the FBI. But you are forcing me out, so I will go make a whole lot more money. Wish I could still be here.

But FBI Director Mueller had other ideas. Director Mueller severely hampered the FBI. There was a lot of damage that was done. And perhaps if he hadn't run off so many good, experienced people, all those thousands and thousands of years of experience, perhaps there would have been more elder statesmen in the FBI when he was allowing FBI agents to manufacture, fabricate evidence, hide evidence, and just

fabricate a case out of whole cloth against Senator Ted Stevens.

I have met him. He was kind of short with me, but that is no reason to prosecute somebody. But it was for the FBI, as Director Mueller created it, the way he wanted it.

But there was, apparently, nobody who would step up. The people who had enough experience and enough confidence in their positions to say: Director Mueller, you have got a grave injustice going on here. You are creating a case where there was none. You hammered this guy. You took all his evidence. You took his computer, all his documents. You raided his bank, got his bank records. You got all his records. He has got nothing except what you allow him to have back. You took everything.

And all of the evidence is pretty clear. He overpaid by hundreds of thousands of dollars for the improvement. There is no case here for saying he got \$600,000, \$700,000 improvements, whatever it was, to his home for free. He overpaid dramatically more than the improvements were worth or cost anybody else.

Supposedly, there was even a message that the contractor said: You are overpaying. And the Senator made clear: They watch me like a hawk. Just cash the check. I'd rather overpay than have them come after me someday.

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And what happened?

You had an FBI that had run off too much experience—well, Director Mueller did—and there was nobody before the verdict that would step up and say: The FBI is doing the wrong thing here. This is injustice. We have rogue FBI agents that have got to be reined in. At least one.

Fortunately, there were FBI agents with consciences, unlike the lead agent that Mueller allowed to stay on, even after he got rid of the whistleblower. Mueller didn't want a whistleblower around; not somebody that would be honest, not somebody that would step forward and say: You created a case against a U.S. Senator when there was no case. He had done nothing wrong, and you tried it the week before his election, and he lost by, what, 1,000 or so votes?

And he would have won but for the FBI, under Director Mueller, destroying a man and robbing him of his finances, destroying his reputation, and Director Mueller, as FBI Director, got this man fired for nothing. Because the truth was he overpaid. He should have gotten adoration for what he did. But not in Mueller's FBI.

I haven't seen anything to indicate the prosecutors knew of the fabrication and the fraud by the lead FBI agent. If that ever materializes, then I would want to find out where those prosecutors are and make sure the world knows of the injustice that they participated in—actually, crime. It is a crime when you fraudulently charge

and convict somebody of a crime and you know there is no crime. You know you fabricated the case, but such was Director Mueller's FBI.

I had great hope for James Comey coming in. Some things were asked today in our hearing about: Well, did President Trump ask for a loyalty oath from you?

Something like that.

I mean, there is nothing wrong with a President saying to a person that he has the power to remove or put in office: Now, I expect you to be loyal to me. What that would mean for a normal person is I expect you to come tell me if there is a problem. And I expect you to be loyal to me so that if there is some problem I am creating, you come tell me, and you don't go do a memo and twist the memo around to try to make it look like I did something wrong. I expect you to be loyal to me and not do anything to me different than you would any other President; that you would serve your country and the President with distinction and just not go leaking things to try to hurt me. You know, just be loyal. That is not asking for anybody to commit a crime. It is not asking for anybody to obstruct justice. It is asking that you just be fair to me as your boss. Will you do that?

It makes sense to ask a question like that when you have already seen so much injustice done to you by the Justice Department.

We didn't even know when President Trump took office just how horrendous the injustices were that were lurking behind the closed doors at the Justice Department because it wasn't a Justice Department. It was a "Just Us" department. The way it sounds like it was going is: We will protect the people who we think will be in the next administration, and heaven help the people if they knock our chosen out of the executive office at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, because we will perform a coup, we will get them out. We will use the Justice Department because, let's face it, after all, there is just a very thin veneer at the top of political appointments. We are just under that level. We will still really control things.

That is kind of the way it sounds like it was going.

When you have got a guy like Andrew McCabe—you know, the Bible says, when you are married, the two become one—his wife running for office, getting hundreds of thousands of dollars, according to what we understand from Donna Brazile, you know, Hillary Clinton basically took over the Democratic National Committee. So if the DNC was giving money to McCabe's wife, they all knew who to thank. Let's face it, they knew Hillary Clinton deserved a thank-you note.

And the one who owed the thank-you note to Hillary Clinton has a husband who is going to prosecute her?

Probably not. Probably not.

Those are the kinds of things we are finding.

Today, in our hearing, FBI Director Wray was asked a series of questions about Peter Strzok. I thought about asking some questions about Strzok, but I figured so many people would have questions, I would go a different direction.

But Strzok was a former number two for counterintelligence. He was removed from Mueller's investigation team this summer after an inspector general discovered he was exchanging politically charged messages with a mistress, Lisa Page, who is an FBI Attorney in the Office of the General Counsel.

We heard from Director Wray today that: Though many of us think of the FBI and think of "Federal Bureau of Investigation," that many FBI agents think the F doesn't stand for "Federal," but stands for "fidelity."

But apparently in the case of the number two person in counterintelligence, Peter Strzok, that fidelity was not an F; it was an I, "infidelity," because he was being unfaithful. He was engaged in infidelity and not fidelity. Nobody is selling that to us. He was engaged in infidelity and was enjoying, in the course of his infidelity, being disloyal to the man who would be and ultimately was his boss, the President of the United States, Donald Trump.

But instead of being fired for his improprieties, for his bias that was clearly affecting his job, Director Mueller, the man who did so much damage, ran off thousands of years of experience that could step forward and guide younger agents away from pitfalls. He ran them off. You are going to have younger agents without the proper guidance from the white hairs or no hairs. He ran them off. He didn't want people with too much experience and might question something that he ordered.

And when there is no accountability, there is nobody with more experience that can come alongside and say: Look, I have been here. I have seen a lot of things. Let me tell you, I see how you are going in this direction. Let me encourage you. Don't go there. I have seen too many people go that way.

No. Mueller made sure the consciences of the FBI, at least as many as he could run off, were gone. So instead of being fired, though, when they found out that Strzok hated President Trump's guts and worshipped Hillary Clinton and skewed the case—I mean, Strzok knew that if FBI Director Comey went out and said that Hillary Clinton had been grossly negligent, then he would have been stating on the record that Hillary Clinton had committed a crime. And since he wanted to protect Hillary Clinton so she could be President, he changed the language. So that Director Comey would not implicate Hillary Clinton in committing a crime, he changed the words "grossly negligent" to "excessively careless," as I understand it, and that wasn't necessarily a crime.

He was covering up. The man should have been gone.

So what do they do?

Well, he was reassigned to the FBI's HR department. It is unclear what Strzok's job duties were in his new position, but when he was asked about the nature of that move today, Director Wray stated that he did not consider it to be a demotion. It wasn't a disciplinary action. Director Wray did not want to discipline the guy for covering up for Hillary Clinton, for skewing the case, for mishandling the case to make sure that Hillary Clinton wasn't implicated. No, no, no. Clearly, he has a bias. Clearly, he hates Donald Trump before and after he is President, but that is no problem.

We sure don't want to lose a guy just because he hates Donald Trump and loves Hillary Clinton and excuses the Justice Department to suit his love for Hillary Clinton and his hate for Donald Trump. No, let's not demote him, let's not fire him. Let's just have a move here, maybe even make his life easier, I guess.

But in quoting from the response of Director Wray to a question posed by my friend ANDY BIGGS from Arizona, Mr. BIGGS said: "Okay, Mr. Strzok was reassigned. It seems it was an odd lateral move. Are you saying that was a lateral move for him?"

Director Wray said: "Reassigned away from the special counsel investigation to the human resources department. I understand that may sound to some of you like a demotion, but I can assure you that in a 37,000-person organization with a \$9 billion budget and offices all around the country and in 80 countries around the world, that I think our human resources department is extremely important, and a lot of what they do is cutting edge, best practice stuff. So it is a very different kind of assignment, certainly, but that is why I don't consider it disciplinary or a demotion."

So based on what Director Wray said, Peter Strzok was neither punished nor demoted after the IG discovered him engaging in politically biased conduct during the course of a key investigation that was of a political nature.

Look, nobody is demanding that our FBI agents not go vote on election day. They have that right. In some cases, they have an obligation because they know so much about what is going on. It is just very unfortunate when they know so much of what is going on and they know the people they are voting for appear to have committed crimes so we have got to change language and cover for them.

Not only was he not punished nor fired, but Peter Strzok was put into a position that Director Wray described as extremely important.

Strzok was sending these messages to a fellow FBI agent that he was having an extramarital affair with.

Why on Earth would you give someone who was caught sleeping around on his wife with a fellow employee an extremely important position? Why would you give them an extremely im-

portant position in the human resources department if you are Director of the FBI?

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Mr. Speaker, I want to start fresh with a great FBI Director, but I am a little concerned here. Do you think it is a good qualification when someone is caught being engaged in infidelity—not the fidelity you talked about the F in FBI standing for, but engaged in infidelity.

They broke their marriage oath, their marriage vow, and that is who you want handling your human resources? Because that is an extremely important position. So we need the guy who was skewing justice, that is who we need? It is kind of ridiculous. Strzok wasn't punished.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate your indulgence.

I yield back the balance of my time.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Lasky, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed without amendment a joint resolution of the House of the following title:

H.J. Res. 123. Joint resolution making further continuing appropriations for fiscal year 2018, and for other purposes.

SENATE ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

The Speaker announced his signature to an enrolled bill of the Senate of the following title:

S. 1266. An act to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to enter into contracts with nonprofit organizations to investigate medical centers of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

BILL PRESENTED TO THE PRESIDENT

Karen L. Haas, Clerk of the House, reported that on December 06, 2017, she presented to the President of the United States, for his approval, the following bill:

H.R. 228. To amend the Indian Employment, Training and Related Services Demonstration Act of 1992 to facilitate the ability of Indian tribes to integrate the employment, training, and related services from diverse Federal sources, and for other purposes.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 6 o'clock and 46 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until Monday, December 11, 2017, at noon for morning-hour debate.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

3332. A letter from the Under Secretary, Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's Report to Congress entitled "Corrosion Policy and Oversight Budget Materials for FY 2018", pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 2228; to the Committee on Armed Services.

3333. A letter from the Under Secretary, Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics, Department of Defense, transmitting a letter stating that the report on the amount of Department of Defense purchases from foreign entities, for FY 2017, will be submitted by the end of May 2018; to the Committee on Armed Services.

3334. A letter from the Acting Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting the Department's Office of Inspector General Semiannual Report to Congress for the period April 1, 2017, through September 30, 2017, pursuant to the Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended, Public Law 95-452; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

3335. A letter from the Deputy General Counsel for Operations, Department of Housing and Urban Development, transmitting a notification of a designation of acting officer, change in previously submitted reported information, and discontinuation of service in acting role, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 3349(a); Public Law 105-277, 151(b); (112 Stat. 2681-614); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

3336. A letter from the Deputy General Counsel for Operations, Department of Housing and Urban Development, transmitting a notification of a designation of acting officer, change in previously submitted reported information, and discontinuation of service in acting role, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 3349(a); Public Law 105-277, 151(b); (112 Stat. 2681-614); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

3337. A letter from the Director, Congressional Affairs, Federal Election Commission, transmitting the Commission's Inspector General's Semiannual Report to Congress, for the period April 1, 2017, through September 30, 2017, pursuant to Sec. 5 of the Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

3338. A letter from the Acting Administrator, General Services Administration, transmitting the Administration's Semiannual Management Report to Congress for the period of April 1, 2017, through September 30, 2017, pursuant to Sec. 5 of the Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

3339. A letter from the Chairman of the Board, Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, transmitting the Corporation's Semiannual Report to the Congress by the Office of Inspector General and the Corporation's Management Response for the period April 1, 2017, through September 30, 2017, pursuant to the Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

3340. A letter from the Acting Commissioner, Social Security Administration, transmitting the Administration's Inspector General's semiannual report for April 1, 2017, through September 30, 2017, pursuant to Sec. 5(b) of the Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

3341. A letter from the Administrator, U.S. Agency for International Development, transmitting the Agency's Semiannual Report to Congress for the period ending September 30, 2017, pursuant to Sec. 5 of the Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.