or Al Green, the gospel singer, or Mahalia Jackson or Marian Anderson or Yolanda Adams. So many great gospel singers have given all of us joy no matter from whence we have come.

So I would like to thank the House leadership. I would like to thank the majority leader and his staff and Chairman TOWNS and the ranking member of the Government Oversight Committee, all of whom helped this day come to fruition.

As we move into issues that require our attention, Mr. Speaker, I would like to comment very briefly on our position in Afghanistan. Tomorrow I will have the opportunity to join in listening to Ambassador Holbrooke, who has just returned back from Afghanistan, and I would like to offer these thoughts.

I do believe that Afghanistan is very important to the United States, and after 9/11 it was important to respond to the attack on this Nation. But now I think it is important to emphasize a diplomatic surge and the stand-down of the military soldiers, all who are valiantly working there. I believe it is important to allow the Afghan people, through the building of schools and roads and through the building of the Afghan Army, to take control of their own security. We cannot allow this to be a 20-year war as it was with Russia, and the Afghan people must stand up.

Some may say it is not the time, that it is a difficult time. And they are right, because instead of pursuing the cause in Afghanistan, over the last 8 years we failed and detoured into Iraq, Iraq that took thousands of American lives and still unfortunately and tragically struggles today with democracy and leadership in their own country. But I do believe it is time for a surge of diplomacy in Afghanistan, and I am going to work with my colleagues to see this happen.

I wish to mention Iran, as well, as the General Assembly gathers in the United Nations and particularly to focus on Camp Ashraf that has displaced Iranians. These individuals are in Iraq and they are subject to abuse. I'm calling upon the administration to demand for the people that are displaced that happen to be Iranians who are in Iraq to be treated with human dignity and for that camp to be protected and for the Iraqi military to protect that camp and not allow the intrusion into that camp and the rampage that's going on and the attack on women and children. Enough is enough. If Iraq claims itself to be a democracy, it is important.

I also call upon the General Assembly to comment on the abuses in Iran, the human rights abuse, the press abuse, the lack of freedom of press. Even as we debate this question of nuclear proliferation, we should not allow the kinds of abuses that are going on in Iran.

As I move to the domestic issue, Mr. Speaker, I think it is important that we clarify that health care is something that America wants. Sixty percent of the American people want health care. And as I was coming here to Washington, I met someone, Mrs. Wallace, in the airport who indicated that her son will have to have surgery costing a million dollars, and she pleaded that we get our job done. I said I would take her message to Washington, D.C. She was sending off her sister going to New Zealand. They have not been hampered by a program that is, in essence, underwritten by the government, but we're not asking for a program to be underwritten by the government; we are asking for people to have choice. But more importantly, we are asking to have an option, a public option, that will provide for the competitiveness that is so very important in providing health care for all Americans.

Let's stop all the myths and the attacks, and let's have an evenhanded debate to recognize that a public option provides for competition.

□ 2015

I want to conclude, Mr. Speaker, by simply saying we have celebrated this 1 year with the Lehman Brothers, but I will say to you that we have to have a recovery that makes sense, and this administration is working on it.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. WOOLSEY addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. MORAN of Kansas addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. INGLIS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. INGLIS addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. SOUDER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. SOUDER addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

ETHICS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CARTER) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. CARTER. Mr. Speaker, as some people might know and some of my colleagues know, I have been appearing before this House for the leadership hour now for approximately 12 weeks, and I have been talking about this House of hypocrisy that we seem to be thriving in here as we have all of these issues that involve multiple people concerning ethical issues, and in some instances maybe even criminal issues that need to be addressed. I have raised the issue because I want to remind the leadership of this House that if we don't address these issues, we are failing in our duty as Members of Congress.

As we sit here with the Democrat majority blasting JOE WILSON for a very inadvertent outcry in the House of Representatives, we seem to have forgotten what I have been talking about for the last 12 weeks which is Chairman CHARLIE RANGEL's decades of tax evasion and ethics violations that have been raised over and over on the floor of this House. This is the ultimate of hypocrisy. So I am going to talk about it again tonight. I think it is important that we listen.

It is important to also know this has not just started in the last few months. Today is a very important day. This is September 15, I believe. Close to it anyway. On September 15, 2008, the New York Times, certainly not one of the more conservative newspapers, and I don't think anyone would consider them a Republican newspaper, called for the resignation of Chairman RANGEL as chairman of the Ways and Means Committee because of the allegations that he himself had pointed out to this House on the floor of this House of his failure to report certain items of value and failure to pay taxes on about $75,000 worth of income that he realized in the Dominican Republic on a vacation home that he owned there and rented out. He rightfully said he was going to correct that by paying the taxes and amending his return and that he felt bad about it, and that he had turned himself in to the Ethics Committee.

Well, this turning yourself in to the Ethics Committee is almost the hypocrite's dream because you say I want you to judge me. Well, are they? They have had a year now. This was turned in to the Ethics Committee a year ago. We were promised when this new Congress started, we were promised in the fall of last year by the Speaker of this House, NANCY PELOSI, that she was sure that all of the Rangel issues would be resolved by the first or second week of January of this year. And yet they are still not resolved.

The Ethics Committee's job is to be the charging body in this Congress, and they are to look into these allegations and they are to make decisions. It is our method of policing ourselves. Quite frankly, when you find your method of policing yourself has failed, and I would argue 1 year on one person is pretty close to failure, then maybe we need to come up with a new system. Maybe we need to come up with a new

way. Maybe we are not capable of policing ourselves.

There have been bodies like bar associations and medical associations that have historically policed up their own members; and other associations, certified public accountants, architects, and others have boards that police up their members. If they do a good job, they should be commended. And if they fail, they should be condemned. There is an old adage in the law, and having spent the vast majority of my life in the trial court in Texas, serving 20 years on a trial bench as a district judge, for 20 years prior to my coming to Congress 8 years ago, I can tell you we have an adage that justice delayed is justice denied. That is why we have things like speedy trial acts in the courts of America where a defendant can say I want this case brought to trial within a set time period because justice delayed is justice denied.

That's why we have multiple terms of grand juries and we promote the grand jury process to move cases along through the system so we can deal with felony criminal cases in an opportune way so justice is not delayed. Therefore, justice is not denied. That is why we come up with alternative forms of resolution of disputes in the courthouse because our civil dockets and our family law dockets get so bogged down in numbers that justice becomes delayed; and, therefore, justice is denied.

Well, I would argue that when one man stands at that microphone and for about an hour confesses his transgressions to this House, defended by the speech and debate clause of the Constitution, and states in no uncertain terms that he had made some serious errors and he was going to correct them and that he was turning it over to the Ethics Committee to get it resolved, then he has not been fairly treated by the Ethics Committee not resolving this. That is one of the things that I want to point out. I am about resolution of disputes. I am about solving these types of things that put an evil light upon this House of Representatives.

We have enough trouble with the public right now. Our poll numbers are terrible. But the reality is that the history of this place calls upon us to be honorable people. We address each other as honorable people. And if you are going to be an honorable person, then we have to have a means of recourse when honor is challenged even if you challenge it yourself. And I would argue that our methods that we are using right now in the Ethics Committee are failing this House of Representatives and the leadership whose committee it is is failing this House of Representatives. This needs to be resolved.

When we talked about this 1 year ago, we heard about Mr. RANGEL's issues concerning the rent that he failed to report as income, and he announced to us that he was paying the taxes and would pay any penalties and interest that may be assessed against him. Later we learned that he paid taxes but he didn't pay any penalties and interest because they weren't assessed against him. That looked to me like the IRS was giving special privileges to Mr. RANGEL. Why would they do that? Could it be because he is the chairman of the committee that oversees the IRS and the chairman of the committee that writes the tax laws of this Nation? It could be, but that is not right. That is not the way it ought to be. Just because 652,000 Americans decide to send one of us to Congress, does that mean that we have special rights that others in this country do not have? No, it does not. And we need to stand up and say so. We go through that same line everybody else does at the airport. We get our pockets emptied at the airport, and we go through the magnetometer just like everybody else at the airport, and we should. We are not different than anybody else in the United States.

And yet I think it is totally, totally inappropriate for the chairman of the Ways and Means Committee, who has admitted that he failed for years to pay taxes on income that he received in the Dominican Republic, that he should not be assessed penalties and interest. For 10 years I practiced law in Texas, and I represented a lot of people who had trouble with the IRS. And I always saw when we finished it up and resolved their issues, penalties and interest. In many instances, the penalties and interest were more than the taxes. And Mr. RANGEL, and I don't have exact numbers, but it was for a period of 10 or 15 years that he didn't pay on this income. Why shouldn't he pay penalties and interest?

So I wrote him a letter. I said very respectfully, Mr. Chairman, I am sure that you do not want to be treated any differently than any other American. I would request that you speak to the IRS and ask them to assess the appropriate penalties and interest, and that you pay them. I received no reply to that.

So I introduced a bill that I call the Rangel rule. The Rangel rule says very simply if you owe penalties and interest on income that you fail to pay, when you pay that tax, write on your tax form ''exercising the Rangel rule'' and you as an American citizen will be treated the same as the chairman of the Ways and Means Committee.

I thought that was fair. I thought that was just. It is still in the hopper. I am perfectly willing, if the leadership of this House will bring it up, to put it to a vote of my colleagues, and we might be surprised; the Rangel rule might actually become law. But we should at least have that find of fair treatment for Americans, the same kind of fair treatment we expect to have. We don't expect people in this Congress to get different treatment.

That is what I have been talking about, failing to report. We have to file a report every year. It is required by law. It is like an oath, and if you violate that oath, there are consequences of violating that oath. You basically swear this is what I owe, this is what I made. This is dividend income or interest income, or whatever. We sign and swear to that. That would at least make it subject to perjury. And we file it every year.

Now the complaint that we give ranges is true. You can report that I own property that is worth between $250,000 and $500,000, and you don't know exactly what end of that rainbow you are talking about, that that is the range. I didn't write the forms; those are the forms. But if you fail to report it, you are given a certain amount of time to amend it. That is fair. People can miss something. And many of the things that Mr. RANGEL talked to us about when he talked on the floor of this House was the things that he didn't report. That is good. He was being honest with the American people and with the Members of this House. He turned that over to the Ethics Committee, too. I assume that he filed the amended reports. And that is sort of what we have been trying to get resolved before the Ethics Committee, is this something that should be sanctionable by the House? The Ethics Committee's job is to tell us that. We have certain sanctions that this House can have. They are set out in our rules. Those rules were given to us by Thomas Jefferson, a fairly famous scholar and famous Democrat. We have got these rules, we have these sanctions, and that committee is supposed to function to start the process.

□ 2030

Today is the first anniversary of the process starting for that, just what I told you so far.

But since then, since that time other things have come forward. In fact, recently, other things have come forward. Mr. RANGEL has been found, in many newspaper articles that have been coming out about this, in a potential additional violation of underreporting income and assets in 2007 by more than half, including the failure again to report the income from his Caribbean resort property. He has aides that work for him that also failed to file these reports and failed to disclose this information.

His lease of a multi rent-controlled apartment was part of the discussions that took place at that time. He is using his House parking space as a storage place for a car he didn't want to pay to be stored. His failure to report or pay taxes on his rental income in the Dominican Republic, the alleged quid pro quo trading legislation action in exchange for the new Rangel Center and College and New York College. All of these things are part of previous accusations. But now we have new properties, brand new retirement accounts, brand new investment accounts, five different investment accounts that, oops, we just discovered those. And

we've just discovered rental properties over in Brooklyn, New York, and over in New Jersey, just discovered and have just come out in the newspapers. And there's article after article after article.

As we celebrate this anniversary, here are some of the things that are out there. We just talked about some of them, the parking spot and all those things. There is also a trip taken by Mr. RANGEL and others to the Caribbean; it was paid for by lobbyists when we had a firm promise by the Speaker and the leadership of this House, the Democrat leadership, that this was a new Congress, they were draining the swamp. Well, the swamp is not drained; in fact, we're knee deep in alligators right now. But the draining of the swamp was there would be no more lobbyists paying for trips, when we have multiple Members of this House, including Mr. RANGEL, who went on a lobbyist-paid trip where they are on film thanking the individual lobbyists for their contributions to the trip.

People say, why isn't this working? Why isn't this Ethics Committee working? And of course the newspapers, who like to speculate, have pointed out that three of the five Democrat members on the Ethics Committee have received major campaign donations from CHARLIE RANGEL. We asked why Speaker PELOSI hasn't taken a hand in this and we found out 119 Democrats have been given money by Mr. RANGEL for their next campaign. And so he's a source of funds for the majority party here in this House, and that may be it, but we don't know.

But you know what? What this is all about is I am sick and tired of everybody being lumped together as evil people in this House. And therefore, justice delayed is justice denied, and it's time we address some of these issues.

I am joined by my friend, who is a classmate of mine, from Iowa. He is one of the stars of this floor because when he speaks, he speaks from the heart. Brother KING, tell us what you've got to say. I will yield you what time you may need.

Mr. KING of Iowa. I thank the gentleman and the judge from Texas. I thank you, Judge CARTER, for your leadership on this issue. And I know that it's hard for a lot of Members to come down to the floor and raise an issue that has to do with the ethics of any other Member. Whatever party they might be, if they're a Democrat or if they're a Republican, there's a certain restraint that exists in this House Chamber. And sometimes it's because Members are afraid that they or their agenda will be punished by a powerful committee Chair who holds a gavel.

There are some, though—as you have done for 12 or 13 or more weeks—that have stepped up here and stood on principle and talked about real ethics and talked about the standards of this House and the standards that we need to hold the other Members to—and ourselves to for that matter—regardless of the consequences that might come along within this circle of people that work together every day. We've got to be the ones that raise the standard of this House and hold it up.

Now, if you have someone who is in charge of the IRS who doesn't pay their taxes, immediately they lose the moral authority to claim anyone else's tax money. That's the case with Tim Geithner. And it's a point that I think has been alluded to at least by the gentleman from Texas. And if you have the chairman of the most powerful committee in the House of Representatives, the Ways and Means Committee, and the lists of these questions, the ethical questions and the problems with his own taxes gets longer and longer after this—happy birthday, Chairman RANGEL—a year since The New York Times called for the chairman to step down, CHARLIE RANGEL to step down as chairman of the Ways and Means Committee.

And I can remember the excoriation that took place when Republicans were in the majority and Democrats were looking for anything that they could fabricate to allege against the people in power on this side. I remember constant attacks on Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich, who had something like 74 charges brought against him; every one of them specious, none of them substantive, and none of them stuck during all that period of time. But it was designed to focus on the person that held the most power here in the House of Representatives.

And so that taints this. And people think that it's purely a political battle that's going on. Well, it's political in a lot of ways. Judge CARTER talked about how political it is with 119 Members of the Democrat Caucus in the House of Representatives having received a campaign check from CHARLIE RANGEL. When you have a majority—close to it anyway—near the majority of your own caucus that you've contributed to their campaign, somehow they just magically, over time, lose their conviction to stand up for pure ethics.

And it's a shame, but the reality of the political world today is that it isn't just a matter of altruism, it isn't just people that come here—and many do come here to do the right thing; many come here because they want to help America; many come because they believe—they're either liberals or conservatives or someplace in between, but they believe in what they do and they stand up and speak out about it. That sense of conviction, that sense of altruism is something that should be applauded and honored and respected whatever that judgment is, whether they're liberals or whether they're conservatives.

I think a lot of America believes that that's what drives this House. I'd like to think it is, it's part of what drives this House. But another part that drives this House is political power, political patronage, campaign contributions. The influence that comes from being able to direct policy as chairman of a committee is a powerful thing, it's an influential thing. And why does Chairman RANGEL have all that money to give to 119 Members of his own caucus? Because he controls the tax-writing committee. He controls a lot of the regulations that control the economy of the United States of America—at least the free market economy and what's left of it.

And so there are those who disagree with the philosophy and the policy that CHARLIE RANGEL drives as the man who holds the gavel chairing the Ways and Means Committee. And there are many people in this country, many companies, many corporations, many entities that will find a way to get checks into that campaign fund because they don't want to be punished. And that money gets delved out to Members of their own caucus. And the chairman forgets to pay his taxes and underestimates his liabilities and assets by more than half, including forgetting to report the income off of his villa property in the Dominican Republic and forgetting to report that he is receiving rent subsidy on apartment houses for years in New York City.

The failure to report and pay taxes on rental income from the villa in the Dominican Republic is as clear as it can be. And was it an attack of conscience that Chairman RANGEL had when he finally amended the statement? I think not, because to falsify those statements is a felony. But when the issue was raised by Judge CARTER, by The New York Times, by a number of others, then the chairman stepped forward and amended his returns, and then amended them again—I actually don't know how many rounds it's been that those ethics reports or financial reports have been amended.

But they're not, I can't envision, being amended because of an attack of conscience; they're being amended because the news media, JOHN CARTER, other Members have stepped forward and laid the facts out before the American people. They're being amended to avoid the embarrassment and perhaps the prosecution in order to comply with and hopefully avoid an Ethics ruling when it comes out of the dysfunctional Ethics Committee in the House of Representatives.

So I think it's pretty interesting that there is an alleged—this is one of the list of things that have emerged in the last year—an alleged quid pro quo of trading legislative action in exchange for donations to a center named for CHARLIE RANGEL at City College of New York. I remember one of our Members, JOHN CAMPBELL from California, in particular, came down to the floor and offered an amendment to strike $1 million out that was earmarked for a center that was named after CHARLIE RANGEL. And he asked Mr. RANGEL, would you really ask that they name a center after you? And the answer was, essentially, I wouldn't want it to be named

after you, Mr. CAMPBELL, but yes, I've been here a long time, it's okay, I think we're allowed to do that.

House Members don't do that. There are posthumous names for Federal buildings for Members of Congress, but it's very rare to find a Member of the House of Representatives to ask for real estate to be named after them; kind of a self-glorification. Quid pro quo? Possibly. It certainly raises a question.

But trips to the Caribbean, this is something that's fairly astonishing. The gift rule violation, the trips to the Caribbean that were sponsored by the Carib News Foundation in 2007 and 2008, raised all kinds of questions. Now the chairman of the Ways and Means Committee—which, by the way, shouldn't be in the business of trying to direct the IRS to examine anybody; he should be worried about national policy and how that affects on a broad perspective, not micromanaging and focusing on an IRS investigation. But he had the audacity to push for a crackdown on U.S. taxpayers who make honest mistakes on their own returns, and then on the heels of Secretary Geithner's crackdown of UBS depositors for failing to pay their own taxes. The timing of this couldn't be worse.

And it goes on. The statement that I thought was really interesting was the Democrats' House of hypocrisy. They made a lot of allegations, but the House of hypocrisy—the IRS should investigate both CHARLIE RANGEL and TIM GEITHNER. And the problem is Tim Geithner controls the IRS. And so if you control an entity, it's pretty unlikely that they're going to do a vigorous job of investigating the people that actually decide what's going to go on within the operation.

The House Committee on Standards hasn't produced anything yet—that's the Ethics Committee. It's been dysfunctional for a long time. It took place that the former ranking member of the Ethics Committee, who is now the chairman of the Justice Appropriations Committee from West Virginia, funny—under investigation himself. And he holds the gavel that controls the appropriations to the people that are investigating him and he controls their purse strings, ALAN MOLLOHAN.

Interesting. House of hypocrisy: Geithner controlling the IRS; CHARLIE RANGEL controlling the Ways and Means and the tax code; the House Committee on Standards can't seem to move; the chairman, CHARLIE RANGEL, has given campaign donations to three of the five Democrats on the Ethics Committee. Now, it should be unethical to make contributions from the House to Members on the Ethics Committee because, after all, especially if you're under investigation, surely that would turn the focus on him.

And the other interesting thing—this is one that really stands out—we had a little investigation going on on these Caribbean trips that are in question that Mr. RANGEL was on. Well, it turns out that the chairman of the investigation of the Caribbean trips was also along on the trip, so he knows what was going on there. If he would have thought there was a problem, he would have blown the whistle at that time, one would think.

This isn't the America that the people in this country pay for, that they want to have. It's not the America that the people I know deserve. This country is full of hardworking, honest, decent people, white collar and blue collar people, people that get their hands dirty every day, people that keep their hands clean and use their brain and their fingers and their computers or calculators, their telephones and their steering wheels, people that are down in the trenches, people that are in the meatpacking plants, people that are producing a product every single day, and they give up time away from their families and their homes and they pay their taxes and they comply with the regulations. And they fear the IRS coming into their kitchen or their office and doing an audit of them. And they respect the government.

And we have a House of hypocrisy here where the chairman of the Ways and Means Committee can't seem to get his own filings right on his own accounting forms, the rules that he writes, and has the audacity to turn up an IRS investigation on people that may not be.

119 Democrats have received money from CHARLIE RANGEL. Funny, the Ethics Committee can't move. Three of the five Democrats on the Ethics Committee seem to have received money from CHARLIE RANGEL.

□ 2045

So I would just say this: that we've got to clean this House up. We've got to end this House of hypocrisy. If anyone is under investigation, under question, and if the chairman of a committee and if the Speaker of the House can't see fit to bring the right kind of decorum and the right kind of decency and when a liberal newspaper like The New York Times is indignant at this House of Representatives—the House of hypocrisy run by Speaker PELOSI—and is thumbing its nose at the people of the United States of America, if The New York Times can see it, I guarantee you the people in my district can see it. They know it in Iowa. They know it in Texas. They know it in the heartland of America. They know it across the red zones of America. Everybody who gets up, who goes to work, who punches a time clock, who earns a salary, who pays his taxes, who carries his weight, and who contributes to this country understands that we've got to have a Nation that's a rule of law.

You can't write enough laws to make a decent people out of an indecent people. You can't cure hypocrisy by covering it up. At some place, at some time, somebody has got to dig up that rotting corpse, and it's going to have to have the light of day shine upon it. When that happens, we'll learn the truth, and there will be a day when the American people rise up again as they did last Saturday, when they came into this city by the hundreds of thousands.

Hundreds of thousands of people came to Washington, D.C., on Saturday and registered their rejection and their contempt for the profligate overspending that has taken place in this Congress, for the corruption that's here and for the House of hypocrisy that it is. They want clean, decent people, like they are, representing them in this Congress. Between them, they have the solutions to everything that's wrong with America. They aren't all good ideas, but among them are all the ideas that we need to solve the problems that we have.

We need to listen to the American people. We need to listen to the Founding Fathers. We need to be re-anchored back to the Declaration and to the Constitution. We have got to reform our fiscal responsibility. We have got to take this IRS out of our lives and get back our freedom. We have got to give people school choice. We have got to make sure that the younger generations learn it right and that they learn about God and country—our true history—and about our Founding Fathers, about personal responsibility and about the price for freedom and what freedom is and about the pillars of American exceptionalism.

This House of hypocrisy is not a pillar of American exceptionalism. It is a corrosive entity that undermines the pillars of American exceptionalism. We must clean it up. It needs to happen now. Why not on the first anniversary of The New York Times' calling for the resignation of CHARLIE RANGEL as the chairman of the Ways and Means Committee? As my father always said, there is no time like the present.

I thank the gentleman from Texas, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. CARTER. I thank my friend for everything he had to say, and I agree with everything he said.

I want to say something that is concerning me. It has come to my attention, through the rumors that have spread around the Halls of Congress, that some are saying this issue that I have raised about Mr. RANGEL has something to do with his race. I want to make it very clear: I spent 20 years on the bench. I believe in that Lady Justice who stands there with that blindfold. I can tell you in no uncertain terms—and I will leave it up to the people in my district, and you can check with them—that I never gave a sentence to a criminal defendant based upon his race nor did I even see the color of his skin. I based it upon his behavior, and the behavior that needed punishing I certainly punished. It had nothing to do with the race of anybody. When people start accusing someone of being a racist because he raises an issue of right and wrong, there's something wrong in this House of Representatives.

I bring this up now because I would hope this wouldn't happen, but if it does, I stand ready, willing and able to point out that this has absolutely nothing to do with race.

By the way, Mr. RANGEL isn't the only Member of this Congress whom I have spoken against and said that we needed to do something about. I just had to get that off my chest. Before this stuff starts, I want you to know the race card has nothing to do with what I'm trying to do on the floor of the House. I'm trying to see that we get justice at this level.

Mr. KING pointed out the fact that the Chairman of the IRS has got issues of not paying taxes. Who is going to go after him? The chairman of the Ways and Means Committee has issues of all sorts, which we've talked about here. Who is going to go after him? Well, I'll tell you who can—the Justice Department.

You know, when there are allegations of improper behavior, if those things rise to the level of criminal behavior, it is the duty and responsibility of the Justice Department to investigate, and I think the Justice Department should. It's supposed to be like that Lady Justice—blind to the political ramifications and going forward based only upon doing justice. That's why it is called the ''Justice Department.'' If there are issues here that people see, the Justice Department ought to do something about it.

This Congress has the ability to hold hearings on these issues, and they have the ability to hold hearings on the other issues that have been talked about here tonight, and it's about time we did it. We have issues of major proportions that are being totally ignored by this House. This has become the House of hypocrisy, as Mr. KING said. There are those who accused others of a culture of corruption just 2 years ago and actually, blatantly, stepped forward on the floor of this House and admitted so. Now, as the corruption is being exposed, all of a sudden, we don't hear anything more about that. It is hypocrisy. I wanted to bring that up because it's important.

I've spent my lifetime trying to be like that Lady Justice—blind as to who you're dealing with. If people will think back, I have said the reason I stand here tonight is because the rule of law is the glue that underpins the very basic foundation of this Republic, and if we let the rule of law be forgotten or to be discarded and if we, as a people, are not bound together by those agreed laws we've agreed to through our legislative process and if political power or influence changes that, then we're no different than a banana republic. Therefore, nothing is more sacred to the basic premises of a Republican form of government and a democracy than that all people, no matter what their statuses, are bound by the law.

Together, we just sent a man who stole in a Ponzi scheme billions of dollars from people around the world. Do you know what? It speaks to the American system. He is in prison tonight. That's the rule of law, and that's the way it's supposed to be.

So, when we talk about this—and occasionally I do—I smile and have fun with the Rangel rule, but the reality is, if we surrender the rule of law, we surrender our freedom and we surrender our Nation. We just can't do it. With all the political back-and-forth that may go on on the floor of this House, I believe in my heart—and I hope in my heart—that every person who sits in these seats is about standing up for the rule of law. If they are not, they don't belong here, because the rule of law is the glue that holds our society and our Republic together. It's very simple. It's not a complex issue. It's that people, as a people, decide to govern themselves with certain rules and regulations that are required of us as citizens. It's what we promise to do by being good citizens. So we're not going to take a handgun and walk across the street and rob the grocery store, because that is disruptive, and society has decided we're not going to tolerate that. That armed robbery in Texas will put you in prison for life, and believe me, I can tell you several people who know that very fact.

There's a reason we have laws: They hold our society together. It's not a law that says the poor immigrant gets the prison sentence and the rich executive does not. If they both break the law and the punishment is prison, they both ought to go to prison because that's the rule of law.

So, when we have issues that affect the rule of this House and, maybe, the rules of law of this Nation—right now, I'm talking about the rules of the people's House. This is the House of the people. This is the only House of the people. Don't let those Senators fool you, okay? They're not the House of the people. This is the House of the people. If someone dies in this House or is removed or leaves office in the middle of a term, nobody appoints his replacement. It is unlawful to appoint his replacement, because the Constitution of these United States says this is the House that is elected by the people. If we have a Senator die, the States can have a rule which says the Governor—and in fact, my State has that rule. If a Senator dies or leaves office in the middle of the term, our Governor gets to appoint a replacement Senator until such time as an election is held, and most States have something along those lines, which means they're not necessarily placed in that office by the people. That's the difference. When we say this is the House of the people, this is the only House of the people.

If we can't abide by our own rules when we are in charge of making those rules that govern life in America, what kind of example is that? Maybe these folks who've been in the streets for the last couple of weeks, who've been marching and yelling and fussing about Congress, have got something to fuss about; because the truth is, if we can't govern our own House, how can we be expected to govern our Nation?

I have been pointing out to the Democrat leadership of this House, who has this responsibility—you know, when you're in the majority, you govern. When we were in the majority, we governed. Governing is hard. It's harder than being in the minority. In the minority, you can just vote your conscience, and that's what we all should do anyway, but in the majority, you're responsible for the results just like whoever sits in the White House is responsible for the results.

Well, if we can't even figure out our own little rules and make our own little rules happen, how can we make laws that are responsible for the results that affect the people in Iowa or the people in Texas or the people in Louisiana or the people in Oregon or the people in Maine? How can the people have confidence if we can't even take care of our own business?

By the way, an issue is coming up, I think, in this House. Whether you're for it or against it, Joe Wilson made an outcry the other night, and he knows and has admitted that he should not have done that. In the heat of emotion, he made an outcry while the President was speaking. Joe is a very honorable man, and he immediately apologized to the President of the United States, and he immediately, in writing, apologized to the White House and to the Vice President. Now there's another street rumor that a privileged resolution is going to be filed on the floor of this House to censure Mr. WILSON before this Congress.

Of course, it's kind of interesting that the process is normally done through privileged resolutions, but there's usually some involvement by the Ethics Committee. I don't see any here. The Speaker has already said she didn't think it was appropriate to do this, and she made public statements that we should move on with health care and that he has apologized. I read that in the newspaper. Yet we're going forward on this. Then I'm crying for 12 weeks about really offensive behavior: When you pay your taxes, don't you think the guy who runs the Ways and Means Committee ought to pay his taxes? I don't see anybody jumping up, except the one time I did, and offering a privileged resolution. Mine was tabled on party lines and didn't get addressed, but I find it curious. I think Joe Wilson has apologized. He has acted like a gentleman, and I think that's where it ought to be. I agree with Speaker PELOSI's statements of 3 days ago to the press that we should move on. We'll see, but I hope we don't do that because it's just going to add, I say, to the hypocrisy of what we're talking about.

I yield back to my friend from Iowa.

□ 2100

Mr. KING of Iowa. I thank the judge from Texas.

And listening to the dialogue here on floor, I have to also rise in defense of the individual that everybody knows here is a true gentleman, a true Southern gentleman, and that's Congressman JOE WILSON of South Carolina. Anybody that knows JOE knows that he is the consummate officer and a gentleman.

He comes from generations of military personnel. He has four sons that have served in the military. And JOE spends his life and his time respecting others, respecting our military people who serve this country. And I have never known JOE to be anything other than a respectful, polite, gentleman, and, yet, duty, honor, country.

He was offended by what he heard here in the House of Representatives. And, for me, so was I.

The President of the United States came into the House of Representatives, as our guest, and stood here at the podium, here in the well, from the rostrum of the Speaker, and he threw the first stone. And he said, the prominent politicians had lied, and he began to tell how. That's how this was set up.

The President threw the first blow in here as a guest of the House of Representatives. And JOE WILSON, a man of honor, was offended at that, instantaneously. It was an instinctive thing, if you know the man.

And, also, so was the instinct to go to the phone immediately after the speech and call the White House and do what he did. That's enough. There doesn't need to be more, and the people in this House that are seeking to gain a partisan advantage and turn this into a circus over two words that probably were said a lot of other times that night here in the House of Representatives too, but they were covered by the other chatter, that happened to be two words that went into a pause of silence, and the timing of it really was unfortunate.

But I don't think JOE WILSON was unique in his emotion. It just happened to be made clear and embellished by the press. And so I don't make excuses for that and neither does he.

But if the President of the United States accepts an apology, no other person has any grounds to request redress beyond that point. And this House of Representatives shall not be turned into a circus to deal with minutiae because Democrats in this country have decided to run this country over the cliff into socialized medicine. And they can't sell it to the American people, so they want to change the subject. That's what it is.

And, by the way, the President of the United States injected himself into an incident that took place up in Boston when a professor at Harvard was breaking into his own house and the neighbors, out of good will, called the cops and Officer Crowley showed up, and the President himself made intemperate remarks.

They were emotional, they were knee-jerk and they show his bias—no really bias in JOE except duty, honor country, truth, justice in the American way. That's not a bias; that's an altruistic belief system that's in the gentleman JOE WILSON.

But the President injected himself and injected race into that situation up in Boston with the professor and the police officer, and he invited them out to the White House for a beer. And so it became a global story about how the President's masterful diplomacy brought everybody together at the White House. And we all knew what kind of beer everybody drank sitting there at the picnic table sitting outside—I actually don't know if they drank any. We know that they served it.

Well, so the President has accepted JOE WILSON's apology, and we are watching, through the majority whip, drive a resolution towards the floor tomorrow to try to excoriate a Southern gentleman.

And the President is sitting there now, having accepted the apology, and all he has to do is tell Rahm Emanuel, pick up the phone, call up there and talk to CLYBURN or PELOSI or STENY HOYER, the majority leader, and call off the dogs. We don't need this circus on the floor of the House of Representatives over something that may or may not have offended the President of the United States.

But that's over because he has accepted the apology. So now if we have a circus on the floor of the House, and the President doesn't come in and be a referee—and maybe call for a beer summit, so invite JOE WILSON out to the White House, that's what I would like to see happen—if the President doesn't call for that you have to wonder if he isn't secretly sitting there watching the fight, enjoying it, enjoying the circus that they are staging for tomorrow.

The circus itself will bring disgrace on the House of Representatives, and it's designed to cover this House of hypocrisy that we have. But instead it will illuminate it. And as the judge was saying about the rule of law, when I write rule of law, I capitalize it. Rule of law, R and L, capitalize it, in everything I write. Sometimes the staff slips by, but I get it in there, because I have such reverence for the rule of law.

And if we are going to be a Nation that functions, we all have got to have reverence for the rule of law. And if you look at some of these other countries that have some gifts and some blessings that look like they might be comparable to that of the United States and you wonder what's wrong, why can't Russia get their act together. Why can't Mexico get their act together and go there and look.

I can go almost anywhere in the world and tell you what I think we ought to do at least to fix it. But I can go to those places, and I can't tell what you ought to do. Because I don't know how to fix corruption.

When corruption is endemic in the culture of a country, you cannot have enough law enforcement officers. You cannot clean it up. It's got to be something that is a habit of the heart of the culture of the people.

We have had that throughout these centuries in the United States of America. And the things that threaten it, it isn't just a reflection of the chairman of the Ways and Means Committee that has this whole list of ethical problems, including tax avoidance, and that's the nicest way I can say that. It isn't just that. It's the culture that supports it.

It's the Speaker of the House that enables it. It's the majority leader that backs it up. It's the fact that we are dealing with this House of hypocrisy while we are trying to set standards for the people of the United States of America and saying be altruistic, pay your taxes, follow through and do your part. And if you do that, we are a greater country.

But if people decide to take the CHARLIE RANGEL/Tim Geithner route, we can't have enough enforcement officers out there working for the IRS to go out and collect enough taxes to go out and run this government. It's got to be because people have great respect and reverence for the rule of law, and it should start here. This should be the highest standard in the House of Representatives.

But if I go to Mexico or if I go to Russia, I see there are natural resources, I see a good labor force, people that are pretty good workers—more so I think in Mexico than Russia from my observations, but they also were used to payola. They are used to payoffs. They don't think they can make a difference. They don't think their voice matters.

And when it gets to that point in the country where people don't believe any longer that their voice matters, and if they don't believe in the people that are making the decisions for them, and if they don't willingly comply with the laws and pay their taxes, then it all becomes a whole nation of gotcha, and who was the victim of enforcement, and who knew how to pay somebody off that had influence so they can avoid doing the right thing. And that might be paying taxes. It might be completely violating it in a violent way, just plain out and out theft.

If they can get by with it, if they have influence, the rule of law. The rule of law is the central pillar of American exceptionalism. Without it, we would have never become the unchallenged greatest Nation in the world.

But we are, because of that central pillar, the rule of law. Now, there are many other pillars, but the central pillar is a rule of law, and we have got to respect it.

And if you don't like the law, we will run for office or support somebody that does and ask them to change it. That's why we have this system. We have amendments to the Constitution. We don't like the Constitution, find a way to amend it.

If the people speak, we are supposed to listen here. Hundreds of thousands

showed up in Washington D.C. over this past weekend. And we need to hear what they have to say.

But they want to respect their elected Representatives. They want the rule of law to adhere to. They don't want to see this country flooded over with the level of corruption that we have seen in places like Mexico and Russia, or I go there and I think, what can be done?

I can prescribe the solutions that I think are very constructive to those countries, but if you could snap your fingers and get rid of the corruption in those countries, that would be the biggest thing that could be done. And then the people would have hope; they would have faith again. They would believe again that their government was responsible and responsive to them.

But the rule of law—and I think about how important it is to comply with the letter and the intent of the law, not just avoid prosecution, not just find a way to skirt around the edge of it, respect and revere the law and comply with the letter and the intent of the law.

And I had this little thought that popped up into my head—I was listening to the judge talk about this—this little phrase recurs back to me: no controlling legal authority. Do you remember that?

The Vice President of the United States, Al Gore, said, well there is no controlling legal authority. So, therefore, if there isn't any way that you can control his activities by enforcing a law that one can point to, therefore, whatever he might do apparently is acceptable or maybe even moral.

In the absence of prohibition, things become moral in this era of morals relativism.

I reject that. We have got to have high standards, high standards of conscience, high standards of morality, and our laws uphold those standards. And the people on the left will constantly argue you can't legislate morality.

Well, but if you de-legislate the morality that others legislated, now you have, now you have lowered the standard. Now you have lowered the bar. And now people believe it's acceptable, and it has happened over and over again. Our legislation is morality. Our legislation, the laws of America, the laws of our States and our local subdivisions uphold the moral standards of the people that pass them.

It's often our faith; our Judeo-Christian values are what shaped this country. The Declaration and the Constitution are infused with Judeo-Christian values. And those values are part of the culture reflected in the documents, not the documents that drove the culture.

And if we lose our culture, the documents will become meaningless to us. That's why we have got to stand up for the rule of law here on the floor of the House of Representatives, and everybody in America has to stand up for the rule of law, the letter and the intent of law, and the moral and ethical foundation that underpins it, or we lose our way, and we lose our country.

Mr. CARTER. I thank the gentleman for that impassioned speech. We have about 5 minutes more left.

So I make it very clear, I don't think I made it clear, but Roll Call newspaper reported on August 25 some of these issues with Mr. RANGEL.

I am going to go through them very quickly. He filed an amended return about his 2007 assets and income disclosing more than $600,000 in assets, tens of thousands of dollars in income, that he had failed to report. He failed to report, for instance, a Congressional Federal Credit Union, which is just right down the hall from us here, account of at least $250,001; an investment fund account also worth at least $250,001.

He originally claimed assets of $516,000 to $1.316 million. Now he has revised it to $1.028 million to $2.5 million.

And once again he failed to report the income on his Dominican Republic account. He failed to report investments that netted him between 29,000 and 81,000 in capital gains dividends and in rental income when he previously claimed between 6,000 and 17,000.

He failed to report his investment in certain stocks, at least 1,001 of Yum brands; 15,001 in PepsiCo; and 250,001 in funds of Allianz Global Investors Consults Diversified Port III, half the limit, number three.

He failed to report rental income, and that's on top of the multiple allegations we have been talking about. It's time for a Member that justice must be swift and justice delayed is justice denied.

I ask the leadership of this House to move this process, reconcile these issues of the chairman of the Ways and Means Committee, and let's resolve this crisis of this House so we can no longer be called the House of hypocrisy.

□ 2115

EXAMINING THE FACTS ON HEALTH CARE REFORM LEGISLATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, tonight I want to take a little time to examine some of the statements President Obama made when he addressed Congress on the issue of health care. Many of the things he mentioned in his address deserve some clarification or outright rebuttal.

The President said that, Not a dollar of the Medicare trust fund will be used to pay for this plan. That was easy for the President to say, and it is technically correct. It is technically correct only because there is no Medicare trust fund. It is an accounting mirage, a sham of government IOUs, thanks to decades of government deficit spending.

And, furthermore, among more than $500 million in proposed savings from Medicare, the Democrat bills also propose redirecting $23 billion from the Medicare Improvement Fund to fund new health care entitlements. According to current law, the Medicare Improvement Fund is designated specifically ''to make improvements under the original Medicare fee-for-service program.''

Then there is the issue of taxpayer-funded abortion coverage. President Obama said, Under our plan, no Federal dollars will be used to fund abortions, and Federal conscience laws will remain in place. But independent groups have confirmed that the legislation will result in Federal funds being used to pay for abortions—both through the government-run health plan and through Federal subsidies provided through the exchange, despite various accounting gimmicks created in a so-called Energy and Commerce Committee ''compromise.''

Republicans offered amendments in all three of the committees to say this money cannot be used for abortions, and they were rebuffed at each turn.

President Obama also went on to claim that, ''Reducing the waste and inefficiency in Medicare and Medicaid will pay for most of this plan. Much of the rest will be paid for with revenues from the very same drug and insurance companies that stand to benefit from tens of millions of new customers.''

But the Congressional Budget Office had previously found that the cuts to Medicare Advantage plans included in the Democrat legislation would result in millions of seniors, including thousands and thousands in my district in North Carolina, losing their current plan—a direct contradiction of the President's assertion that, Nothing in this plan requires you to change what you have.

The President could have strengthened his statements by quoting sections and lines to back up the statements. We who have presented our alternatives and who have stood to refute the comments have been able, in most cases, to quote the section and the line of the bill to show that what we are saying is the truth.

As you can see from this discussion of the President's speech, when it comes to the debate over health care reform, there are often two sides to the issue, and it is simply not as cut and dried as President Obama has tried to make it out.

Many of us have serious misgivings and disagreements with the proposed legislation and will not allow our disagreements to be mischaracterized and sidelined by lofty rhetoric.

CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, the gentlewoman from