

I know as the second ranking minority member that neither he, I, nor any other Members have been consulted. We have read a lot in the paper about what the Committee on the Judiciary was going to do, what it would not be allowed to do, how it was going to be bypassed.

To have this funding request come forward, it is over a \$1 million, some of which would be presumably assigned the minority, with no consultation is a problem. And the problem is compounded because the chairman of the committee did say there would be consultation, but the consultation he discussed was on a subject that appears to be different.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BOB SCHAFFER of Colorado). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. RIGGS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

CONFUSION SURROUNDING REQUEST OF COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

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

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, the point is that the justification that the chairman mentioned, the consultations that have been held with staff of the minority and the majority, apparently are irrelevant to the request tomorrow.

So I would hope, and I would think the ranking minority member would agree with me, that we could get the Committee on House Oversight to hold off voting this kind of money until there could be a public hearing.

There appears to be a fundamental confusion, at best, about \$1.3 million. Is it money that is to redo the investigation of the independent counsel? Is it money to check up on whether the Attorney General has appropriately dealt with the independent counsel? Or is it for the reauthorization of the Justice Department?

What the chairman told us today was one justification, but the letter that he and the gentleman from Georgia (Speaker GINGRICH) sent to the chairman of the committee is entirely about something else. We ought not to have \$1,300,000 so casually used.

We also ought to stop what appears to be a two-track operation in which the ranking minority member is told one thing about the operation of the Committee on the Judiciary when other conversations are going on. There is a partisan tinge to this which is inappropriate when dealing with the most significant things we can deal with.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS).

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, here is what the justification submitted to the Committee on House Oversight said: "The Committee on the Judiciary contemplates an investigation of the Department of Justice's investigation, with an emphasis on the need for an independent counsel."

They go on to point out that the 17 Republican members have written a letter to the Attorney General and that their plans include the following: The Department of Justice Public Integrity Section and Campaign Fundraising Task Force has been plagued with conflicts of interest, et cetera. In the Chipewa casino matter the Department of Justice is acting as the criminal prosecutor.

Further on, the fundraising investigations, the last time the Committee on the Judiciary sought an appointment of an independent counsel was on the Health Care Task Force.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman would allow me, as he is making clear from reading this, nothing in here deals with the ongoing responsibilities of the Department of Justice, which was the stated purpose for this funding from the chairman. Maybe the chairman thinks it is for one thing and the Speaker is, to use his phrase, saddling him with another purpose.

There ought to be a public hearing. I would think the ranking minority member ought to have a chance to go before the committee and talk about that money, whether it is needed, what it ought to be used for.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I would say to my friend, the gentleman from Massachusetts, if anybody in this House thinks that any serious investigation of the White House or this administration can begin on a partisan basis, as this is appearing to be, I think they are dooming it to a total failure. The notion that anything remotely resembling impeachment activity be sent to any committee other than the Committee on the Judiciary is a clear signal that something is wrong.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. I would ask the ranking minority member, has there been any conversation on the part of any member of the majority, from the Committee on the Judiciary or elsewhere, with the gentleman dealing with how we might respond to Independent Counsel Starr?

Mr. CONYERS. No. Not only has that not happened, but I have been assured repeatedly, and I am sorry to have to put this into the RECORD now, that I would be kept abreast of all developments connected with this, because I have repeatedly been hearing in the media what they were trying to do. As a matter of fact, a January letter requesting this money was brought to me by a member of the press when I told them I had never seen it before. This document I did not see until after the hearing of the full Committee on the Judiciary late this afternoon.

So it is with some sadness that I make public that the agreement that I

thought that I was entering into has been shattered. Perhaps it can be replaced. But I want the entire Congress to know that these unilateral Republican shenanigans, whether they come from the Speaker or from the chairman of the Committee on the Judiciary, work an extreme disservice on the processes that are within the jurisdiction of the Committee on the Judiciary in the House.

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

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

THE TAXPAYER BILL OF RIGHTS III

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

Mr. FOX of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise to bring to the attention of my colleagues the importance now of the passing of the Taxpayer Bill of Rights III. We know that it was not that long ago the Senate Finance Committee had hearings wherein IRS agents, presently working for the agency, as well as taxpayers, came forward to talk about the problems of abuse, the problems of mom and pop stores being levied with fines and with penalties for violations that had not occurred, but they had paid them, nonetheless, out of fear of the agency going after them, and yet these people do not have attorneys or CPAs to help them.

My Taxpayer Bill of Rights legislation, which has enjoyed bipartisan support, is, frankly, a bill that is going to move forward in this respect to change the burden of proof to make sure that taxpayers will now be presumed innocent, and the Commissioner of the IRS will have the burden of proving otherwise, instead of the reverse, the way it is now.

It also will say, no more quotas for IRS investigations, no more quotas for IRS audits, no more fishing expeditions where taxpayers live in fear of the IRS, no more random audits, and, more importantly than the ones I have already mentioned, the fifth provision of the bill says that, in fact, if the IRS is overreaching or causes a legal business or individual loss in an unfair way to any constituent, then they would be responsible for reimbursing that taxpayer.

Moreover, there would be whistleblower protection. If in fact an individual comes forward to talk about an IRS violation by an agency employee or the agency itself, then they will not be audited just out of retribution. Moreover, the bill calls for mediators to be provided in case someone wants to settle a claim.

These are all commonsense provisions to make the IRS more taxpayer-

friendly. We know very well that the employees of the agency work very hard to do a good job, but the burden of proof and other items within the tax code and within the tax system have made it difficult to have anything but an adversarial relationship between the IRS employees and the taxpayers they are supposed to work for.

The fact is out of 100,000 tax employees that the IRS has, there are only 43 taxpayer advocates. That is certainly an imbalance there, Mr. Speaker, that we need to correct. I know that working with our Senate colleagues in a bipartisan fashion, we can make the IRS an agency that will be fair to the public while still making sure that taxes are collected, but in a fair and responsible way that will make sure that the American taxpayer will not be violated in any way, shape, or form.

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

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

TRIBUTE TO GIRLS' BASKETBALL COACH DOROTHY GATERS

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

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, as we continue with the celebration of Women's History Month, I am reminded of the fact that it takes great teachers to make great schools.

I rise today to recognize one of the great female coaches of girl basketball of all time, Coach Dorothy Gaters. Coach Gaters coaches the Lady Commandoes, a Marshall High School girls basketball team on the West Side of Chicago, located in the Seventh Congressional District.

Dorothy Gaters graduated from Marshall High School in 1964, and went on to attend DePaul University, where she graduated with a Bachelor's Degree in 1968. She received her Master's Degree from Governor State University and began teaching at Marshall High School in 1969.

Coach Gaters has not rewritten but has simply written the record book when it comes to girls' basketball in the State of Illinois. Coach Gaters has been coaching in the Chicago Public League at Marshall High School since 1976.

During this time, she has won six State titles, three State runner-ups, three third places, and three fourth places in State tournaments. She currently holds eight State records: 17 tournament appearances, 15 AA tournaments, nine title game appearances, 13 class AA consecutive tournament appearances, and three consecutive title game appearances, to name a few. In 22 years, Coach Gaters has a record

of 619 wins. No other coach in Illinois has even 500 victories in girls' basketball.

□ 1815

No other coach has been in as many State tournament final games as her nine, or won as many titles as her six. Her team has played more games, won more games, and even lost more games in the Elite Eight than anyone else's in girl's basketball history. Of the 14 girl tournament coaching records, Coach Gaters owns 10 of them outright and is tied with Teutopolis's Dennis Koester two other categories.

Before girls basketball was sanctioned by the Illinois High School Association, Coach Gaters was there from the beginning when young women who loved the game could compete only in clubs and intramural contests. She and her teams grew with the sport and today it is as fully recognized as any boys' sport, with its own State championship. And all along, the Lady Commandos were role models of excellence and perseverance and an inspiration to all the other teams.

Coach Gaters' response to all the numbers and all the fawning is consistent with her straightforward approach in coaching: "It says I have been around a long time. I care about it because it will be a victory, not necessarily because it is number 597. I have never really been one to count the games."

Mr. Speaker, we both know that the Illinois High School Association counts, and it listed the Marshall coach with 597 victories against 70 losses entering this, her 23rd season as coach. That was then. Today it is 619 wins to 70 losses. And according to the national high school statistics, Coach Gaters ranks among the top 20 coaches of all time in number of victories. She was inducted into the Illinois Basketball Coaches Association Hall of Fame in 1996, and while her basketball team is nothing short of amazing, they have also succeeded academically. Ninety-five percent of the players who started with Coach Gaters went to colleges and/or universities. Over three fourths of them have graduated. Several of Coach Gaters' former players are now coaches at various institutions. Marie Christian coaches at California-Berkeley; Kimberly McQuarter at Chicago State University; Trinetta Wright is an assistant coach at Chicago State University; and Jennifer Jones coaches at Manley High School.

Other players went on to play in the Women's National Basketball Association. Kim Williams plays for the Utah STARZZ; Toni Foster is with the Phoenix-MERCURY; and Janet Harris plays for the Charlotte STING.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate Coach Dorothy Gaters and the Lady Commandos of Marshall High School who have demonstrated that academic excellence coupled with athletic prowess is the order of the day.

CONGRESS MUST FACE UP TO SERIOUS PROBLEMS IN SOCIAL SECURITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BOB SCHAFFER of Colorado). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. SMITH) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, this last Saturday, the Pew Foundation, responding to the President's comments in the State of the Nation address, had a forum where 10 cities in the United States were linked together in interactive television. In each one of those cities there were 10 tables. At each table there were 10 participants talking about the problems of Social Security and what we might do with Social Security.

One thing that came from almost all the cities was that we should stop using the Social Security trust fund money to mask the deficit and that we should stop using, taking that money, and in return giving nonmarketable IOUs.

One point I made on Friday night, the Pew Foundation called me and said that they understood the President had requested time and asked if I would like to also have 12 minutes of time making my comments as far as the situation with Social Security. The first thing I said was my concern about using Social Security trust fund money to really mask the deficit.

Mr. Speaker, I suggested that we really did not have a surplus in this country and that only because this current year we are borrowing about \$85 billion from the Social Security trust fund, next year we are going to be borrowing closer to \$100 billion from the Social Security trust fund, that borrowing is what is allowing us to say that we have a balanced budget.

I think it is very important that we stop, in effect, hoodwinking the American people. Even though it is nice to brag about a balanced budget, the fact is that the only reason we are pretending the budget is balanced is because we are borrowing all of this money from the Social Security trust fund.

I told the people, I was at Cobo Hall in Detroit in Michigan, and I suggested that there has got to be several guidelines as we proceed in making sure that Social Security stays solvent. Number one, that it be bipartisan. Number two, that all possible solutions be kept on the table. Number three, that we do not reduce the benefits for existing retirees or near retirees. Number four, that we have some kind of a system where our kids and our grandkids and their kids and grandkids can expect retirement accounts that are going to last them through what is expected to be an even longer life span, and that we have a system that is fair and equitable. That we not privatize the system, but rather that we have a system that allows forced savings and investments in accounts that are owned by the individual workers that can accrue dividends throughout their working lifetime.