

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

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

CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM INVESTIGATION

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

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I came here tonight to speak about what we had accomplished today over in the Cannon Building where we were talking to the American public about how we, the Republican majority, are going to talk about and have a discussion with the American public on drugs. But I am compelled now to change that topic and to speak on the comments that were just made by Members of the Democratic Party.

I want you to know I serve on the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight, and for the last 15 months we have seen a charade that is taking place where Members of the Democratic Party have not only ignored every opportunity to be bipartisan in their attempts to work with us in the majority on dealing with the abuses of the White House in campaign finance, but we have also seen that what they will do is not only not tell the truth but what they will do is to obstruct justice.

□ 1815

Just last week we had a vote whereby we were going to have four people who we were attempting to grant immunity to. These four people are individuals who are involved in the campaign finance scandal of foreign money influence upon the White House.

And what happened is that we very carefully laid out a case by which these four people, they are not high level and they are not involved in a big way, but to where we wanted to talk to these four people and to grant them full immunity from prosecution. We had worked directly with the Department of Justice, and they had indicated that they had no problem with us issuing this immunity.

Yet on a 19-to-nothing vote we were not able to grant these four people immunity because it requires a two-thirds vote of the committee. Not one Democrat wanted to issue immunity because they did not want these four people to tell the truth and to tell their story.

This White House, and I can tell my colleagues that this Democrat Congress and the Members of the Democrat Congress who are Members of the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight repeatedly have attempted to block every single request that we have made that is reasonable and normal.

And I tell my colleagues that back in 1974, when Richard Nixon was involved

in not only illegalities but constitutional questions, it was the Republican Party that stood up with Senator Howard Baker and asked the tough questions. It was Senator Howard Baker who made sure that not only were the tough questions asked but that he made sure that this President did not escape telling the truth and the whole truth.

Mr. SUNUNU. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. SESSIONS. I will be happy to yield.

(Mr. SUNUNU asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks and to include extraneous material.)

Mr. SUNUNU. I think it is interesting that the gentleman mentioned the circumstances in 1974, because the previous speaker made the point that somehow the call for the President to be forthcoming, the emphasis that no one is above the law, seemed to be unprecedented. Not only were the speaker's comments fair, I think they stand in stark contrast to the comments of the Speaker of the House in January of 1974, when the Speaker of this body called for the resignation of President Nixon months in advance of any bipartisan investigation.

So at that time there was not only a willingness to move forward without any thought of a bipartisan discussion of the issues but the Speaker of the House was calling for a resignation before that impartial investigation could even move forward.

I would finally like to note that in the gentleman's discussion of the obstruction that the committee has run into, not only were those four immunity requests, that had been approved by the Justice Department, voted down by all 19 Democrat members of the committee, there have been, to date, 92 individuals that have either taken the fifth amendment or fled the country or refused to talk to authorities that have obstructed the progress of the committee's investigation.

And, Mr. Speaker, I include for the RECORD a list of all 92 individuals that have obstructed the investigation in that way.

WITNESSES WHO HAVE FLED OR PLEAD THE 5TH

(Full Committee Hearing—December 9, 1997)

Mr. BURTON. Have you ever experienced so many unavailable witnesses in any matter in which you have prosecuted or on which you have been involved?

FBI Director FREEH. I spent about 16 years doing organized crime cases in New York City, and many people were frequently unavailable.

53 HOUSE & SENATE WITNESSES ASSERTING FIFTH AMENDMENT

John Huang, Gene Lum, Gin F. J. Chen, Mark Middleton, Nolanda Hill, Jane Huang, Duangnet Kronenberg, Maria L. Hsia, Webster Hubbell, Yogesh Ghandi, Steven Hwang, Gilbert Colon, Irene Wu, Mike Lin, Zie Pan Huang,* Michael Brown, Simon Chen, Kent La, Johnny Chung, David Wang,* Siuw Moi

*Granted Immunity after plead 5th Amendment.

Lian,* Seow Fong Ooi, Bin Yueh Jeng, Hsiu Chu Lin, Jen Chin Hsueh, Chi Rung Wang, Jou Sheng, Judy Hsu, Jane Dewi Tahir, Maria Mapili, Jie Su Hsiao, Hsiu Luan Tseng, Mark Jimenez, Woody Hwang, Sieng Fei Man, Terri Bradley, Man Ya Shih,* Keshi Zhan,* Yi Chu,* Joseph Landon,* Nora Lum, Larry Wong, Na-chi "Nancy" Lee, Hueutsan Huang,* Yue Chu,* Man Ho,* Manlin Fong,* Yumei Yang, Arapaho/Cheyenne Indians, Hsin Chen Shih, Shu Jen Wu,* Charles Intriago, and Jessica Elinitarta.

21 WITNESSES HAVE LEFT THE COUNTRY

Charlie Trie (has returned to United States), Antonio Pan, Arief Wirindinata, Subandi Tanuwidjaja, Susanto Tanuwidjaja, Yanti Ardi, Laureen Elnitiarta, Pauline Kanchanalak, John H.K. Lee, Ted Sieng, Soraya Wiradinata, Suryanti Tanuwidjaja, Nanny Nitiarta, Sandra Elnitiarta, Ming Chen, Agus Setiawan, Dewi Tirta, Felix Ma, Subandi Tanuwidjaja, Yopie Elnitiarta, and Sundari Elnitiarta.

18 FOREIGN WITNESSES HAVE REFUSED TO BE INTERVIEWED BY INVESTIGATIVE BODIES

Ng Lap Seng, Ken Hsui, Eugene Wu, Suma Ching Hai, Ambrose Hsuing, Bruce Cheung, Stephen Riady, John Muncy, Mochtar Riady, James Riady, Lay Kweek Wie, Wang Jun, Roy Tirtadji, James Lin, Stanley Ho, Daniel Wu, Li Kwai Fai, and Hogen Fukunaga.

Mr. SESSIONS. Reclaiming my time, Mr. Speaker, the facts speak for themselves. We are attempting to run a fair and open bipartisan investigation of the wrongdoings of the Clinton White House. It will require a minimum of one Democrat asking to seek to have the truth.

The bottom line is, in 1974, Senator Howard Baker stepped forth and insisted. We ask for that same resolve today.

CONGRATULATIONS TO ISRAEL ON ITS 50TH ANNIVERSARY

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

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, we have heard some contentious discussion of our partisan divisions. I rise for a task that I think is far more joyful and one as to which this entire body is united, and that is I rise to congratulate the people of Israel on the 50th anniversary of their rebirth and independence.

Today represents the 50th anniversary of Israel, as determined by the Jewish lunar calendar. And it is with great joy that I point out that House Joint Resolution 102 was adopted by this House 2 days ago by a vote of 402 to nothing, demonstrating the united and bipartisan support that the State of Israel and the close U.S.-Israel relationship enjoyed in this House.

We should reflect that in August of 1897, a century ago, the first Zionist Congress affirmed its aspiration to form a Jewish homeland in the historic State of Israel. After the horrors of the Holocaust, in which one-third of the Jewish population of the world lost their lives, the Jewish people returned to their ancient homeland and established the State of Israel.

Since the Nation's founding, over a million Jews from throughout the world have sought refuge in Israel. Israel has, over the last 50 years, rebuilt a nation, maintained a pluralist democracy, the only one in the Middle East, and based that democracy on freedoms and the rule of law. It has developed a thriving economy and a society, transforming the desert into a land of milk and honey.

On this 50th anniversary we have a chance to reflect on the courage and leadership of President Harry Truman who, against the advice of experts in the State Department, et cetera, stood with the people of Israel and recognized their declaration of independence.

Over the last 50 years, governments of the United States, both Democrat and Republican, have supported the people and the State of Israel. Likewise, governments of Israel, Likud and Labor, have supported the people and the government of the United States. We have a friendship that transcends party; and whichever policies may rule the day in Jerusalem or here in the United States, that bond stands.

We should note that Jerusalem has been the eternal and indivisible capital of Israel, both 3,000 years ago and for the last 50 years. The United States Congress passed the Jerusalem Embassy Act calling for the American Embassy to Israel to be moved to Jerusalem in 1999. What better way for us to celebrate the rebirth of the State of Israel than for the State Department to announce today that they will abide by, rather than seek waivers from, the Jerusalem Embassy Act.

But because the State Department may decide to try to waive that act, I will be introducing, hopefully with substantial support, a bill that states to the Department of State that, before they open a new embassy in another formerly divided city, Berlin, they must open at least a temporary embassy, and, hopefully, a permanent embassy, in the indivisible and eternal capital of Israel: Jerusalem.

I rise today to congratulate the people of Israel on their 50th anniversary of the new State, and I rise today to say that when it comes to America's embassy to Israel: next year in Jerusalem.

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

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

MAIL FRAUD AND TELEMARKETING SCAMS TARGETING SENIOR CITIZENS

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

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call my colleagues' attention to a serious crime being perpetrated against some of our most vulnerable citizens: mail fraud and telemarketing scams targeting senior citizens. In my own district, one gentleman pleaded with me, "The mail is still coming. I don't have the money to send."

Some companies peddling questionable products or promoting unwinnable contests make a living out of targeting senior citizens. It is estimated that telemarketing fraud robs Americans of at least \$40 billion a year.

The actual number may be much higher, as telemarketing fraud has always been a part of our Nation's underground economy. Not all losses have been clearly documented. Some consumers are too embarrassed to report that they have been defrauded or they do not recognize the extent of the fraud that has been perpetrated upon them.

Mr. Speaker, I held a meeting on this issue in my district recently; and I was appalled at the number of people in the audience who came up to me after a discussion led by members of the FBI, led by members of the Post Office, the Postal Inspector Section, after the recitation of statistics and perspective by myself, and yet asked me afterwards if I could give them my personal assistance in contacting some of the fraudulent companies to see if it was not possible for them to perhaps receive their prizes or be acknowledged for the funds that they had been sending.

□ 1830

Mr. Speaker, I can assure my colleagues that this is a heart-wrenching situation. It is taking place all over the country, and it prompts me to rise today to extend these remarks to my colleague and to the other Members.

Older Americans, Mr. Speaker, are the target of many fraudulent telemarketers because they are generally at home more often than younger persons, they may be more trusting. That is certainly the case with those that I spoke with recently in Honolulu, Mr. Speaker, and may look upon a smooth-talking telemarketer as a trusted friend rather than someone preying upon their life savings. These fraudulent activities are a disgrace, and we should do all we can to stop them.

On April 8, 1998, as I indicated, I sponsored a mail and telemarketing fraud briefing for senior citizens in my district in Honolulu, Hawaii. This education national briefing was designed to give vulnerable senior citizens a fighting chance against an industry designed to victimize them.

John Gillis, a supervisory special agent for the Federal Bureau of Investigation in Honolulu, and Byron Dare, a postal inspector for the United States Postal Service in Honolulu, presented testimony on their agencies' efforts to combat mail and telemarketing fraud and educated seniors on how to avoid becoming victims of such schemes.

Mr. Speaker, I most sincerely urge my colleague and other Members to take advantage of FBI offices in our districts, as well as postal service inspectors in our district, to hold similar briefings for senior citizens in our areas. Senior citizens need to be protected from these scam artists, and one of the best ways to do this is educate them on how fraudulent information is presented.

I am preparing legislation on this issue. I am already a cosponsor of the Protection against Scams on Seniors Act, H.R. 3134. This bill authorizes the Administration on Aging to conduct an outreach program to educate seniors on telemarketing fraud. I plan to continue my outreach efforts to reach Hawaii's elderly population from falling prey to these unscrupulous mail and telemarketers.

I also support the efforts of Federal agencies and private organizations who have been actively involved in this issue. The American Association of Retired Persons, the AARP, has created a profile of telemarketing and mail fraud victims. The profile shows the average victim is not only an older American, but relatively affluent, well-educated, well-informed, and socially active in his or her community.

AARP's research indicates that the critical difference between victims and nonvictims is their ability to recognize that telemarketing fraud is a crime. Mr. Speaker, I want to emphasize that. The key here, the critical difference between being a victim and a nonvictim is their ability to recognize that telemarketing fraud is a crime.

Many people find themselves the victim of fraud and do not recognize that it is, in fact, criminal activity, and there is something they can do about it. AARP has produced educational materials in English and Spanish. If seniors would contact the AARP in their area, they will be happy to provide them with materials, telephone numbers, et cetera, which will aid them.

The AARP has produced educational materials in English and Spanish that inform recipients of telemarketing calls about ways to distinguish between legitimate and fraudulent calls; how to respond safely to calls without becoming a victim; and how to report suspicious calls. I am making sure this material is available in all the senior centers in Honolulu.

In Hawaii, state laws on telemarketing require specific disclosures by the telemarketer regarding prize and gift promotions. Our state law also provides consumers with a right to sue for damages and obtain relief on his or her own initiative, aside from any state action. Maximum penalties for a violation of Hawaii's telemarketing laws are set at \$10,000.

Uncovering these schemes, returning money owed to its victims, and educating seniors are worthwhile efforts I will continue to pursue. I am happy to have the support and knowledge of many organizations who also promote these goals. I will continue to educate senior citizens in my district of this \$40 billion rip-off. I hope my fellow Members of Congress will do the same. With a concerted effort, we can protect our senior citizens and put mail and telemarketing con-artists out of business.