

The IRGC perpetrated another attack on commercial shipping, this time targeting Japanese and Norwegian oil tankers transiting through the Strait of Hormuz. I would say that that is an emergency and a threat to life.

A rocket hit an oil drilling site in Iraq's southern Basra Province striking inside a compound that housed contractors and employees of Exxon Mobil. I would say that is an emergency and a threat to life.

Iran shot down a U.S. military asset over international waters. I would say that is an emergency.

Just last week three Iranian paramilitary vessels tried to impede the passage of a British oil tanker transiting the Strait of Hormuz, and I would say that is an emergency and a threat to life.

Now, even as Iran continues to threaten international shipping and civilians in the Middle East, there are Members of this body who want to create doubts about the commitments that we have to our partners on the front lines. Now for Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, this is not an abstract threat. It is their tankers that are being attacked, their airports that are being targeted, and their oil fields.

Now, our bilateral relationship with Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates undoubtedly is complicated, and we absolutely have to press for improvements in domestic human rights for both countries. I think we can agree on this wholeheartedly: we have to seek justice and accountability in the murder of Jamal Khashoggi, undoubtedly. In fact, earlier this week this body voted overwhelmingly for Mr. MALINOWSKI's H.R. 2037 which imposes sanctions on those responsible for Mr. Khashoggi's murder.

Even as the United Arab Emirates draws down its position in Yemen, we must press Saudi Arabia to minimize civilian casualties in that conflict, but none of these challenges justify whatsoever abandoning our partners as they face down a threat from an Iranian regime that is on the march throughout the Middle East. In fact, we must continue to show our investment in our strategic partnerships in order to incentivize our partners to make the changes that we are asking them to make.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that my colleagues on the other side of the aisle have had a longstanding concern about these sales. We have a codified congressional review process precisely to address such concerns, however it is my assessment that my Democratic colleagues abused this review process.

Prior to the emergency notification, Republican Members had supported these sales, but Democrat Members subjected them to informal holds—in some cases for over a year—without any clear path to resolution. Now, given the wide range of conflicts and threats in the Middle East, I do not understand why my colleagues were sur-

prised when, after months and even over a year of delay, it was assessed that our partners urgently needed these defense articles and services for their national security in these emergency situations.

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Perhaps if my colleagues had taken a more active approach to resolving their concerns, we would have avoided the situation in which additional capabilities were needed to respond to the elevated threat, this emergency situation that has been posted by Iran.

Now, Mr. Speaker, there has long been a consensus in this body that Iran's malign activities in the Middle East are a threat to the United States' national security and to our partners. In the past 3 years alone, we have passed legislation responding to Iran's support for terrorism, growing ballistic missile arsenal, and human rights abuses. The Iranian regime has not backed down from these malign activities, and it is my sincere hope that this body will not back down from its resolve to counter Iran's destabilizing agenda.

Unfortunately, this resolution and the other joint resolutions of disapproval for the 22 sales are very much a step in the wrong direction.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Texas (Mr. TAYLOR).

Mr. TAYLOR. Mr. Speaker, from its inception, the Islamic Republic of Iran had an anti-American bent: what it did in our Embassy, its attack on the Marines in Beirut in 1983, its efforts in Iraq.

In 2003, I was part of the invasion force. I saw with my own eyes the Iranian efforts to destabilize Iraq, and they continue to do that there today.

They continue to support the Assad regime in Syria. They continue to overthrow the regime in Yemen, support the Houthi rebels attacking Saudi Arabia.

Around the Middle East, Iran has become the enemy of freedom and democracy.

If America is going to succeed, we need to have allies; we need to have friends. We need to support those allies and those friends. Making sure that Saudi Arabia or UAE have the weapons that they need to fight back against Iran's terrorism and warmongering around this region is mission-critical for the survival of our Republic.

Mr. Speaker, I stand against this resolution.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time for the purpose of closing.

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

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time to close debate on this measure.

I am glad we had a spirited debate on the issues. As always, I am grateful to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. MCCAUL), my friend, the ranking mem-

ber, for his collegiality. We are generally bipartisan on the Foreign Affairs Committee, and when we do disagree, we do so on the issues and not on the politics and the personalities.

I have enormous respect for Mr. MAST, which he knows about, but I would say that this, today, is not a referendum on Iran. I agree with everything that my colleagues on the other side of the aisle have said about Iran: its bad intention, its bad behavior. I agree.

But, again, I say, as I said before, it doesn't mean we give another country, being an ally or not, a blank check to do whatever it pleases. And in this particular case, the conduct of the war in Yemen is something that we cannot just turn our heads away and say: "Oh, well, this is the war and the Iranians are bad, so, therefore, we are going to look the other way." I think if we are talking about American weapons, we can demand better.

So I think that these measures are a chance for the Congress to take back some of the power granted by the Constitution, to say that we won't stand by when any administration—this administration, administrations to come in both parties—we won't stand by when any administration ignores Congress, plays fast and loose with the law, and fails to demand accountability for human rights abuses around the world.

I encourage all my colleagues to support this measure and the two others that we have just considered.

I thank Mr. MAST and my friends on other side of the aisle for a spirited debate, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time for debate has expired.

Pursuant to House Resolution 491, the previous question is ordered on the joint resolution.

The question is on the third reading of the joint resolution.

The joint resolution was ordered to be read a third time, and was read the third time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the passage of the joint resolution.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. MAST. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

RECOMMENDING THAT THE HOUSE FIND WILLIAM P. BARR AND WILBUR L. ROSS, JR., IN CONTEMPT OF CONGRESS

Mr. CUMMINGS. Madam Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Oversight and Reform, I call up the report (H. Rept. 116-125) to accompany the resolution recommending that the

House of Representatives find William P. Barr, Attorney General of the United States, and Wilbur L. Ross, Jr., Secretary of Commerce, in contempt of Congress for refusal to comply with subpoenas duly issued by the Committee on Oversight and Reform.

The Clerk read the title of the report.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. DeGETTE). Pursuant to House Resolution 491, the report is considered read. (For text of the report, see proceedings of the House in Books II and III of July 17, 2019.)

Mr. CUMMINGS. Madam Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Oversight and Reform, I call up the resolution (H. Res. 497) recommending that the House of Representatives find William P. Barr, Attorney General of the United States, and Wilbur L. Ross, Jr., Secretary of Commerce, in contempt of Congress for refusal to comply with subpoenas duly issued by the Committee on Oversight and Reform, and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 491, the resolution is considered read.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

#### HOUSE RESOLUTION 497

*Resolved*, That William P. Barr, Attorney General of the United States, and Wilbur L. Ross, Jr., Secretary of Commerce, shall be found to be in contempt of Congress for failing to comply with subpoenas authorized by the Committee on Oversight and Reform and duly issued by Chairman Elijah E. Cummings relating to the 2020

*Resolved*, That the Attorney General I(i) Census, failed to comply with a Committee subpoena issued on April 2, 2019, to produce documents, and (ii) ordered a Department of Justice employee, John Gore, not to comply with a Committee subpoena requiring him to appear for deposition testimony before the Committee on April 11, 2019.

*Resolved*, That the Secretary of Commerce failed to comply with a Committee subpoena issued on April 2, 2019, to produce documents.

*Resolved*, That the Report of the Committee on Oversight and Reform details the refusal of the Attorney General to produce documents to the Committee as required by subpoena, the order from the Attorney General directing John Gore to defy a duly authorized Committee subpoena for deposition testimony, and the refusal of the Secretary of Commerce to produce documents to the Committee as required by subpoena.

*Resolved*, That pursuant to 2 U.S.C. 192 and 194, the Speaker of the House of Representatives shall certify the Report of the Committee on Oversight and Reform, detailing the refusal of William P. Barr, Attorney General of the United States, to produce documents to the Committee on Oversight and Reform as directed by subpoena, to the United States Attorney for the District of Columbia, to the end that Mr. Barr be proceeded against in the manner and form provided by law.

*Resolved*, That pursuant to 2 U.S.C. 192 and 194, the Speaker of the House of Representatives shall certify the Report of the Committee on Oversight and Reform, detailing the refusal of Wilbur L. Ross, Jr., Secretary of Commerce, to produce documents to the Committee as directed by subpoena, to the

United States Attorney for the District of Columbia, to the end that Mr. Ross be proceeded against in the manner and form provided by law.

*Resolved*, That the Speaker of the House shall otherwise take all appropriate action to enforce the subpoenas.

*Resolved*, That the Chairman of the Committee on Oversight and Reform shall take all necessary steps to enforce the above-referenced subpoenas, including, but not limited to, seeking authorization from the House of Representatives through a vote of the Bipartisan Legal Advisory Group pursuant to clause 8(b) of rule II, and H. Res. 430, to initiate or to intervene in proceedings in any federal court of competent jurisdiction, to seek judgements affirming the duty of the subpoena recipients to comply with the above-referenced subpoenas, and to seek any appropriate ancillary relief, including injunctive relief.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The resolution shall be debatable for 1 hour, equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Oversight and Reform.

The gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS) and the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. COMER) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Maryland.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. CUMMINGS. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and to insert extraneous material.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Madam Speaker, I yield myself 5 minutes.

Madam Speaker, I support this bipartisan resolution to hold Attorney General William Barr and Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross in contempt of Congress because it is necessary to preserve the integrity of this body and of the Census.

The Constitution mandates that we conduct a Census every 10 years, and that the Census count every person. A full, fair, and accurate account is critical to ensuring that we properly allocate Federal funding and congressional apportionment.

I do not take this decision lightly. Holding any Cabinet Secretary in criminal contempt of Congress is a serious and somber matter, one that I have done everything in my power to avoid. But in the case of the Attorney General and the Secretary, Secretary Ross, they blatantly obstructed our ability to do congressional oversight into the real reason Secretary Ross was trying, for the first time in 70 years—in 70 years—to add a citizen question to the 2020 Census.

Secretary Ross testified under oath that he added a citizenship question solely—I want you to concentrate on that word, “solely”—to help the Justice Department enforce the Voting Rights Act. But we now know that claim was nothing but a pretext.

And do not take my word for that, Madam Speaker. The Supreme Court said that.

Our committee's investigation uncovered evidence that Secretary Ross launched a secret campaign to add the citizenship question within days of assuming his post.

We learned that Secretary Ross ignored warnings from experts inside and outside the Census Bureau, including the Bureau's chief scientist, that adding a citizenship question will be costly and harm the accuracy of the Census.

In other words, they were saying: If you do this, you are not going to have an accurate Census.

Our investigation also revealed that Secretary Ross spoke with Attorney General Sessions, Steve Bannon, and Kris Kobach. Contrary to his testimony to Congress, the Commerce Department conjured up the voting rights rationale to hide these interactions.

This entire Congress should be insulted by this.

Committee Democrats first asked for documents from the Department of Commerce and the Department of Justice when we were in the minority in April and May of 2018. Both departments ignored us.

When I became chairman, I renewed these requests on behalf of the committee. Since then, the administration has engaged in a purposeful effort to obstruct—and I do not use that word lightly—our investigation. The Departments have refused to provide key unredacted documents that we need to understand the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, about why they really made this decision.

Instead, what did they do? They produced thousands of pages that were largely nonresponsive, heavily redacted, or publicly already available.

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When they let us interview witnesses, what did they do? They ordered the witnesses not to answer more than 500 of our questions. Secretary Ross even refused my request to meet to try to work this out.

Like I said, I do not come to this floor lightly. This is not an easy decision. But there comes a time when the Congress must be for the Congress.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

As a result, on April 2, more than 3 months ago, after a bipartisan vote, the committee subpoenaed these key documents, including a secret memo that the Department of Commerce wrote about the citizenship question and gave to the Department of Justice.

The Departments have admitted to us that this memo does exist, but they refuse to produce this document and many others.

I must say, to give credit where credit is due, that my good friend and colleague on the other side, Mr. MEADOWS,

worked tirelessly to try to help us get the things that we needed. I appreciate that, trying to work in a bipartisan way.

Going on from there, last month, in light of this obstruction, the Committee on Oversight and Reform passed a resolution to hold Attorney General Barr and Secretary Ross in contempt of Congress. The vote was also bipartisan. However, many of our Republican colleagues apparently support the Trump administration's refusal to comply with duly authorized congressional subpoenas.

Let me say to my colleagues that we need to be clear that we, as a body, have a constitutional duty to be a check on the executive branch. That is our job. Every 2 years, we swear to uphold the Constitution of the United States of America. That is what we are supposed to do.

Some of my colleagues claim that we were interfering with the Supreme Court's decision on this issue. That argument never did make any sense to me since we launched our investigation in 2018, more than 10 months before the Supreme Court took up the case.

Even if you accept that misguided argument, the Supreme Court case is now over. That argument is gone.

The President announced last week that he would no longer pursue adding a citizenship question to the Census. However, in that same speech, the President admitted that he wanted citizenship data to implement partisan gerrymandering.

The President's statements directly contradict Secretary Ross' sworn testimony that the only reason, the sole reason, the Trump administration wanted this data was to help the Justice Department enforce the Voting Rights Act.

The Departments of Justice and Commerce have been engaged in a campaign to subvert our laws and the process Congress put in place to maintain the integrity of the Census.

I would say to all of our Members: Let's be very careful about what we do with regard to the Census. It has a tremendous impact for 10 years on how more than \$660 billion in Federal funds are appropriated, over and over again—apportionment, redistricting, and making sure that every American gets their fair share back of their taxpayer dollars; that is, the money of the hard-working people who raised the money for our taxes.

The resolution before us today is about protecting our democracy. It is about protecting the integrity of this body. It is bigger than the Census. It is about protecting the integrity of the Congress of the United States of America.

We need to understand how and why the Trump administration tried to add a question based on a pretext so that we can consider reforms to ensure that this never happens again.

There are those who will ask the question: Why, with the Supreme Court

having decided what they have decided, do you want the documents? We want the documents because we want to make sure that we do not, in the future, spend a year or a year and a half chasing something that is not accurate—in the words of the Supreme Court, a pretext—delaying our process of getting an accurate account, which is exactly what the Constitution says we must do.

I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support our resolution to hold Attorney General Barr and Secretary Ross in contempt of the Congress of the United States of America.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. COMER. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume, and I rise in opposition.

Madam Speaker, we are here today debating a premature and ill-advised resolution to hold Attorney General William Barr and Secretary of Commerce Wilbur Ross in contempt of Congress.

In the eyes of the Democratic majority, their crime is not cooperating enough with the Democrats' investigation into the reinstatement of the citizenship question on the 2020 Census.

First, this contempt citation is a misuse of one of the most powerful tools available to this body.

Second, the idea that the Trump administration is stonewalling this investigation or even, in Chairman CUMMINGS' words, engaged in a coverup from the top, is simply wrong.

The bottom line is, the Department of Justice and the Department of Commerce are cooperating with the committee's investigation into the re-institution of the citizenship question on the 2020 Census. The administration has produced a total of 31,000 pages of documents to the committee, 14,000 pages from the Commerce Department and 17,000 pages from the Justice Department.

The committee had heard testimony from six witnesses, with more interviews expected this month. Secretary Ross himself testified for over 6 hours about his decision to reinstate the citizenship question on the Census.

The real issue we should be debating is why the Democrats are afraid to ask how many citizens are in the United States of America.

Let's remember, just 1 month ago, the Supreme Court ruled that asking a citizenship question on the Census is constitutional. Since the Supreme Court ruling, the President has said a citizenship question will not appear on the 2020 Census.

To put away all doubt about asking a citizenship question on the Census and all future Censuses, I introduced a bill last night to add a citizenship question to the 2020 Census. My bill is intended to put away all doubt about asking a citizenship question on this and future Censuses.

If the Democrats can't impeach President Trump, they will, instead,

hold his Cabinet in contempt of Congress. This is just another episode in political theater. This exercise is not a responsible use of the contempt authority.

This is just another attempt for the Democrats to delegitimize the efforts to accurately count the number of United States citizens in the United States, something that should not be controversial. This is all part of the same game plan to manufacture controversy around anything associated with the Trump administration.

These are the sort of abusive tactics that we should reject. These are the sort of tactics that give Congress a bad reputation. We should be better than this.

Madam Speaker, I urge all Members of the House to vote against moving this partisan contempt legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Let me be very clear: This is not theater. I wish it was theater. It is not theater.

This is about us making sure that we protect the integrity of the Census and of this Congress.

Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. LAWRENCE).

Mrs. LAWRENCE. Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong support of this resolution to hold Attorney General Barr and Commerce Secretary Ross in contempt of Congress.

Madam Speaker, we have reached a point that we, as Congress, must have the courage—and we have a duty to our constituents of these United States of America—to uphold the Constitution.

Congress has an obligation to conduct oversight of the executive branch, yet this administration complains each time we request information critical to fulfilling our investigative responsibilities.

Today, the full House will vote to hold Attorney General Barr and Secretary Ross in criminal contempt of Congress for their complete disregard of the Constitution—not of Democrats, of the Constitution—and their refusal to provide our committee with relevant documents relative to the investigation of our 2020 Census.

It is 100 percent within our congressional responsibility to ensure the Federal Government is ultimately working in the best interests of the people it serves.

I urge my colleagues to support this resolution, to stand up and fulfill their duty and responsibility to the Constitution, which says we must take care of the people of this great country and that Congress will maintain its power as a separate but equal branch of government.

Madam Speaker, I thank the chairman for his leadership.

Mr. COMER. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. KELLER).

Mr. KELLER. Madam Speaker, every Member of Congress was elected to work on issues that will positively impact their districts.

As we stand here today, our Nation is dealing with a crisis at our southern border; our seniors are struggling with rising prescription drug prices; our farmers are waiting for a free and fair trade deal with Mexico and Canada; and our veterans deserve the care they have earned.

Yet, today, House Democrats are, once again, putting off these important issues and continuing with their partisan investigations of President Trump and his administration.

Madam Speaker, this administration has produced 31,000 pages of documents related to the Census. This administration has made five senior officials available for interview. All this is due to a disagreement over a citizenship question on the Census.

Madam Speaker, a citizenship question is not new, nor should it be controversial. Every Census conducted by the United States Government from 1820 to 1950 asked about citizenship.

Other countries ask about citizenship. The United Nations recommends it as a best practice. The Census Bureau today already asks a segment of the population about citizenship.

Let's set these facts aside. Given that President Trump is no longer seeking to add a citizenship question to the 2020 Census, voting on a resolution to hold two Cabinet members in contempt of Congress is simply a Democratic tactic to waste this Chamber's time and avoid working on the serious issues facing our Nation.

Madam Speaker, I urge Members to vote against the resolution so the House can stop this partisan nonsense and focus on meaningful policy.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY), a member of our committee.

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding and for his great leadership.

Madam Speaker, today, we vote to defend the interests of the American people, our system of checks and balances, and our very Constitution with this resolution to hold Secretary Ross and Attorney General Barr in criminal contempt.

For well over a year, Trump administration officials have lied through their teeth about the reason for adding a citizenship question to the 2020 Census.

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They have repeatedly lied to Congress, the Supreme Court, and the American people.

In an effort to cover up their lies, they blocked every demand from our committee, every demand to comply with reasonable oversight, withholding documents, asserting illegitimate executive privilege, and blatantly ignoring bipartisan subpoenas, all to a degree

that would literally break the Constitution if allowed to stand.

New evidence in court, which I shared on this floor, revealed that the real reason for the question was to disenfranchise non-White voters. The Supreme Court ruled that the administration's explanation was contrived.

A functional democracy depends on accountability. Accountability requires real oversight.

The passage of this criminal contempt resolution is necessary to preserve the integrity of all congressional oversight on this and so many other issues now and into the future. This contempt resolution, in fact, allows both Democrats and Republicans to do their job.

Never, ever during my time in Congress have I encountered such complete contempt for the law, and that contempt deserves to be punished.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote for this. Our democracy depends on it.

Mr. COMER. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MEADOWS), one of the great leaders of this body.

Mr. MEADOWS. Madam Speaker, let me give you a quote: "Holding someone in contempt of Congress is one of the most serious and formal actions our committee can take, and it should not be used as a political tool to generate press as part of an election-year witch hunt."

Who is responsible for that quote? It is not Ranking Member JIM JORDAN. It is not Leader MCCARTHY. It is not Conference Chair LIZ CHENEY. It is Chairman ELIJAH CUMMINGS. Those are his words.

What we need to do is understand that we are using this as a political tool, and we are better than that. We are better than that.

I am going to quote from another letter from Chairman CUMMINGS. At that time, he was not the chairman. Chairman CUMMINGS wrote a letter to Speaker Boehner. He said, "A fundamental problem with conducting such a partisan investigation is that the results are not even-handed but instead are skewed, incomplete, and inaccurate."

Chairman CUMMINGS went on further. He said: "These deficiencies are magnified when we rush from a committee vote to a floor vote at breakneck speed, with little concern for the facts or the law."

What was he referring to? He was referring to a contempt vote on Eric Holder.

Here we are today, in the same venue. I am using the chairman's words, so I am going to make an appeal to the chairman, with the hope that my good friend opposite will heed these words because, in that same letter, he made a direct appeal to the Speaker of the House at that particular time. He said that he hoped that the chairman would accept that the Attorney General is willing to come in to meet per-

sonally and enter into direct negotiations in good faith to try to resolve the matter.

I am hoping that the gentleman opposite will withdraw his contempt resolution, not force a vote on this, but enter into a direct negotiation with the Attorney General of this great country and, hopefully, resolve this without taking this particular action.

Madam Speaker, I think it is critically important that we understand why we are here today. It is because we are using two standards, one standard for the minority party at one time and one standard for a majority party at another time. Let's use the same standard and make sure that we give the Attorney General the ability to negotiate directly with the gentleman opposite.

Madam Speaker, I certainly hope that cooler heads will prevail and that we get to the bottom of this. It is about allowing Congress to do its job but do it with respect.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Let me be clear. First of all, I thank the gentleman for quoting me so much. I am tremendously honored. I think the quotes that he used just reiterate what I said when I began about how seriously I take this matter. I wouldn't be here if I did not consider this to be very serious.

The other thing I would say is that we have made tremendous efforts, and the gentleman knows it because he has helped, working with me to try to get the documents and the things that we need. We have not been able to get them.

Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. GOMEZ).

Mr. GOMEZ. Madam Speaker, the Census can be used to either marginalize or to empower communities. This President decided on the path of marginalization.

They did that by coming up with an idea to silence the voices of immigrant communities throughout the country by adding a citizenship question that they deemed necessary to enforce the Voting Rights Act.

For 53 years, no Department of Justice had a problem enforcing the Voting Rights Act without Census block data on citizenship. All of a sudden, 2017 comes around, and you know what? We have a problem.

This is the excuse that they had. This is the reason they had to add this question to the Census. It is just completely false, even to the extent that we saw that they said that the Department of Justice was the one that asked for it.

Then, we find out later that they had to shop around to the Department of Homeland Security and other Departments in order to get somebody to try to ask the Census Bureau to add the question. Then, they went back to Jeff Sessions, who carried out their request.

We are investigating because everything that they have said, the Department of Commerce and Wilbur Ross, has been a complete lie.

If you don't believe me, the recent Supreme Court decision said, "Unlike a typical case in which an agency may have both stated and unstated reasons for a decision . . . the sole stated reason seems to have been contrived."

What does "contrived" mean? It means forced, artificial, manufactured, false. False, that is what it is. It is a contrived reason.

The American people have a right to know the real reasons, not the contrived reasons, not the ones that were manufactured, not the ones that were made up. That is why we are asking for these documents. That is why, when Congress cannot perform its obligations for oversight and as a check on the executive branch, then we must hold these individuals in contempt.

I ask my colleagues to do the same thing.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

THE SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will remind Members to use the proper designation for the presiding officer.

Mr. COMER. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from West Virginia (Mrs. MILLER).

Mrs. MILLER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to oppose the resolution before us.

Knowing who is in our country should not be controversial. Let me repeat that: Knowing who is in our country should not be controversial.

Although my colleagues across the aisle have blurred fact and fiction on this issue, the truth is, asking a citizenship question is standard operating procedure. It is currently asked on censuses throughout the world, in Australia, Canada, Germany, Ireland, Mexico, the U.K., and many others. The United Nations even recommends asking the citizenship question as a census best practice so countries can gather accurate information about their citizens.

It is not a new idea in the U.S. either. We first asked the citizenship question on the Census in 1820 and continued the practice for the next 130 years. It is still asked every year on the American Community Survey. The information collected is protected by Federal law, and our Justice Department uses the information to enforce the Voting Rights Act.

We still ask the citizenship question on I-9 employment eligibility forms.

Right here in the District of Columbia, a citizenship question is asked on driver's license applications. They do the same in Wisconsin.

In California, anyone who applies for a firearm license has to answer a citizenship question. In Ohio, concealed-carry applicants must verify if they are citizens or not.

These States believe it is fine to ask this question to obtain a firearm or

driver's license, but it is not okay to ask on the Census?

For anyone to claim that this is a hot-button issue, I just don't buy it. It seems a little bit more like hot air.

I am glad that President Trump is working across Federal agencies to ensure that we can get this crucial information.

I urge my colleagues to oppose this resolution so that we can get back to actual work.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. RASKIN), the chairman of our Subcommittee on Civil Rights and Civil Liberties.

Mr. RASKIN. Madam Speaker, like the chairman, I am charmed and tickled by the argument offered by our friend Mr. MEADOWS, who quotes our beloved chairman in resisting a rush to a contempt vote against Attorney General Holder.

Of course, two sides can play this game because the gentleman from North Carolina, of course, voted for and championed a contempt citation against the Attorney General in that case.

Why would he support a contempt finding as appropriate against one Attorney General who is acting in a recalcitrant way but not against another?

Madam Speaker, this is not a policy battle about the citizenship question, although my friends seem to think that it is. They have already lost that battle. They lost it in the Federal district courts three times. They lost it in the United States Supreme Court. They lost it with Chief Justice John Roberts. They lost it with the majority of the Supreme Court, a Supreme Court that was gerrymandered by Senator MCCONNELL for precisely occasions like this, so they could get the outcome they wanted, but even that Court rejected the contrived rationale that was offered by the Commerce Department.

It has been rejected by six former Census Directors. It was rejected by their own chief scientist in the Commerce Department and the Census Bureau. They lost the case under the Census Act. They lost the case under the Administrative Procedure Act.

Even President Trump acknowledges that they lost. At least, I think he acknowledges it today, although he does waver back and forth. And I hope nothing that we say today will prompt him to start over again.

They lost because their justification was contrived, according to Chief Justice Roberts. It was made up, completely pretextual, according to the Federal district courts, arbitrary, capricious, irrational, silly.

We get the citizenship information we need right now, and we have for the last 70 years, under what was called the long form. Now it is called the American Community Survey.

It has been rejected, but six former Census Bureau Directors said that if we did what they wanted to do, we would

get a far more inaccurate counting. We would get a far less accurate portrait of America.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. CUMMINGS. I yield the gentleman from Maryland an additional 1 minute.

Mr. RASKIN. If the minority wants to talk about the policy, we can, but we don't need to. They have already lost repeatedly on that, and they seem not to want to acknowledge that basic fact of this discussion.

This is about congressional power, Madam Speaker, and that is something that should unify every Member of this body and institution. We must stand together.

The Supreme Court and the Federal courts have said repeatedly that our factfinding power is inextricable, essential, and indispensable to our legislative power.

We have the power of the people. The sovereign political power of the people has been given to us to legislate. We can't legislate if we can't get the information that we need.

Sometimes we disagree, when they are in the majority, with the stuff that they want. I wasn't here then, but I would have disagreed maybe with some of the Fast and Furious stuff or the millions of documents that they got in the Benghazi investigation. It makes no difference. The majority has a right to get what it wants. We have a right to get what we want.

If you act with contempt for the Congress of the United States of America and the people of the United States, we will hold you in contempt of the Congress and United States of America. I support these contempt resolutions.

Mr. COMER. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from California (Mr. MCCARTHY), the great minority leader.

Mr. MCCARTHY. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Before I walked out of my office, I first looked at my calendar. I knew it was July, but I wondered if it was back in February. It is another day on the floor, and it is like "Groundhog Day" all over again.

Yesterday on this floor was a sad day. It is not a day about decorum. It is not a day about any of the issues that any of my constituents ask about.

□ 1445

They ask me when I go home, and, Madam Speaker, I envision that they ask most every Member in this body: Have you done anything about surprise billing? Have you made sure pre-existing conditions are protected like that bill GREG WALDEN has with so many cosponsors? Have you done anything to make sure the economy continues to grow?

No, I go home, and I tell them: They had another resolution to attack President Trump or the administration. So we may be in July, but it is Groundhog Day all over again.

Are we doing anything about a budget? Because, Madam Speaker, I listened to my colleagues when they say: Show me your budget; show me your values.

And I know winning a majority is important, and I knew, Madam Speaker, when we were in the majority putting a budget out is not easy, but it is the fundamental responsibility of a majority. So, yes, I came to this floor hoping we would have that debate. But, no, no debate about a budget. I can't tell my constituents that the majority did a budget this year.

When they ask me: Well, what about I read all these things about caps, that you have got to come into agreement to ever make something happen together.

No, I am coming back down to the floor this time, and we are talking about contempt.

They ask me, Madam Speaker: What contempt are you talking about?

I said: Well, it is regarding the Census.

Well, wasn't that all solved?

Well, yes, that has already been solved and already been decided, but, Madam Speaker, this majority thinks it is another political opportunity.

Then I listened and I heard this comment the other day. Madam Speaker, they said: I challenge you to find voters who can name a single thing House Democrats have done for their kitchen table this year, a single thing, challenging all voters to name one thing.

And I wondered: Did my press operation put that out? No, it didn't come from my office.

And then I wondered: Maybe it was another Republican inside this body. No, it wasn't. It wasn't one Member elected on the Republican side.

This quote actually came from a chief of staff of one of the most prominent Members on the other side of the aisle. I agree with that chief of staff. Name me one thing that we have done for the kitchen table.

Yesterday we did a resolution attacking the President, but we couldn't even get to that because, Madam Speaker, we couldn't even have decorum in this body.

We set a record that we have never seen before based upon a Speaker's action. The very first page in Thomas Jefferson's manual talks about decorum. But not only did this body try to change the rules after the fact, they don't think everybody is equal, Madam Speaker. Because if your words get taken down, you don't have a right to speak that day. But, no, we should change that. We should show them. The majority should get what they want.

Madam Speaker, I guess the majority doesn't want a budget. I guess the majority doesn't want to do anything about surprise billing. I guess the majority doesn't want to find, when it comes to our national defense to keep a 58-year history of bipartisanship, they broke that record, too. They made it partisan. And that is what we did last week.

Well, now we are right back at Groundhog Day, and we are going to have contempt votes today. But that is not all we are going to do today. We are going to go for the third time on impeachment—impeachment.

Madam Speaker, I watched a crisis on the border. I listened to the other side, who asked the President if he would pause a court action so we could deal with it, and I patiently waited those 2 weeks to have a hearing on it because, Madam Speaker, I am not in the majority. I can't control these committees. The majority party can.

They didn't have one hearing on it, but they have scheduled another one. They have got Mueller coming in. They even postponed it so they could have more time. I guess 22 months, \$40 million, 13 countries, I guess that is not enough.

Madam Speaker, I wonder if it is only one chief of staff challenging to find voters that can name a single thing House Democrats have done for the kitchen table this year, because when I am home, they don't come up to me and talk to me about party; they talk to me about what the House is doing. In their house, at their kitchen table, you know what they talk about there? They talk about their budget, because they do know their budget is their values, and they value having a budget. They will talk politics, but I don't think they get too petty.

It is interesting, at the kitchen table in the House of Representatives, there are rules for different people. I thought the rule of law mattered in this country, and I was kind of excited when I watched a Problem Solvers Caucus stand up together, Republicans and Democrats, before there was a vote for a Speaker in this Congress, and they requested a Consensus Calendar. And what does a Consensus Calendar mean? It means, if a Member from any side of the aisle works really hard, that they believe in the issue, that they get 290 cosponsors—and you have to understand what that means.

That doesn't mean walking up to a Congresswoman or Congressman and saying? Will you support my bill? Will you put your name on this? Do you believe this policy is so great you will put your name on this?

It takes 218 to pass a bill, but that is not the number they put out—290, to get above politics. If you made that happen, your bill would come to the floor.

Well, that was the rule. That is what we just put in.

Madam Speaker, do you know what happened? There was this Congressman from South Carolina. He didn't get 290. He is up to 370. He followed the exact rule that the majority just put in. And do you know what happened the day that he was going to be the very first bill on a Consensus Calendar? And what was the topic that really brought people together? Survivor benefits for those who gave their life to defend this Nation.

I was proud. I was proud that more than 370 people in this body did not play politics with that issue.

But do you know what happened when that day came? The rules are not equal. The rules are not equal. They are written, but they are changed. They were changed last Friday. They were changed so he could not have his vote. So Congressman JOE WILSON could not come to this floor.

Was it changed in a committee? No. They put it in a rule, self-executing.

Yesterday, when I watched decorum on this floor, any other Member of this body would not have the right to speak if their words were taken down, if it were me, you, anybody else. But, no, the rules were changed once again, and everybody on one side of the aisle, Madam Speaker, voted to change those rules; they hold people who seem to be different, seem to be special, seems to be that they can break the rules.

I guess the majority should get what they want, not what the people around the kitchen table of America want.

I wonder, Madam Speaker, I wonder, when I watch people campaign and they talk about what they want to achieve here, how many said they wanted to have a week of contempt, of impeach and resolution, all after one entity, the President of the United States?

I didn't have anybody on any side of the aisle ever ask me that question.

I hold this job with a great deal of respect. There are less than 12,000 people who ever had the privilege to serve here. I travel a long way each week to have that opportunity. I spend a lot of time thinking about it. I spend a lot of time listening and talking to my constituents.

Last night I went home and I did a telephone townhall. Thousands of people were on that call. Not one person asked me about the contempt of a Census form that is already going out. They talked about an earthquake. They wondered if they would have enough money. I said: I don't know; we don't have a budget.

The hospital, because this community is not very big, Ridgecrest, about 30,000, the earthquake did damage to the hospital. People can get some surprise billings, not anything their fault, but we are not talking about it on this floor. We are not solving that problem. But we are holding another person in the administration in contempt.

Is this going to go anywhere? Is this going to do anything for anybody's kitchen table?

I know some people on the other side of the aisle, Madam Speaker, might get mad at this chief of staff, but sometimes you get upset when people speak the truth. Sometimes it hurts.

What hurts more to the American public is more of this, if it is just going to be Groundhog Day every day that we serve here, because once we get done with this, we will debate impeachment for the third time. For the third time, we will debate impeachment.



When we go home this week and we talk about what we achieved, I don't know what I can say. That is not why we ran. We are better than this.

When I watched the decorum yesterday, I know we are better than that. But what is most disturbing to me is, when somebody did not abide by the rules of the House, the rules were changed to protect that person.

America is more than a country. America is an idea, an idea of self-governance, an idea of rule of law, of respect. If you care so much to change the rule that you would have a Consensus Calendar, abide by it, not just because somebody on the other side of the aisle worked harder. If you cared so much that you said a budget matters, that it sets the tone of who you are, produce one.

I understand there are winners and losers in elections, but, Madam Speaker, when I heard what a Member said of why they wanted to battle, they admitted to their colleagues they were using the Census investigation to gather information that, in his words, the courts could use in ongoing litigation.

So are we really here because your constituents asked about it? Are we here because you just want to play a little more politics? Because I would tell you this: You have got another thing coming up right after they can play politics on it one more time.

I would ask deep inside that, for once, let's put it aside. I know that election didn't turn out the way you wanted it, but at the end of the day, people expect us to find common ground. They expect us to give on both sides.

I will guarantee you no one ever went to the polls to say: I want you to go there to spend a whole week just attacking an administration. I imagine the majority of people who voted for you had the same question as that chief of staff. They wanted you to change the kitchen table. So let's start focusing on the issues that the American public is talking about around their kitchen tables.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are directed to address their remarks to the Chair.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I just want to make it clear, Madam Speaker, as I listened to the comments of our very distinguished minority leader, the fact is that what we are doing today is trying again to protect the integrity of this House and to protect the integrity of the Census and make sure that we get the records that we need to do our job, and I would hope that he would join us in making sure that happens. Because it is not just about us; it is about people who will come and fill these seats when we are dancing with the angels.

I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CONNOLLY), the very distinguished gentleman who leads our Government Operations Subcommittee excellently.

□ 1500

Mr. CONNOLLY. Madam Speaker, I thank my good friend, the distinguished chairman of the Oversight and Reform Committee, for yielding.

Madam Speaker, what we just heard might be described as hyperanimated chutzpa to bemoan accountability, to talk about a kitchen table that is, I think, imaginary.

I can tell you it doesn't characterize the kitchen tables in my district, and it probably doesn't characterize them all across America, which is maybe why the minority leader is called that instead of the "majority leader" in this Congress, because my Republican friends abrogated any accountability, any oversight of this administration in the 2 years they were in the majority and Mr. Trump was in the White House.

Americans are focused on economic and health issues, but that doesn't mean they don't care about what is happening to their country. They do.

The Census, the distinguished minority leader doesn't want you to focus on why the Census question was so important because it is in a context that is disturbing. It is in a context of voter suppression all across America: Get rid of early voting; restrict absentee voting; have stricter ID laws; make it harder for students and people of color to vote; purge voting rolls; have manufactured assertions about phony voting, as if that were the major problem in America.

Asking the citizenship question on the Census is part and parcel of that scheme to discourage minority voting in America, to frighten immigrant communities.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Madam Speaker, I yield an additional 30 seconds to the gentleman from Virginia.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Finally, Madam Speaker, maybe the worst of all, to bemoan the change yesterday to allow the Speaker to have her words considered and to allow her back on the floor. Why? Because we don't care about rules? No. Because we care about the impact on millions of Americans of harmful, racist words, and we felt that the duty to provide some comfort to those people that this House cared was more important than a juridical commitment to an ancient rule.

Mr. COMER. Madam Speaker, may I inquire how much time is remaining for each side.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Kentucky has 18½ minutes remaining. The gentleman from Maryland has 7 minutes remaining.

Mr. COMER. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. GROTHMAN).

Mr. GROTHMAN. Madam Speaker, prior to talking about the Census, I just want to make one brief point in response to some of the debate on the other side. I will give some of the speakers a little bit of a project here.

When we say the Pledge of Allegiance, we pledge allegiance to the flag and the Republic for which it stands, and perhaps some of the speakers on the other side can do a little research as to why we pledge allegiance to the Republic.

Today, again, we are debating because of a potential question on the Census. There are certain people who feel that it would be wrong to ask about citizenship on the Census.

I can tell you, as a lawmaker, I would certainly like to know how many people in this country are citizens. I would also like to know how many people are legal or illegal, both of which may affect decisions we make, formulas we make here.

I have a bill up—in the past; I already introduced it this year—that says that people who are noncitizens shouldn't be eligible for public benefits. If that bill were ever to become law, I can easily imagine distributions of money from this place being affected by the results on a Census like that.

Other countries do not have problems getting numbers if they ask about citizenship. Canada doesn't have a problem. Mexico doesn't have a problem. That is why the United Nations recommends we ask about citizenship.

It didn't result in bad Censuses until 1950. It doesn't result in bad results on the long form or bad results on the Community Survey. It doesn't result in problems in the State of Wisconsin, where we have a citizenship question that you have to answer prior to getting a driver's license.

So I wish we would put away this resolution today. I don't think it is right to spend more time debating the Census question.

I hope if this does not appear on this Census, that it is eventually put on the Census for 2030.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON).

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, I thank my good friend for courageously bringing this contempt resolution to the House today.

The authority and the very integrity of the House of Representatives has been challenged by this administration as never before in American history. If it were not for the Supreme Court, this administration's determination to deliberately prevent an accurate Census count would have succeeded.

Neither the President nor the Republican House has the support of a majority of the American people.

Using Secretary Ross, the administration tried to cheat its way to an undercount. Both Attorney General Barr and Secretary Ross have gone out of their way to refuse to provide needed documents or offered pretexts for not providing them pursuant to valid subpoenas.

So serious has been this obstruction that the House must seek criminal contempt, which can carry stiff penalties

and prison time, or simply surrender to the administration and invite continuing obstruction of our ability to perform our legislative and oversight functions.

To be sure, we fully recognize the difficulty of enforcement of criminal contempt against this administration by this administration, but the House would as soon surrender its authority as to take no action in the face of historic and willful defiance.

Mr. COMER. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. JORDAN), my friend, the distinguished ranking member of the Oversight Committee.

Mr. JORDAN. Madam Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. COMER) for yielding and for his great work on the committee.

Secretary Ross and Attorney General Barr are doing their jobs. So what is their reward? Democrats are going to hold them in contempt.

Both agencies, the Commerce Department and the Justice Department, have submitted 31,000 documents to the committee. They have made available all kinds of witnesses for depositions and transcribed interviews. In fact, we have got another one happening later this month.

And the Secretary himself sat for over 6 hours in a hearing answering every single question the committee had. He raised his hand, said he swore to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help him God, and answered all the questions. And what does he get for it? Democrats are going to hold him in contempt.

And why are they doing this? All because they don't want a simple question on the Census: Are you a citizen of the United States of America? That one sentence is driving it all.

Are you a citizen of the greatest nation in history is driving it all.

They are going to hold two people doing their jobs in contempt, all because we don't want to do what has been done for 200 years in this country. Since 1820, in one form or another, we have been asking the citizenship question on the Census. They are going to hold them in contempt.

All because they don't want to do what the U.N. says is the best practice, they are going to hold them in contempt.

All because they don't want to do what is just plain old common sense.

Listen to what Justice Alito said in his opinion a couple weeks ago: "No one disputes that it is important to know how many inhabitants of this country are citizens, and the most direct way to gather that information is to ask it in a Census."

Shazam. Imagine that. The best way to figure it out is to ask people in the country that you are surveying. Holy cow.

And here is the kicker; here is the final thing: You go anywhere—go anywhere—in this country, any State you want to go to, some small town, some

big city, walk up the street and ask someone on the street: Do you think when we do the Census to figure out how many people are in this country, it is appropriate to ask if you are a citizen?

Every person you talk to, every single one of them will say: Well, heck yeah. And, oh, by the way, aren't we doing that already.

You would have to say: Yes. We have been doing it for 200 years.

This resolution is ridiculous, and we should vote it down.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I want to just remind our distinguished ranking member, when he talks about quoting from the courts, we might want to look at what the Supreme Court said about the language that Secretary Ross used in our committee, because it is the same language used in the Supreme Court case.

What the Supreme Court said was that that was "contrived," and that is a quote, and incongruent with what the record reveals. In other words, he was saying it was not accurate. He may have come to testify before us, but it wasn't accurate.

Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands (Ms. PLASKETT), a member of our committee.

Ms. PLASKETT. Madam Speaker, I want to respond first to the distinguished gentleman from California (Mr. MCCARTHY), the minority leader, when he talked about us doing work. He asked us if work was being done here in Congress and said that we weren't responding to the daily needs of America.

Madam Speaker, I would remind him and remind the Speaker that we, in fact, have passed the Violence Against Women Act in the Judiciary Committee. The Energy and Commerce Committee passed the prescription drug bill that came to this floor. The Energy and Commerce Committee is working on Medicaid as we speak, right now.

So 150 bills have been passed by this body and are sitting on the desk of his friend, the Senate leader, MITCH MCCONNELL, who has decided that he is not interested in the work of the people of the United States.

But guess what. We can walk and chew gum at the same time, as I have said. This committee's responsibility is oversight, not anything else. And that is what we are doing is oversight of this administration.

I know that is difficult for that side of the aisle to want to think about, overseeing and reining in individuals who may be acting outside of the law.

Last year when Secretary Ross testified before Congress, he said he added the citizenship question solely to help the Department of Justice enforce the Voting Rights Act. We understand now that may not have been true.

And he has given us unresponsive—that is a legal term—unresponsive documents in those thousands of documents that he has turned over to us, not the documents that we have asked for.

It is our responsibility as the Oversight Committee to hold individuals responsible. I would ask that my colleagues across the aisle consider their responsibility on this committee if you want to sit on the committee, to do the work of the committee, and that is overseeing this administration. I think that we have done our job, and we are doing it well.

Madam Speaker, if he has not been responsive, we must hold him in contempt.

Mr. COMER. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Georgia (Mr. HICE).

Mr. HICE of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

The problem is that this is not the way we are supposed to go about the business of oversight. Contempt resolutions are generally something that happens deep inside and deep within an ongoing investigation when the committee has run up against brick walls and has exhausted all possibilities before then.

That is certainly not the case here. We are in the middle of an investigation into Federal agencies that are complying with our requests. This is absurd.

□ 1515

The Oversight and Reform Committee has held six transcribed interviews with witnesses. Another one is on the way within days. The Commerce Department and the Justice Department have produced over 31,000 pages, documents, combined—14,000 from Commerce and 17,000 from Justice. These are not things that happen when we are talking about Federal agencies that are stonewalling an investigation. That simply is not what is happening here.

This investigation has only been going on for a couple of short months. I would like to remind this Chamber that it wasn't too long ago that then-Ranking Member CUMMINGS was cautioned himself against pursuing a resolution of contempt in 2012, and that was after a year of stonewalling by the Obama administration. We are just a couple of months into this one.

If these Federal agencies were legitimately stonewalling an investigation, as the Obama administration did, I would certainly feel differently, and I am sure others here would, as well. But they are not stonewalling, and the facts simply don't support this contempt resolution.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues not to support this.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. COMER. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MEADOWS).



Mr. MEADOWS. Madam Speaker, I want to make a point that in this body now on 2 consecutive days, we have broken the rules of Congress to expedite things.

In this particular contempt resolution, I want to make sure that the RECORD reflects that we broke rule 2(f) on the committee about notice. It was brought to the attention of the chairman, and here we are again going and violating the rules of this House, not rules that the minority put in place, but rules that the majority put in place. We gave the chairman the chance to perfect this procedural problem, and yet they continued on to hold this contempt violation.

I can tell you, they may vote today to hold them in contempt, but it is a violation of Congress' very rules itself that should have been remedied. I ask that the gentleman opposite withdraws his resolution so that we can perfect this.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Madam Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. COMER. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from North Dakota (Mr. ARMSTRONG).

Mr. ARMSTRONG. Madam Speaker, upon assuming the chairmanship of the committee in January 2019, the chairman of the Oversight and Reform Committee formally initiated an inquiry into Secretary Ross' decision to reinstitute the citizenship question on the 2020 census.

Just recently, as of June 27, 2019, the Supreme Court has issued a ruling. The Supreme Court ruled that the administration may ask a citizenship question, but rejected the rationale presented by Secretary Ross for adding the question on the 2020 census.

The committee's fact-finding is still active and ongoing. The administration is cooperating with the investigation. The DOC and the DOJ have produced 31,000 responsive documents—14,000 from the DOC and 17,000 from the DOJ. The committee has held six transcribed interviews with witnesses, and a seventh interview is expected.

In short, Madam Speaker, the Judiciary Committee has already held Bill Barr in contempt for not violating Federal law. And now the Oversight and Reform Committee is about to hold Bill Barr in contempt for cooperating with the committee. This is wrong. This is not how we are supposed to do business in this Chamber.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Madam Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. COMER. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT).

Mr. GOHMERT. Madam Speaker, this is such a disturbing time for those of us who have spent our adult lives trying to see that justice is done, laws are followed, and yet here we again come after Attorney General Bob Barr and another Cabinet official, Ross.

The truth is, I didn't really know Bob Barr when he got nominated. I knew that he was friends with Bob Mueller. That caused me concern. But it appears we have an attorney general who is concerned about justice and he is concerned about stopping injustices. And yet, we still have people who are wanting to cause as much trouble for the President and stop his administration from getting as much accomplished for the American people as possible.

It has got to stop at some point. It is like a game, we come here and we are going to hold him in contempt again. This is a double secret probation against Bob Barr. How many double, triple, quadruple secret probations are we going to do? This isn't going to amount to anything.

If you take this to any Federal judge to try to enforce it, he or she will look at the procedure and go: This is ridiculous. You are not going to have me hold the attorney general in contempt for trying to follow the law, and you are wanting to interrupt his efforts to follow the law. That is not happening.

So this is all about a show, when there is true injustice going on. Thank God that we have a President who wanted to see justice done. He knew he didn't collude. And now we have an attorney general who is trying to do the same thing.

Madam Speaker, let's say no to this contempt. Let's get back to doing the job that the American people want us to do.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Madam Speaker, I continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. COMER. Madam Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Madam Speaker, I think that just about everyone who spoke on our side of the aisle made the factual points that this is not necessary. This resolution is an ongoing attempt by the majority party to try to do anything they can to disrupt the Presidency of our President of the United States.

Every country, just about, in the world asks the citizenship question. Mexico and Canada ask the citizenship question. In fact, the United Nations recommends that countries ask the citizenship question.

I don't for the life of me know why we would resort to this type of action in this body, especially after what happened yesterday. I wonder, Madam Speaker, is this an attempt to try to move the direction of the American people from their frustration at the lack of achievement by the majority party from a legislative standpoint to try to somehow enrage their anger at the President?

This is unnecessary. This is more political theater, and I urge the Members of this fine body to oppose this resolution.

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

Mr. CUMMINGS. Madam Speaker, may I inquire as to how much time is left?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Maryland has 2 minutes remaining.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Madam Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Madam Speaker, some of my colleagues have argued that holding Secretary Ross and Attorney General Barr in contempt of Congress is premature. That is simply not true. If anything, it is long overdue.

The Department of Commerce and the Department of Justice have failed to comply with congressional requests for more than a year. The Oversight and Reform Committee Democrats first asked for documents from the Department of Commerce in April of 2018 and from the Department of Justice May of 2018. Those requests were ignored.

When I became chairman, I renewed those requests. In response, the administration produced thousands of pages. But most of the documents were either heavily redacted, already public, or nonresponsive to the committee's request. So the committee narrowed its request and issued bipartisan subpoenas to compel production of that narrow group of documents. That was in April, more than 3 months ago.

I even asked Secretary Ross to meet with me personally. He refused.

And, last month, the committee passed the bipartisan resolution before us to hold Secretary Ross and Attorney General Barr in contempt of Congress. Still neither department has provided the documents that we have asked for.

So I have come to the floor to urge our Members to vote in favor of this. I do not, again, bring this lightly. This is not theater. This is about doing our job. This is about protecting the integrity of not only our census, but of our Congress.

Madam Speaker, I urge all Members to vote for this resolution, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time for debate has expired.

Pursuant to the rule, the previous question is ordered on the resolution.

The question is on adoption of the resolution.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. COMER. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

#### ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. PINGREE). Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or votes objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

The House will resume proceedings on postponed questions at a later time.