

And now we're being asked to radically restructure our economy based largely on the research of these scientists.

Mr. Speaker, Congress needs to hold hearings into this matter. We need to investigate these very troubling revelations. If we are to make policy that will so profoundly impact our Nation, that policy must be made on facts, not on articles of faith or manipulated data.

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

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

THE RULE OF LAW

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

Mr. CARTER. Mr. Speaker, again tonight I rise here to talk about the rule of law and the fact that there are those in our society who seem to want to circumvent the rule of law and think because of their position either in Congress or in the government that the law shouldn't pertain to them the way it pertains to other Americans, that they should be treated specially. And even though our President stated that he didn't think that that's what the American people—that he was going to fight to make sure there was no special treatment for people other than everybody get treated equally, we've still got this issue going on. And I've been talking about this, and I've been talking about Chairman RANGEL and his issues with the tax folks and about how the rule of law didn't seem to apply to him, and tonight I am going to talk about Secretary Geithner, the Secretary of the Treasury.

Before I start talking about this, I was thinking, as I was sitting here listening to people talk—and everybody was very informative—that there may be people who really don't understand what I say when I talk about the rule of law.

The rule of law is a very basic concept. It is a prevailing concept that holds our Republic together here in the United States. But in truth and fact, the whole world seeks a system where the rule of law prevails, because it is that system which gives recourse to the ordinary person. So let me just point out some of the things that we're talking about here tonight that the rule of law is part of.

When I say "recourse," the average American citizen, if someone is breaking into their house, if they hear a burglar prying open the back door of their home, they call 911 and ask them to send out a police officer or a sheriff's deputy or someone to protect their

home. And they know that we have procedures whereby that officer has the authority to come in and make an arrest of that person, to protect the homestead of the person that is being violated. They know that there's someone they can call who will help and that there are rules that the society they live in has established so that they get treated fairly in being protected by the law. And the person who is accused of breaking the law is also treated fairly, because they know that we have rules that we have all agreed upon. These are the rules that our society will follow. That is the rule of law.

When we talk about Afghanistan—which is an issue that probably, as I am speaking, the President is speaking on some other channel about this—the issue, when you're talking about counterinsurgency cut down to its finest point, is establishing the rule of law in a war zone, if you will. We did it in Iraq. And basically we did it with a civil principle which we've used in New York City to lower the crime rate. We used it in Philadelphia to lower the crime rate. Big cities have used it from time to time everywhere, and that is community policing. That is the idea that there is somebody in your neighborhood you can turn to and say, "Help me. I need your help."

And really, counterinsurgency is using the military to train up the local folks in their police force and their army so that their citizens know that they can be protected by their police force and their army and their court system and their government from those who would do them harm. So they don't have to look to the strongest guy in the neighborhood—which may be the Taliban—to protect their interests; they can look to the government and the society that's been established by that government.

And counterinsurgency is basically putting American forces and indigenous forces in place in neighborhoods all over Afghanistan so that the Afghan citizens realize there's someone there permanently to make sure that they are treated right and treated fairly. And so it's the beginning of the establishment of the rule of law.

We in the United States have been blessed for our entire history with a rule of law. And, in fact, we don't salute a king. We don't salute a dictator. We don't salute an individual that sovereignty comes from that individual. We salute a document.

When those of us who are fortunate enough to be elected to Congress and are able to serve our constituents back home here in Congress and we have the opportunity to be here in Congress, we stand up and we take an oath. And that oath is to the Constitution of the United States, that we will preserve, protect, and defend that Constitution from all enemies, foreign and domestic, because the Constitution is that set, beginning set of rules of law that we established this Republic under. So we are a very blessed Nation. We started with the rules of law.

Today, in many nations around this world, there are still folks who don't have some rules that they can feel comfortable will be there to protect their society. And a lot of what happens when you create a counterinsurgency force like we're doing in Afghanistan, we're establishing that security for those people who live in that country. So that is a little bit off subject, but it gets you to the idea of how important it is that a people, whoever the people are, wherever they exist on this Earth, have some set of rules they can feel they will be treated just like their neighbor next door or the guy clear across the country. They're going to be treated fairly, they're going to be treated well, and they're going to have a source that they can get recourse for something that happens to them. It is a very simple concept, but it is the foundation concept of a civil society, of a society that functions properly.

And one of the things that offends the rule of law and that has offended Americans at every stage of our history is when there are those who think, The law doesn't apply to me. It applies to you, but it doesn't apply to me. I am more important than you. I am a big shot or I am a powerful person or I am a rich person, so the law doesn't apply to me. It applies to you.

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And there are always going to be those misdirected people in any society who feel that way. But it is our duty when we see people who are taking that position or where a group of people is taking that position on behalf of an individual, that they are above the law, they are above being treated the same as you might be treated or that I might be treated, they are special, they should have special treatment.

Let me show you what the President said about that. President Barack Obama on February 3, 2008 said, "I campaign on changing Washington and bottom-up politics. I don't want to send a message to the American people that there are two sets of standards: one for powerful people and one for ordinary folks who are working every day and paying their taxes."

That is what the President of the United States said about the rule of law as it pertains to what he wanted in his Presidency.

There are lots of laws in the United States that pertain to all of us. Most of us don't feel pressure about most laws. The vast majority of Americans citizens are very law abiding. They do what they are supposed to do. They may speed once in a while, and occasionally they get caught and they expect to be treated like everyone else. And they may do some other minor things that they shouldn't do. But the truth is the American people, we are very law-abiding people.

But there is one area that we are all affected by every day, and I would argue that many of us in this country fear, and that is the area of the Internal Revenue and our taxes. Quite