

Obama's IRS Scandal Is Heating Up

by George Canning

May 27—Informed sources in the Washington, D.C. intelligence community have told *EIR* that there is a renewed push, and considerable potential as an impeachment issue, behind the investigation of the Obama Administration for the Internal Revenue Service's subjecting conservative groups seeking tax exemption to special and invasive attention. President Richard Nixon's attempts to use the IRS for political targeting comprised a significant element of the Articles of Impeachment voted up against him by the House Judiciary Committee in 1974.

On May 7, the House of Representatives passed two resolutions on the issue of the IRS. First, was a resolution recommending that the House find Lois Lerner, the former IRS Director of Exempt Organizations, in contempt of Congress for refusal to comply with the House Oversight Committee's subpoena for testimony. Lerner attended the Committee hearing, and after giving a statement proclaiming her innocence of any wrongdoing, asserted her Fifth Amendment privilege against self-incrimination to all the Committee's questions. Months later, it was revealed that Lerner had, *prior* to the Committee hearing, given a full interview on the matter to Justice Department investigators, without a grant of immunity. The contempt resolution was voted up on a near party-line vote of 231-187.

The second resolution was for the House to request Attorney General Eric Holder to appoint a special counsel to investigate the allegations about the IRS. That passed 250-168, this time with the support of 26 Democrats.

House Speaker John Boehner, the next day, certified to the U.S. Attorney for the District of Columbia Lerner's refusal to provide testimony before the Oversight and Government Reform Committee, for action on the contempt citation. This is unlikely to move ahead, just as the contempt citation against AG Holder himself went nowhere.

But the resolution for the Special Counsel has the potential to become a fighting issue.

In a May 16 statement posted on his website, and published in various newspapers in his district, entitled "Seeking an Independent IRS Investigation," House Judiciary Committee Chairman Bob Goodlatte (R-Va.) denounced the Administration's obstruction of the investigation (including Holder's having named "a loyal donor of President Obama's campaign to spearhead the investigation" of the scandal). Goodlatte explained, "Under current law, the Attorney General is required to appoint a Special Counsel when he or she determines that the criminal investigation of a person or matter is warranted. Specifically, the Attorney General is required to appoint a Special Counsel when the investigation or prosecution would present a conflict of interest for the [Justice] Department, and when under the circumstances it would be in the public interest to appoint an outside Special Counsel to assume responsibility for the matter. In this case, a Special Counsel is needed so that Americans can be confident of the process and the conclusions reached by the investigators."

Goodlatte was referring to the fact that Holder has appointed Barbara Bosserman, a Justice Department trial attorney who donated at least \$6,750 to Obama's campaigns and the Democratic National Committee, to lead the DOJ/FBI investigation of the IRS.

New Revelations

On May 14, Judicial Watch announced it had received an FOIA release of Internal Revenue Service documents regarding the IRS's handling of Tea Party exemption applications. Judicial Watch and others who have reviewed the documents assert that they demonstrate two important things. As summarized by Main Street.com, they show "that the IRS Tea Party scrutiny was directed out of Washington, D.C. Previously, IRS officials testified this inappropriate and possibly illegal inspection of Tea Party groups was done by a rogue office based in Cincinnati. The documents are also said to show that Senator Carl Levin (D-Mich.), and others in Congress, were pressuring the IRS about alleged political activities of conservative-leaning tax-exempt organizations."

Meanwhile, the *Wall Street Journal* and MSNBC reported on May 20, that House Oversight Committee Chairman Darrell Issa has issued subpoenas to the Justice Department for documents about the IRS targeting investigation. Issa said he'd previously simply requested the documents, but since the DOJ had not provided them, he was now doing so with subpoenas.