

So just at the time when we need more productivity, more charity, more investment for jobs, and more energy, the Obama administration proposes a massive tax increase that they have the gall to tell us will stimulate the economy. These taxes will hammer every American, either directly or indirectly. At exactly the time when we should be reducing burdens on the economy, this administration wants to increase them.

If the President wants to raise taxes because the government is out of money, what makes him think that the American people happen to be flush with cash? This is exactly the mistake that Herbert Hoover made in responding to the recession of 1929. He dramatically raised income taxes, import taxes, and spending, and he turned the recession of 1929 into the depression of the 1930s.

Adam Smith, the father of modern economics, pointed out that a government that raises taxes in response to a recession makes exactly the same mistake as a shopkeeper who raises prices in response to a sales slump. California has again ignored that warning. It is set to impose the biggest State tax increase in history on April 1. That is going to be \$13 billion from California families, proportionately a little bit less than the President's taxes, but it is in the same ballpark. I suspect that by the time the Obama budget, with all of its tax increases, comes up for a vote, California will have become a poster child for what not to do. Maybe, by then, the administration and the majority in Congress will figure out that raising taxes in a recession is not exactly the smartest thing that we could be doing.

SO MUCH MONEY TO GIVE AWAY AND SO LITTLE TIME

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

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, these are interesting times we are living in. It just seems like the motto we hear in Congress is, so much money to give away and so little time. Wow.

How can we give away more and more money? Well, to give it away, we have got to tax, we have got to borrow, and we have got to print more money. All of these are not good things to be doing. And how ironic this week to see an article in national papers that, as Mr. Geithner is encouraging other countries to follow our lead and spend and spend and tax and spend and borrow and spend, Europe, of all places, is saying, we are not sure that this idea of spending and spending more and more money is such a good idea. Whoever would have thought that Europe would be the ones to give us a lecture on overspending not being the way to go? But these are the people that have

been overspending. They know, it doesn't work. Yet, here we are, trying it ourselves.

Now, we keep hearing about the deficit. When I was here as a freshman in 2005 and 2006, I was upset about the overspending. I was upset about the deficit going up. And it wasn't the tax cuts that created the problem. The tax cuts created the greatest revenue coming into the U.S. Treasury in American history, more money than ever coming into the Treasury. That wasn't the problem. But as it came in faster and faster, we were spending even faster than that, and there were some of us who were upset about it. The American people were upset about it. So as our friends across the aisle kept pointing out, you have got to cut out this deficit spending, the voters heard them. They said, they are right. The Democrats are the ones saying don't be spending and running up the deficit on our children and grandchildren. The voters were right. The Democrats were right to say that, because we were overspending. Many of us in the Republican party were saying the same thing. But that was not what carried the day. There was overspending.

As a result, we got this comment after the election in November of 2006 from our now Speaker: "The American people voted to restore integrity and honesty in Washington, D.C., and the Democrats intend to lead the most honest, most open, and most ethical Congress in the history."

In fact, we even voted a few weeks ago in here that we would not even vote or take up this horrible spending bill, spendulus, porkulus, whatever you want to call it, until we had at least had 48 hours to review it. We voted on that. The vast majority, it seems like it may have been a super majority, voted that we would not vote on that bill until we had seen it for at least 48 hours. Then it gets on the web at 11:00 or 12:00 at night. I got my copy to review the next morning about 9:00, and we are debating at 10:00. And we are told, people are losing their jobs every minute you are delaying passing this bill. We have got to pass it. You don't have time to read it, you have just got to trust all the people, the staffers and everybody that put this together. We don't know what is air-dropped in there; we don't know what all is part of it, because we don't have time to read it, either. Nobody on either side of the aisle read it, but we had to pass it.

It doesn't exactly match up with the transparency and the openness that was promised. It doesn't match up with the President of the United States, President Obama, promising there would be no bill that would be taken up and voted on unless we had 5 full days before he signed it to have comments, 5 full days. Well, we were told we had to pass it, we had no choice, people are losing their jobs. And the thing is, people were hearing things that were supposed to be in the bill, and yet the very week that this bill was being brought

to the floor to vote on, there were tens of thousands of jobs every day being lost because businesses were giving up hope. They were trying to hang in there, hang on to their good employees. So many of those jobs lost were good union jobs. They were trying to hang in there. But then, from what they were hearing it didn't sound like this so-called stimulus or spendulus bill was going to allow them to come out from under the trouble they were in, so they gave up and kept laying jobs aside. People, families were hurt. So we were told, "It has got to be fast. Don't read it, just vote on it." So it was passed, and 4 days later it gets signed into law.

□ 1515

Now, how is that an example of being open, honest and transparent? As a young attorney, I always advised people, if people want you to sign off on something but say, "you don't have time to read it, just sign it," then it is even more important to read before you sign off on it, before you put your name on it. And here we had the Congress of the United States put their names on a document that they were not allowed to read all because it had to be passed immediately. And then 4 days later, once we get the press and all of that going on, have the photo op there in Colorado, then the bill gets signed. And I'll bet the folks there, I'll bet the President had not read the bill. Of course he hadn't. He hadn't had time.

I am joined by my dear friend from Indiana, Mr. DAN BURTON. I would love to yield time to him such as he would use and do so at this time.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Thank you very much. I appreciate it. And I'm happy to stick around here tonight with you to go into some of the things that I think ought to be explained to our colleagues and to the American people if they happen to be paying attention here tonight to what we are doing.

The people really do have a right to know where we are spending this money. And we had people from the Treasury Department appear before the Senate Banking Committee last week. And Senator SHELBY, as I recall, asked where some of the money was being spent. They actually would not even tell him where the money was going. And we are talking about \$700 billion that was passed by the House and the Senate. There was supposed to be transparency so that we knew where the money was going.

Now we did find out, and I mentioned this in a previous Special Order tonight, we did find out that some of the money that was given to the financial institutions to get the economy moving again was used to help other countries. Now this is \$700 billion that was supposed to be used to help the American people, help the American economy and help the financial institutions to be able to survive. And yet \$8 billion, \$8,000 million, was loaned by

Citigroup to Dubai, \$1,000 million was loaned by JPMorgan Treasury Services to India, \$7,000 million was loaned by the Bank of America to the China Construction Bank Corporation, and a whole lot more. There were 297 other entities that got the money, and they would not tell us where the money went.

Now we are the representatives of the people. The Senators are the representatives of the people. And we have a right to know where the money is going when we vote to spend it. That is one of the reasons why I voted against almost every one of these spending bills this year because we haven't been able to understand where the money is going to be spent or why it is being spent, and there hasn't been any real plan. We have just thrown money at it, like that is going to solve the problem.

If we are going to spend taxpayers' dollars, in my opinion, they have the right to know where the money is going, number one. And number two, we need to see the plan, as representatives of the people, so that we know where the money is going to be spent, how it is going to be spent and whether or not it is going to be spent wisely. And so far, every single one of the spending bills that I have looked at—and I think my colleagues looked at it as well—not one of them really gives us a plan on how to work our way out of this morass that we are in.

I went into some of the things that I have mentioned in the past. And we are looking at trillions and trillions of dollars that we have been spending. And when I talk to the American people out in my district, in the Fifth District of Indiana, about all this spending, and you talk to them about \$1,000, they understand, \$1 million they understand, \$1 billion they start to glaze over. And when you get to \$1 trillion, it just does not register because it is so much. That is a thousand thousand million dollars, \$1 trillion. And we are spending money in the trillions. The budget that is coming up here after we have already spent trillions of dollars is going to be almost \$4 trillion in addition to that. And today we found out that the Speaker of the House has indicated we might have another stimulus bill, which means we will probably add another \$1 trillion on top of that.

Now I brought a chart with me tonight, Mr. GOHMERT. I can't talk to the American people, because we are in the well. But if I were talking to them, I would like for them to take a look at this chart just like my colleagues do. And it shows what happens when you inflate the money supply. And when I talk about "inflating the money supply," I'm talking about when we spend all these trillions of dollars that we don't have. We have to either borrow it from countries like China or we have to borrow it from countries like Japan. And we owe Japan over \$600 billion. We owe China over \$700 billion. And it will soon be over \$1 trillion. And when we borrow that money, it is supposed to

help out the problem. But we have to pay them interest on that money. But the money that we cannot borrow, we have to print. And I hope my colleagues are listening to this. We have to print the money. And so far, we have increased the money supply by almost 300 percent. That means if we were buying something 1 week ago or 1 month ago, such as a car, in the future, when this money starts getting into circulation, because we have increased the money supply 300 percent, we are going to have a heck of a rate of inflation. That means the cost of everything is going to go up and up and up. That means college educations, cars, refrigerators, homes, the price of everything will go up.

If my colleagues doubt this, I hope they take a look at this chart. It shows the money supply and how it has changed over the years. And you go all the way to 1990 and you start to see a rise. And then you see in 2000 it goes up more rapidly. And then you go to where we are today, and you see the money supply is going straight up. I mean it is going up straight. It is not going at an angle anymore. It is going straight up. And that means we are continuing to spend more than we are taking in. And we are printing that money.

We had this problem back in the 1970s. Mr. GOHMERT remembers. I think you're old enough to remember that. Back in the 1970s, we had this problem when President Carter was in office. And we ended up with double-digit inflation. We had 14 percent inflation and 12 percent unemployment. And they ended up raising the interest rate to slow the inflationary trend at 21 percent. And that put us into a deep, deep recession.

What we are doing today is going to bring those days back in spades. It is going to be worse because we are increasing the money supply and spending much more rapidly than they did in the 1970s. And that was a tragic experience. Ronald Reagan came in and cut taxes across the board. And we ended up working our way out of the economy, and we had a long period of time of economic growth. But we are digging such a hole right now with this spending that it is going to be much, much more difficult to dig ourselves out of that than it was back in the 1980s when Reagan was President. So I really appreciate Mr. GOHMERT taking this special hour. He is one of the real stalwarts as far as fiscal responsibility is concerned.

Unless we get our colleagues on both sides of the aisle to start paying attention to what we are doing and not just thinking, "oh, my gosh, we don't have to worry about the spending, it will take care of itself," then we are going to continue to dig ourselves into this hole.

And I just wish the American people, Mr. Speaker, would call every one of their congressional representatives and their Senators and say, hey, let's start

being fiscally responsible. Let's cut spending. We want to know where the money is going, and we don't want to waste it. And we certainly don't want to have hyperinflation.

This will be passed on to our kids and our grandkids in our posterity. They are going to pay more in taxes. They are going to be paying more in inflation. And their quality of life is going to go down if we don't change this stuff pretty dog-gone quickly.

With that, I want to thank the gentleman for yielding. I appreciate being with you tonight.

Mr. GOHMERT. Thank you. I'm so grateful to my friend from Indiana. I always learn something every time I hear him speak. And I appreciate him any time he wants to speak while I've got time, he is welcome here. It is interesting though. It just seems like we do not learn the lessons either of history from other countries or of our own history. We keep trying the same things over and over again.

For one thing, though, we had this massive bailout back in September. And there were a few dozen, I think maybe 60 Republicans that joined with the vast majority of the Democrats and passed that bailout bill. I thought it was a huge mistake. I knew it was a huge mistake. I begged my colleagues across the aisle, this side, please don't do this. And yet, we did. Seven hundred billion dollars. It was an outrageous amount. It may be that only \$250 billion of that—only—only \$250 billion of that was spent before the new administration came in. And they immediately asked for the other \$350 billion, another \$800 billion in a stimulus, spendulus, porkulus whatever you want to call it bill, and then followed that up with over \$400 billion on top of that. We only get \$1.21 trillion in from income tax, from individuals for the entire year of 2008. And yet, just in a matter of weeks, \$1.6 trillion, \$1.7 trillion, an incredible amount of money.

I have said this before, people I think are getting the idea, you want to increase the economy and help the economy? Let every taxpayer know they can keep their own tax dollars. Now originally my bill proposed 2 months. But for the kind of money we have been spending, we would be better off to tell everybody you have the whole 2008 tax year off with no taxes. If you send it in, you're getting it back. If you haven't paid it, then don't. We would have been better off. Cars would be bought. Homes would be bought. Homes would be built. Businesses would be built. American Dreams would be made all over.

It is interesting to hear a study this morning that we went from an American Dream of having our children have it better than we have to now the current American Dream, the majority American Dream is to own their own business, to have a small business. Then also know that American businesses, small businesses, that is, have 70 percent of the employees in the

country. You want to help the country? Help small business. And yet all we are hearing is we are going to hammer the people that may make more than \$250,000, the very people who I've heard from who have said, "I would like to hire at least one or two employees, but if I'm about to get hammered with a tax, I'm going to have to pay that in taxes. I can't afford to hire anybody. So I'm waiting back here to see if I'm going to get hammered with more taxes. And if not, then I will hire more people. And if I am, then I'm not hiring anybody. I will just kind of hang on to what I've got."

One of the things we learned back in history classes was that the power to tax is the power to destroy. That is so clear. Over and over, no matter what country you're in, the government has the power to tax, unless it is a socialist country, in which case all money comes into the government, and they pay everybody, so they just own everything, which kind of seems to be the way we are going right now, but if you tax something, you get less of it. If you want more of an activity, then not only don't tax it, but give it an incentive to have more of that.

There is no better example than in the 1960s when the people in this body, in the House of Representatives, had a big heart, a tender heart, and wanted to help single women who they knew, there weren't that many, but there were some who were having to deal with deadbeat dads, who were not helping raise the children and were not helping with funding. They said, let's help those women. Let's give them a check from the Federal Government for every child they can have out of wedlock. They meant well. But now, 40 years later, we have gotten what we paid for. We have gotten a Nation in which nobody would ever have dreamed at this time that so many of our children would be born out of wedlock. Some of the greatest contributors to this country have come from single-parent homes. And I just have great praise for the single parents who try to raise kids and have done so effectively. It is a tough, tough job. But studies indicate, generally speaking, kids end up better off if they come from a two-parent home, as long as there is not abuse, things like that, we know that. As a former judge, I sure do.

Well, then if you look at some of the things we have taxed, we still have a marriage penalty. If you're married in America, and you are both working, then you're going to pay a higher tax than you would if you were living together in what used to be called in the Bible Belt, "living together in sin." So what does the government do? The Federal Government, this body, because this is the only body that can do it, this body taxes marriage. Well, you get less marriage when you tax marriage.

Now, we have heard over the last few decades all kinds of solutions, we are going to try to fix the marriage pen-

alty, we are going to lower the tax here, fix this, do that and have less of a penalty, oh, we think we have fixed it. I have gotten sick of hearing those messages. And I intend to have a bill filed in the next couple of weeks as soon as we get it back from legislative counsel. It is very simple. It just says, if you're married, then you have got a choice. You can file married jointly or you can file as a single individual, whichever is better for you. Boom. No marriage penalty. That's the end of it.

Now that is how you deal with a marriage penalty. You give people who are doing a good thing, being married, you don't penalize them, you help them.

□ 1530

And then we hear in the President's budget, his plan, we are going to disallow charitable contributions beyond a certain extent. It will be interesting to see how it ends up shaking out. But we are going to disallow tax advantages beyond that and allow that income to be taxed.

Guess what? If you are going to start taxing that money instead of allowing the charitable deduction for the full amount, you are going to get less charitable deductions. I have said all along that this President is a smart man. I think he is. I wish that he would leave the teleprompters alone because the things that we need and what we need to fix America will not be found in a teleprompter. I wish he would look us straight in the eye and talk to us.

In any event, if you are really, really smart and you are pushing to provide less tax incentive for charitable deductions, charitable contributions, you are going to get less of them. If you are really smart, you know that. You know you will get less. So what can you be meaning? What can your thoughts be?

Well, the inevitable conclusion is that you intend to have fewer charitable organizations because you intend to do all of the charitable giving by the government. That is the only conclusion that can logically be drawn. You think you're better at giving charitable donations to the right places than the American public could be, and that the government will do better with those donations, we call them taxes when they are to the government, than those charitable organizations will be.

As I have traveled around the world as a Member of Congress, I haven't done it but a few times, but what I see, the best work for individuals suffering in other countries doesn't come from the U.N. It doesn't come from the United States dollars. When the United States gives, it has to go through another country or through the U.N., and all these people get their cut of the action. And sometimes we prop up corrupt governments by trying to help their people. No, the best work gets done by charitable organizations that go straight in and help the people directly. That's where the greatest good gets done.

Now with this President's new budget, he is proposing to cut that back so the government will be the end all charitable donor. That is so offensive. That is so offensive.

I am delighted to be joined by one of the greatest Members of Congress that we have here. We were delighted when she joined our ranks a couple of years ago because this is someone who comes from the heart, incredibly sincere, and it is hard to beat somebody who is both sincere and very, very intelligent. I would yield to my friend, the gentlewoman from Minnesota (Mrs. BACHMANN).

Mrs. BACHMANN. I want to thank the gentleman from Texas, LOUIE GOHMERT, and I want to thank you for the great idea that you proffered to this body earlier on, which is if we want that true stimulus, Mr. President, I recall you saying, Mr. GOHMERT, then why don't we let the American people keep that stimulus dollar directly, pull the United States Government out as the middleman and let's prohibit the government from skimming off its portion to go into a bureaucratic cliff that no one knows where the money goes, let's let the American people keep their money. That was the LOUIE GOHMERT plan.

People all across America have said to me, Do you know that LOUIE GOHMERT? Have you heard of his plan?

And I tell them, You bet I know him. I can't imagine a more stimulative impact.

As a matter of fact, I was with two ladies yesterday, women who don't necessarily think about politics day and night, and I told them about the LOUIE GOHMERT stimulus plan. They said hey, I would love that. I would love to have of that money because, as the gentleman from Texas knows, in the last 50-52 days under the current Obama administration, the average American family has just had placed on their shoulders an incredible debt load of over \$18,500 per family. That is just in the last 52 days. I don't know about you, my family cannot afford these current spending policies.

What we have seen in the last 52 days, out of a Democrat-controlled House, a Democrat-controlled Senate and a Democrat-controlled White House, is spending at historic proportions: \$18,500 per American family. That's on top of the debt load that we already have.

What has been the response of the American people? In the month of January, the American people were spooked about what is happening in this economy. What did the American people do? Their personal savings rate has elevated to 5 percent. You know what that savings rate was before, Mr. Speaker, that savings rate was minus 1 percent. The American people are so afraid of these historic levels of spending, they are holding on to every dollar they have, and the personal savings rate has increased to 5 percent. I think that it is great that the American people are going down a savings route. It

shows that inherently the American people are prudent with their own money.

But what has been the Obama plan? The Obama plan has been to raise spending to such historic levels that it will force the United States Government to continue to borrow more money from China, and the Chinese right now are a little skittish about buying more American debt. So skittish are they that our Secretary of State, Hillary Rodham Clinton, had to go to China about 2 weeks ago and practically beg the Chinese to continue buying American debt. Our Secretary of State wouldn't be in that embarrassing position if the Obama administration wouldn't be so bent on spending this level of money.

Well, if we don't have to spend this kind of money, then we don't have to borrow from China. We don't have to have punishing high tax increases, and that is what is amazing to me in the President's budget. He was just here in the Chamber about 2 weeks ago with his State of the Union address, and he said that he plans to tax the American people under the new cap-and-tax plan.

Under this tax plan, which is hard to believe, I know, in the midst of a recession, adding to the burden of the American people \$646 billion in new energy taxes. Well, we all remember how much fun it was last July to pay over \$4 a gallon for gas, that is the road we are heading down again. In fact, some estimates say that the average American family will see an increase in their yearly energy bill of over \$1,400 a year in their utility bill because of this energy tax. Why do we have to have this tax? Because spending is out of control. As a matter of fact, it won't just stop with the utility bill, it is also the gas bill when you go to your local gas station and fill up. The energy tax will impact the price of food. It will impact the price of goods at Wal-Mart. If you go to a local clothing outlet like Target, it will increase the cost of things there. Everything we touch will be impacted by the energy tax. We wouldn't need to do this if we didn't have these historic levels of spending.

One thing that was alluded to by our colleagues, Mr. BURTON and Mr. GOHMERT, is the fact that what we will see happen, other than punishing tax increases and going to other countries to borrow money, we will have to resort to inflation. What's that? Inflation occurs because the Federal Reserve is printing money 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and putting that money into the money supply. If we have \$100 in the money supply and the Federal Reserve puts another \$100 into the money supply, what does that do to the \$100 we have now? It means that our \$100 is actually worth half of what it was before.

The cruelest tax of all is the tax of inflation, especially for senior citizens and especially for people who have spent their entire life trying to create wealth, and that is the genius of the

United States of America, freedom. Freedom is the genius of our country. And with freedom, we have been able to amass private wealth creation.

Now I'm not just talking about billionaires, I am talking about my grandparents who lived through the Depression. My grandfather made a dollar a day working as a meat cutter, \$7 a week. He had seven children that he had to feed on \$7 a week. But they wanted to create as much private wealth as they could in their family. My grandmother and grandfather never became wealthy, but what did they try to do individually, they tried to save as much money as they could so that someday they could afford to buy a home.

My little grandmother was eventually able to buy a one-bedroom home. She was so proud of that home. She took such good care of that home because she wanted to make sure that my mother and her six brothers would one day have an inheritance. And at the time of her death, she was able to give them \$10,000 each. That was her goal, to transfer to them some of her private wealth. And that is what I am so worried about, Mr. Speaker. That is what I am so worried about, that we are going to take away the right of the American people to amass private wealth no matter how much because they want to be able to use it to be able to pass on to their own kids.

They cannot do that, Mr. Speaker, when this body continues to spend money on the most worthless projects imaginable. We could spend the next hour in this Chamber going after worthless project after worthless project. We just saw in this body this week, President Obama signed it yesterday, almost 9,000 earmarks; 9,000 earmarks. And that is after President Obama campaigned and said I will be a new President. I don't want to see earmarks; I don't want any more earmarks. And what did he do in the first 52 days, putting a burden on the American people of over \$18,500, including wasteful projects, 9,000 of them, and having the audacity to say to the American people, This is the end of the old way of doing business. From here on out, it is the new.

It is not the new, Mr. Speaker, not when you are looking at continual rampant spending to have continual rampant taxing. That is what is around the corner.

This horrible energy tax is going to forever change our American way of life, and now is our opportunity to stop it.

I know, Mr. Speaker, that Representative GOHMERT and I were talking about that earlier today. The opportunity that we have between now and May when the Obama administration wants to make sure that the American people are saddled with this horrible new tax, and how do we know that? He has already built it into his budget. He has already assumed that you are going to be paying \$4,000 per family in

new taxes to finance these boondoggles that all of us come up with here in Washington, D.C.

I didn't vote for any of this. I am more proud every day that I voted against every one of these wasteful spending programs. I know that Representative GOHMERT feels the same way.

With that, I would like to hand it back to Representative GOHMERT, and I would be happy to talk about that with him.

Mr. GOHMERT. Thank you, and great points all. I was enjoying the points you were making.

But what came back to mind was the story about Davy Crockett in the House of Representatives. Some people don't know he was a representative, and yet there is a great story, a true story about him going back home to Tennessee and somebody, one gentleman just lowered the boom on him and was really fussing at him because Congress had decided to give money to help some business that had burned. The gentleman was telling Davy Crockett, if you want to help somebody or some business because it is a noble cause, give them your money, don't give them my money. And Crockett came back here and told about the incident as part of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, telling his colleagues: How about for once we don't just force the taxpayers to give up their money and give it to where we think it ought to go. If we think that this business deserves some charitable help, then let's give it out of our own pockets.

□ 1545

They took up a collection. Can you imagine if the debate here on the floor were along those lines these days, that the children need our help, so I'm passing the hat and would like for everybody to kick in their own money here on the floor so that we can help these children? No, that's not what we hear.

Mrs. BACHMANN. If the gentleman would yield. I'm familiar with that story as well. Davy Crockett did come back to this Chamber, he did go to his fellow representatives and ask for money. And the disgraceful thing is that Members did not want to give money personally out of their own pocket to be able to help—it was a widow, I believe, they didn't want to give that money to the widow.

I have only been in this body for 3 years, but if there is anything that I have learned it is how easy it is to spend other people's money. It is so easy to be generous. But one thing that this body needs to remember, one thing that President Obama needs to remember, we are not a philanthropic society, we are not the family, and we certainly are not the church. And when government tries to be the church, when government tries to be the family, and when government tries to be a philanthropic society, we distort everything and usually mess it up.

If you look today, the news just came out that Freddie and Fannie, which

were the engines behind this failure on the housing mortgage meltdown, Freddie and Fannie need another \$30 billion of infusion of money because, guess what? They're now nationalized; they're owned by the American taxpayer. They can't stop spending money. They're addicted. As a matter of fact, our government charged Freddie and Fannie with making more loans to people who can't even afford to put down payments on houses. The government hasn't learned its lesson, and it seems unwilling to learn its lesson. I don't know why in the world we would want to take more money out of the hands of people who get how to save it and how to spend it and bring it here to Washington to people who have proved for all time that they have no clue how to spend it.

I yield back.

Mr. GOHMERT. Thank you. Actually, I guess it was right at the end of 1 year, my freshman year here, there were so many of our friends across the aisle quoting Scripture. And it was being used in a way to say things like, well, Jesus said take care of the widows and orphans. And some of you guys, you want to just neglect the widows and orphans and help your rich friends. And others would say, Jesus said that we should be good Samaritans and help those less fortunate. Somebody else said Jesus had said to them that we're to love our neighbors as ourselves, "the golden rule." When a lawyer asked him what is the most important commandment, he said, love your neighbor—those were the two, love God and love your neighbor.

But anyway, we were getting beat up over that, that we ought to be taxing people, taking from other people and giving to these folks that were in need. And I had to point out that night that Jesus never said go ye therefore, use and abuse your taxing authority to take somebody else's money to help them. He said, you do it. You do it. He was talking to the individual. He was talking to the individual heart. And the individuals who were supposed to do it, not go and abuse taxing authority, take somebody else's money, and yet that is what has happened. And a great example was Zacchaeus. Because if you look at what Zacchaeus did after he met Jesus, he went and cut taxes. Not only did he cut taxes, he gave rebates to those he over-collected from. And that is what would be called a tax holiday.

Mrs. BACHMANN. And if the gentleman would yield. We could go to the Old Testament as well and look no further than the Ten Commandments. The Ten Commandments say, "Thou shalt not steal." And whether it comes from government or whether it comes from an individual, we are not to steal from our neighbor.

That's what has me so concerned about this new energy tax from the Obama administration because it literally will be widows and orphans that will be in the worst possible position.

Because this energy tax will hit every aspect of American Society, it will forever lower America's cost of living and our way of life. We need look no further than Europe. Europe has already instituted this energy tax. It is continuing to lower the standard of living in Europe, and it is creating job losses all across the United States. Why would we be cruel to widows? Why would we be cruel to orphans?

This will not work. It has been a disaster. And now is the time for the American people to raise up, contact their Member of Congress, and say, please shield me from this Obama energy tax, I can't afford it. Why would we do this when we see crushing debt loads?

Earlier this week, Mr. Speaker—I was sharing this with Mr. GOHMERT—I met with people from the furniture industry. And I don't know if the American people know yet, the furniture industry, if you look at their stock value, the stock value of the American furniture industry has dropped 90 percent. So if you have people who spent their life working in the furniture industry and that's what their retirement was made of, they have lost 90 percent of the value of their wealth assets. Why would you impose a cruel energy tax where we are going to require more jobs to flee from this country?

I yield back to the gentleman.

Mr. GOHMERT. That is such a great point. And it goes right along with the corporate tax. We have people come in here and say the corporate tax is the way to go because these mean, cruel, greedy corporations, let them pay the tax. Well, if a corporation does not pass that tax on to its customers or its clients, then it goes out of business. So that is so deceptive. And I think it is so wrong to say, we all know in here we're going to stick it to the little guy, the guy that is just working and doing all they can to stay up, or the seniors who are on Social Security, we're going to stick it to them, but we can't just stick the tax to them any more than we already have, let's tax the corporation, and then they will have to pass it on. But it won't say "tax" when it's passed on because it's from us to them, and it's our way of sticking it to the little guy without them knowing.

But at some point the American public is going to wise up. And I've looked into this as well because there are some that say we need to erect tariff barriers and say, if you're going to sell stuff in this country, your country may be subsidizing this kind of thing, but we're going to put a tariff. Well, that triggers so many penalties. It would trigger a tariff war around the world if we did that. Whereas, what I have looked into is, what if we said we are not going to allow Congress to stick it to the little guy by popping the tax on the corporations that they have to pass on. Let's just say no corporate tax.

Corporations that have fled this country because of the high corporate tax rate have said, our manufacturing

jobs will be back in America. The furniture jobs, even though labor is cheaper elsewhere, it would open them up. And some would say, well, that's subsidizing. But the nice thing is it would not trigger any penalty or any tariff war, no trade agreements, penalty provisions would be triggered by doing away with corporate tax so that the people in America wouldn't be taxed further.

But how much more insidious could it be than what President Clinton did as soon as he took office with a Democratic majority when he raised this massive tax on Social Security benefits? These people have worked their whole life, paying taxes on what they made, putting a little bit into Social Security, and actually they're only getting back about one-fourth to one-third of what they would have been if they could have put it into their own private retirement account. But anyway, here it is, they're getting so little as it is, and now you're going to put a tax on top of that? To me, that was pretty insidious. And it continues. There's talk about even possibly increasing the Social Security tax. I think it's outrageous.

We have been joined by my good friend from Iowa. It is always a pleasure, Mr. Speaker, to see him here on the floor. I yield to my friend, Mr. KING.

Mr. KING of Iowa. I appreciate the judgment of the good judge from east Texas. I was listening to this dialogue, and I thought I would come over here and engage in it. And I appreciate you recognizing me and yielding.

The point that the gentleman from Texas makes that—I'll say it succinctly—corporations don't pay taxes, corporations collect taxes that are imposed upon their bookkeeping system and aggregate the money from people and customers and flow that money to the Federal Government into the Treasury. That's how the corporations function, they are tax collectors for the government. But it is always the people that have to pay the taxes, it is always the customers that have to pay the taxes. And by the way, neither do LLCs pay taxes, neither do sole proprietorships, or partnerships, or any other business configuration that has customers out there pay taxes. They have to transfer those to their customers. They have to add it in and calculate it in.

I made payroll out for 28 years. I transferred a lot of those costs onto my customers. I had to. And if you didn't do that, in the first place you couldn't cash flow a business; you would never get it started in the first place. You would never get it to expand. You've got to have capital. By the way, Adam Smith made this real clear. This is something I like to tell the people that will not respond to this charge. There are two components to the cost of everything we buy, it is the cost of capital and the cost of labor. And the capital cost is included in everything that we purchase.

And so if we are going to have policy in this legislature that raises the cost of capital—which takes place easily when you see the tax increase—if you increase taxes on businesses that are doing business, that are investing, that are holding mortgage-backed securities, there is a capital cost to that. If you raise the cost of capital, then you are putting more burden on the economy.

And the other component is labor. Adam Smith wrote it this way: “The price of gold plummeted in Europe as the Spanish galleons began arriving on the continent from the new world.” Adam Smith didn’t say that because they stole the gold from the Incas and the Aztecs. He described it as they lowered the cost of labor for getting that gold out of the ground and getting it into the marketplace. And that’s how this economy works. But corporations have been demonized by the people on the left side of the aisle because they don’t understand that simple equation; the cost of capital and the cost of labor is the sum total of all of the things that we buy, and that the businesses in the country have been enlisted, by law, to collect those taxes from people, impose them on people. And what do we do? We impose the acrimony on top of the businesses that are the tax collectors for the government. I’m with LOUIE GOHMERT; let’s take the tax off of all these corporations. Let’s take all the tax off of productivity, actually.

Mrs. BACHMANN. If the gentleman would yield.

Mr. KING of Iowa. I would. I think I like where you’re going.

Mrs. BACHMANN. I would like to add to the stunning STEVE KING from Iowa for his comment. He is absolutely right that the cost of a good is labor and capital. But the third component is the added cost of government. That’s the third component that goes into an item. And that cost is getting exceedingly high. And I know that my colleague from Texas, LOUIE GOHMERT, knows this very well because, if you look at the energy industry, at oil and gas production, the amount of money that companies make in profits is exceeded dramatically by the amount of money that the corporations pay in taxes to the government.

People think that oil and gas companies have obscene profits, but they pay even more obscene levels of taxation. Literally, they have spent trillions of dollars that they’ve paid over to government in taxes, while they’ve kept billions of dollars in profit. But out of that profit pool, that is where the oil and gas companies have had to take that money to invest back into the business so Americans can enjoy more energy.

I am so pleased about the positive solution that’s been offered by one of our colleagues, JOHN SHADEGG, and also Mr. BISHOP, and also Senator VITTER, and it is the No Cost to the Taxpayer Stimulus Bill that says, very simply, let’s open up and legalize all forms of energy

production all across the United States—wind, solar, biofuels, oil, gas—all of them, let’s open all of them up—in fact, I say hamsters running on cages. No matter what it is, let’s make sure that we legalize the source of energy. And that is zero cost to the taxpayer. It relieves the American people’s burden on dependable gasoline at affordable prices. Let’s do that.

I know I was absolutely astounded, Senator Obama, during the campaign—and I will yield back after this quote. This is a quote from our now President. He said, during the course of the campaign, “What I’ve said is that we would put a cap and trade system in place that is as aggressive, if not more aggressive, than anybody else’s out there. So if somebody wants to build a coal-powered plant, they can. It’s just that it will bankrupt them because they are going to be charged a huge sum for all that greenhouse gas that’s being emitted.” He is admitting that his plan will bankrupt coal companies.

“When I was asked earlier about the issue of coal, you know, under my plan of a cap and trade system, electricity rates would necessarily skyrocket.” That’s the future that the American people have to look forward to, and I think that’s audacious.

I yield back.

Mr. GOHMERT. I would yield to my friend from Iowa.

Mr. KING of Iowa. I thank the gentleman.

When you describe this, this cap and trade tax that is on everything, I would ask, Mr. Speaker, that we illuminate this for the American people. Think if America were a continent unto itself, what if we were a planet unto ourselves; would we manage ourselves this way? And I would say no. Because we are wasting all kinds of resources; we are wasting labor, we are wasting capital—we’re not even using sound science—if we were a planet unto ourselves. But we have to compete with the rest of the planet. So this cap and trade proposal ties our hands, ties our legs. And we are like Gulliver tied up by the Lilliputians with the cap and trade legislation that looks like it’s coming down the pike which will immobilize America’s economy while India’s and China’s are growing. And not only are they growing, but they’re emitting CO₂ gas and greenhouse gases at an accelerating rate.

□ 1600

So our little piece of this pie that we could possibly effect is so minimal a century from now that it really can’t be measured by science. Sound science doesn’t support this. Sound economics doesn’t support this. And there are many better solutions, even if there was a prediction that could be made accurately.

Mr. GOHMERT. I thank Mr. KING and I thank Mrs. BACHMANN.

That’s such a great point about energy. We have been blessed in totality with more natural resources in the

United States of America, I think, than any other country. It’s just been fabulous. And yet we continue week after week, month after month with the Democratic majority to continue to put more of our natural resources off-limits.

One of the things some of us have been advocating, and I have got my staff working on a bill we talked about yesterday that would be in conjunction with our friend Mr. SHADEGG, with Senator VITTER, but we all agree: We want all-of-the-above energy. Use it all. But make sure we protect the environment. And that can be done. But open up the OCS to drilling. Put litigation on a fast track so they can’t tie it up for 10 or 20 years and just keep repeatedly bringing them to court. But let’s go use it if it’s legal, if it’s proper, and it will be if it’s done right.

And then something that had been negotiated before that could be done is that the Federal royalty that could be obtained by leasing the OCS would be more than traditionally a property owner gets from leasing their land to produce oil and gas. Traditionally that’s been one-eighth. One-eighth of the royalty is what the owner normally got. We could get at least three-sixteenths. We could split it with the States. We’ve got States coming up here like California saying, please, give us some money. I’m so proud they worked on their budget. They still need money.

You’ve got all kinds of money sitting in the vault, sitting in the bank, right off your coast. Use what you’ve got. If it’s solely in the State’s territory, it’s yours. If it’s out beyond that and in Federal territory, we will split the money with you. And then my feeling is, and this is what I’ve talked to the staff about in a bill, we’ll take half of the Federal part of that because we should share it with the States, but then with our half, take half of that and devote it completely to research for alternative fuels. You don’t have to tax anybody else. You don’t have to add more costs to the already hard-working people that are paying to sustain this unwieldy government. But you could fund our own alternative research so that as things run out, we’ve got it.

And it’s really beginning to appear very disingenuous, this stuff about the global warming, and that’s why we are no longer hearing “global warming.” They’re not using that term. They are using “climate change.” Climate change happens four times a year. It’s the seasons.

Mrs. BACHMANN. If the gentleman would yield, in Minnesota that’s true.

Mr. GOHMERT. I yield to the gentleman from Minnesota.

Mrs. BACHMANN. Thank you. I think we see two separate agendas at work here. The American people want low-cost energy that’s dependable. We need that. Not only just individuals but also businesses, we need low-cost, dependable energy. But the Obama administration has taken a very different

view on energy. Then Candidate Obama said he wants high-cost energy. Why? Because he wants to force the American people to have to pay the carbon tax that's about to come down the pike. We wouldn't need this terrible carbon tax that will completely damage our economy, especially in this time of recession, if the Obama administration wasn't addicted to spending. Because they are so addicted to these high levels of spending, President Obama, in his State of the Union address, said what he wants to do with that money. He wants socialized medicine. Is that what the American people want? The American people aren't crying out for socialized medicine, but that's what President Obama wants to give to the American people.

Not only that, but in his State of the Union address, he said his vision for America is that government's hand would be in the hospital room of a brand new baby with a brand new mother. He wants, from cradle to career, the Federal Government's hand on the life of that child. I don't know about you, but the people in the Sixth Congressional District of Minnesota, moms and dads want to have one of the parents at home with that baby to be able to love that child, rear that child. They don't want to send that little baby off to a government daycare center from the day that baby is born. That is President Obama's vision for child rearing, that the Federal Government would be involved in the cradle stages of a child's life. Massive spending demands a way of taxation.

This cap and trade isn't going to solve our energy problem. It will add to our energy problem because, again, it's going to take out of the pockets of the middle class of this country to put into the pocket of the Federal Government.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. GOHMERT. I yield to my friend from Iowa.

Mr. KING of Iowa. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I would add to this. Again, take it back to a big picture, and that is this is about freedom. It's about preserving the freedom we have, defending the freedom we have, and, in fact, we should be expanding the freedom that we have.

Our freedom has diminished generation by generation since the founders established this country. When you move to the left, it always includes an increase in taxes and an increase in government interference in every aspect of our lives, from raising our families to micro-managing energy to sticking their fingers into education, every aspect of our lives. So when you expand the role of government, you expand also the taxation and you diminish the freedom.

And whether you do it insidiously by saying I'm going to take your child now at age 3 or 2 or 1 as opposed to 5 or 6, as it used to be, or whether you do it in a blatant way by saying we're

going to impose this Draconian regime on everybody in America and we're going to confiscate your income, the point that's been made by this administration and this majority, not in so quite many words is this: You're not really entitled to the money you earn, in their view, but the people that claim they have a need are entitled to the money that you earn.

That's the philosophical divide that's been turned. When you go to the left, you give up freedom and it's diminished. When you move policy to the right, you expand freedom and it's enhanced.

We need to be about expanding everyone's freedom in this country. That's the foundation of America, and that's where our vitality comes from. That's why we are the unchallenged greatest Nation in the world, because our vitality comes from our freedoms. Acts that diminish it diminish our vitality and handicap us.

I thank the gentleman from Texas for his indulgence.

Mr. GOHMERT. I appreciate my friend from Iowa's (Mr. KING) help.

I would be willing to yield for any final comments to my friend from Minnesota.

Mrs. BACHMANN. I thank the gentleman from Texas. I appreciate that.

I would just like to expand on what Mr. KING said. When you look at this body of the House of Representatives and when you look at the United States Senate and when you look at the White House, one thing that we all do when we come in is we take an oath and we pledge our allegiance, not to the American people, not to an issue; we pledge our allegiance to the Constitution of the United States.

Every time this House acts in contravention of the Constitution, we cause a distortion of freedom and we cause a diminution in the freedom of the people. We cause a diminution in the prosperity of this great land. That's the problem. Our founding principles are all contained in the Declaration of Independence. Abraham Lincoln republished and reaffirmed this Nation to a new foundation grounded in the Declaration of Independence.

And, of course, we know what that beauty is. The beauty is that our rights were given to us from a Creator. Those rights are not from government, the rights of man. The rights come from a Creator God. And that Creator gave those rights to every human being on the planet. Among those rights are life, liberty, the pursuit of happiness. Those are rights that only God can give. Government can't give them; government can't take them away. And our government was instituted for only one reason, and it was to secure those unalienable rights.

None of us in this Chamber with an election certificate has any right to violate those rights because we are here only by the consent of the governed. And when we act in contravention of that, that's how we get into the

soup we're in. And today we are in some kind of soup. So if we return to our Constitution, we're in good shape.

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

THE PROGRESSIVE CAUCUS: D.C. VOTING RIGHTS

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

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Speaker, as we come in week and week out, the progressive message is up again, as we come back every Thursday in order to make the progressive position clear on the critical issues.

I'm going to be joined tonight by a number of colleagues who are making their way to the House floor, but tonight our topic is going to be the very critical issue of District of Columbia's voting rights, the District of Columbia's voting rights, which is a vital and essential issue which has been dogging our country for many years. We certainly hope that this issue of D.C. voting rights is an issue that the country focuses its attention on. D.C. voting rights is a question of giving rights and conferring rights upon Americans who pay their taxes, Americans who send their children to war, Americans who are equal in every way to Americans who live in the various States. And because of this important role that they play in our country, this equal role, we're looking forward to seeing legislation come out that will allow members of the District of Columbia to be able to have a representative who can cast a vote in our Congress. We are looking forward to this in the near future.

But before we get to that topic, I want to yield to the gentleman from Virginia, who is going to take a moment to make a critical statement.

YEAR OF THE MILITARY FAMILY

Mr. NYE. I want to thank my colleague very much for yielding to me.

I am rising today to express my strong support for a resolution this House passed yesterday by unanimous vote, Mr. Speaker, the resolution urging the President to designate 2009 as the "Year of the Military Family." And while no words or gestures can fully match the service or sacrifice of our soldiers and sailors, our airmen and Marines, we must also remember those Americans that do not wear a uniform: our military families.

In my home district of Hampton Roads, we know all too well that the challenges faced by our military families are not just financial. They are emotional and physical too. Men and women in my district wake up every day not knowing if their loved ones are safe, not knowing when they will return, or what scars they might bear when they do.

Dealing with that and explaining it to your children with a smile on your