

official Muslim religious police arrested a 75-year-old woman for accepting bread from two young men. The crime: She had the arrogance to be with males who were not blood kin.

To the religious police in Saudi Arabia, her behavior cannot be tolerated. So the 75-year-old woman was hauled off to court, and a judge ordered her to receive, get this, 40 lashes and 4 months in jail with deportation to follow. And the two boys who were kind to her by giving her bread: lashes and prison for them too.

The official Muslim religious police are feared by women in Saudi Arabia because they enter homes to enforce dress codes, prayer times, and segregation of the sexes. Flogging women in the name of religion for accepting bread from young men seems to be anti-social action and contrary to basic human rights.

So much for the idea of helping the widows and the orphans. Maybe next year grandmas in Saudi Arabia can celebrate International Women's Day without being flogged by their government.

And that's just the way it is.

THE ECONOMY

(Ms. RICHARDSON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. RICHARDSON. Mr. Speaker, mistaken policies, misplaced priorities, and profound irresponsibility have brought us where we are today. President Obama and this Congress are committed to real change. And what is that change? We propose solutions, real solutions. An honest budget, rejecting gimmicks, and eliminating the wasteful spending that has brought us to this trillion dollar deficit that we now have today.

What the American people need are tax cuts, and 95 percent of Americans will now receive a tax cut. What do the American people need? A double commitment of the investment of Pell grants, of looking at a commitment to Head Start, and so many of the other vital areas.

When we look at this Congress, we are committed to fixing health care, not to be a party of "no," but to say that we are going to address what is happening for struggling homeowners.

The American Recovery Act addressed and is helping us to bring forward 3.5 million jobs to help stabilize the State budgets and to dig us out of this fiscal mess that we inherited over the last 8 years.

We can recover, we must recover, because as Americans, failure is not an option.

ENERGY

(Mr. CASSIDY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CASSIDY. Mr. Speaker, as regards to energy, I'm an all-of-the-

above-type person. We need a diversity of energy sources. But we will not be carbon free for generations. Our need for plastics, fertilizers, lubricants, and fuels so dictates.

So given the fact that we're not going to be carbon free, it seems like domestic energy production should be encouraged. If we've got to have something, it's better for us to buy it from ourselves, for our workers, for the money to stay here.

In Louisiana alone, my home State, oil and gas production in the petrochemical industry employs 320,000 people. They work as welders, pipe-fitters, on barges, engineers. Countless small businesses with another 100,000 or so workers. Yet the President's budget contains at least eight separate tax hikes specifically targeting domestic oil and gas production.

Tax hikes create uncertainty, uncertainty creates caution, and caution inhibits economic activity. As we seek energy security and to create and preserve American jobs, I have to ask why are we punishing the industry which contributes both?

FORMER VICE PRESIDENT CHENEY'S ATTEMPT TO REWRITE HISTORY

(Mr. YARMUTH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. YARMUTH. Mr. Speaker, on Sunday former Vice President Cheney made the latest in a series of outrageous attempts to rewrite history. He suggested that America was less safe now than under President Bush. Well, as a former journalist and editor, I'm compelled to do a little rewrite of his story.

I think it is important to note that under President Bush and Vice President Cheney, we let Osama bin Laden escape. We took our eye off the ball in Afghanistan and moved to Iraq. We went into Iraq with no plan for victory. We heard from Vice President Cheney that we were going to be greeted as liberators, that WMD would certainly be found, and that this war was going to be very short and cost us very little money.

My editing of Vice President Cheney's statement on Sunday would be that he did not exactly tell the whole story.

Fortunately, the American people know the whole story. They know that we are much safer now with President Obama in the White House. So as the recently departed Paul Harvey would have said, "And now you know the rest of the story."

CALLING FOR THE PREVENTION OF BONUSES PAID TO AIG EXECUTIVES AT TAXPAYERS' EXPENSE

(Mr. BUCHANAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BUCHANAN. Mr. Speaker, the American people were outraged yesterday, and with good reason, when they learned that the bonuses of \$165 million were going to executives at AIG, an insurance company. They are the very executives who drove the company to the ground and helped create the economic problems we're facing today. Instead of getting bonuses, they should be fired.

AIG is now 80 percent owned by the Federal Government, which is the American people. This is an outrageous injustice at taxpayers' expense.

I have been in business 30 years. We always pay for results, proven results, in this case something that would be a return to the American people. But that hasn't happened. This rewards greed and recklessness.

AIG recently reported in a 2008 fourth quarter more than \$60 billion in losses, all while the unemployment in America hit a 25-year high.

I ask the President to use all the power at his disposal to prevent these bonuses from being paid at taxpayers' expense.

CALLING FOR 100 PERCENT TAX ON "PERFORMANCE" BONUSES BY ANY COMPANY IN WHICH THE GOVERNMENT OWNS A MAJORITY STAKE

(Mrs. MALONEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, we all know the news yesterday that AIG is paying over \$100 million in bonuses. I find this an absolute outrage. I'm glad the President has directed the Treasury Department to use all legal means to restrict these bonuses.

But we in Congress can actually make the laws, and here's a law we should make: Tax the bonuses of any company in which the government owns a majority stake at 100 percent. I have introduced this bill today—tax so-called "performance" bonuses at 100 percent.

Bonuses are supposed to be given to someone who has done a good job. But AIG, as my colleague said, and we've found something we agree on, lost over \$70 billion in the last quarter. We put in \$170 billion of taxpayers' money. They don't deserve a bonus. They deserve better management. They deserve certainly a restriction on the bonuses that they have. And I really applaud President Obama, who said yesterday that this isn't just a matter of dollars and cents; it's a matter of fundamental values.

I urge my colleagues to join me in taxing this bonus.

PRESIDENT'S BUDGET: TAXES TOO MANY TOO MUCH

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, Democrats have broken their promise not to raise taxes on 95 percent of Americans. Democrats are proposing to tax small businesses and everyone who plans to turn on a light, drive a car, or heat their home.

Under the Democrat budget, many small businesses will see their taxes go up. At a time when our economy is in trouble, this budget raises taxes on the one group that creates the most jobs in America.

But small businesses are not alone. Under the new Democrat cap, trade, and tax proposal, every household in this country would pay as much as \$3,128 each year in higher energy costs. This would surely overwhelm any tax break they may be getting.

The President says this budget is not just about numbers on a page. I agree. There are real families and small businesses that will be hurt by the \$1.4 trillion in new taxes this budget will create.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th.

CALLING FOR COMPREHENSIVE FINANCIAL REGULATORY REFORM AND ACCOUNTABILITY

(Mr. ARCURI asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ARCURI. Mr. Speaker, the bonuses announced by AIG are nothing less than a slap in the face to the tax-paying families across my district and across the entire country. Families that are struggling to pay rising energy bills and put food on their table.

To expect hardworking middle class families in my district and across the country to foot the bill for executive bonuses when those same executives failed in their job and dragged our economy down with them is completely unacceptable.

My constituents pay their bills on time. They make hard financial choices, and they meet their responsibilities each and every day without a bailout.

This is truly a nonpartisan issue. I will work with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle and with the administration to build a regulatory system founded on accountability. That is why I support legislation to hold these irresponsible individuals accountable and demand that they pay back to the American people the money that we gave them in bailouts.

Now is the time for comprehensive financial regulatory reform and accountability. Never again should we leave the foxes in charge of the henhouse.

THE DEMOCRAT PARTY: THE PARTY OF "OWE"

(Mr. KINGSTON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, the Democrat budget that we are looking at of \$3.6 trillion spends too much, taxes too much, and it borrows too much.

Not that spending is a problem to this majority. Take recently the town of Union, New York, which received \$578,000 in stimulus money that they did not ask for, and the money was earmarked for a homeless prevention shelter, which they do not have. Now the town supervisor says this is nice but we're not aware of any homeless problem in Union, New York.

Nonetheless, the White House, instead of saying this is a mistake, they simply say we encourage them to develop creative strategies for this funding.

This party is the party of "owe." They owe China. They owe their big union lobbyists. They owe our children and the future generations. And, oh, my goodness, look how many O's are in \$3.6 trillion.

□ 1230

FISCAL YEAR 2010 BUDGET

(Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address the President's fiscal year 2010 budget proposal. We are in a crucial time in our Nation's history. According to a recent CNN poll, 45 percent of Americans believe that another Great Depression is likely.

The President's budget represents a bold strike to revitalize the economy and provides a path to future economic stability and prosperity. The proposal is a good start.

There are, however, areas that require further refinement. The suggestion to limit itemized deductions will have negative unintended consequences. As charitable donations become scarcer in these trying times, signaling an intent to limit their tax-deductible value may further impair charitable giving at precisely the time we need more.

Capping the mortgage interest deduction will cause unintended discouragement for homeownership at precisely the time we need to stabilize home values. We also must consider increasing the \$250,000 income cap for raising tax brackets. In my district, with one of the highest costs of living and one of the highest percentages of dual incomes, the proposed level would be a difficult imposition. Additionally, we must ensure pay parity between civilian and military government employees as we ask more of the civilian workforce.

Overall, I expect the proposed budget to be worked out over the next few weeks in the Budget Committee.

LEGISLATIVE MALPRACTICE

(Mr. PITTS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, the President's chief of staff said, "You never want a serious crisis to go to waste. It's an opportunity to do things that you think you could not do before."

In other words, the administration and this Congress are exploiting our financial crisis, inserting many of their political-agenda items into the massive spending bills without due deliberation: items like repeal of welfare reform; like the comparative effectiveness board that will lead to rationed health care; like electricity rate decoupling, which increases electricity prices as people use less energy; like easing Cuba travel restrictions; like mandating Davis-Bacon for all contract projects in the country; like killing school choice for poor kids in Washington; and parts of government-run health care and the cap-and-trade energy taxes and more and more.

Without one Member of the House reading these 1,100-page-plus bills, Mr. Speaker, this is legislative malpractice.

AIG AND THEIR BIG-TIME BONUSES

(Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, my e-mail inbox is full of constituents fed up with AIG. I don't blame them. I have had it up to here with bad news about AIG and their big-time bonuses. They should return that money.

As a U.S. News columnist asked, "Forget bonuses. Why are these people still collecting regular paychecks?" I am glad that New York Attorney General Andrew Cuomo demanded AIG provide information on who is receiving bonuses in its Financial Products Group. Those who receive the fat-cat bonuses are mainly responsible for the company's and the country's financial problems.

I say fire them all. They don't deserve bonuses. Turn them over to the Marines. Put them in the brig.

CONGRATULATING ZWOLLE AND SPRINGHILL ON WINNING BASKETBALL STATE CHAMPIONSHIPS

(Mr. FLEMING asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. FLEMING. Mr. Speaker, I want to acknowledge the accomplishments of two outstanding basketball programs that brought home Louisiana State titles in my district over this weekend.