

Mr. GRAYSON. Mr. Speaker, now that help to Haiti is on the way and that we are doing the best we can to save lives and to reconstruct lives in that torn country, I think this is a good time to look back and to give some thought to people's reaction to what happened in Haiti, to do sort of a post-mortem of the post-mortem. And particularly I want to revisit one comment that was made after that time, the comment by Pat Robertson. He claimed that the earthquake in Haiti was the result of a pact with the devil that the people of Haiti had made to achieve an end to slavery and independence at the beginning of the 1800s.

I thought that was an interesting comment to make. It turns out that there were two devastating earthquakes in Haiti before their independence, before their so-called pact with the devil, before their end to slavery. And in the 200 years plus since their so-called pact with the devil, Haiti has actually been pretty much earthquake-free.

Now you compare that to the neighboring country, the Dominican Republic. In 1946, the Dominican Republic had a devastating earthquake, actually, it's hard to believe, ten times more powerful than the earthquake that Haiti experienced 2 weeks ago. The Dominican Republic had no pact with the devil, and therefore, if I can use the word "therefore" in this context, was laid low. So under Pat Robertson's logic, one would have to conclude that, in fact, Haiti has benefited tremendously by what he would depict as a pact with the devil.

And I wonder, in contrast, how well Pat Robertson's followers have made out with their own pact with the devil. And what I mean is this: Pat Robertson ran for President in 1988. He did something in that year that nobody has done before or since. He brought 3 million volunteers to his campaign. He got millions of people involved in the Republican Party all across the country. In the end, he came in third. But he activated the Christian right. And all those people joined the Republican Party with something in mind, a couple of things in mind. One thing they wanted was an end to gay marriage. And for years, when the Republican Party was in charge of this country, the House, the Senate, the Supreme Court, the Presidency, the Republican Party did nothing to accomplish that for Pat Robertson's followers.

Similarly, these people wanted an end to abortion in America. And I'm not going to say whether that was right or wrong, whether they are right or wrong, but I will point out to you that when the Republicans were in charge, the Senate, the House, the White House and the Supreme Court, once again, they did nothing to help Pat Robertson's followers accomplish what they wanted.

So tonight I ask those people, the Christian right: What about your own pact with the devil? How has that worked out for you?

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

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

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

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

NEW ORLEANS SAINTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New Orleans (Mr. CAO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CAO. Mr. Speaker, the New Orleans Saints are going to the Super Bowl for first time in franchise history. As their representative to Congress, I want to congratulate them in an official manner by acknowledging words of encouragement from constituents on the House floor.

Sunday's thrilling and historic win was an inspiration to the residents of Orleans and Jefferson Parishes, who continue to struggle to rebuild their lives 4 years after Hurricane Katrina. I'm proud to be their Congressman, and I look forward to an exciting Super Bowl in which they will defeat the Indianapolis Colts.

Tonight, I will read several statements from my district in their honor. The first statement is from Kay Higginbotham, a teacher at the Academy of the Sacred Heart in New Orleans. Kay writes, Do the Saints have an impact on education? As a school administrator, I believe the impact is immeasurable and far exceeds economics. The value lessons are much greater than an awareness of team colors. Students certainly enjoy spirit days or completing math problems with a Saints bent, but they also spend time discussing the job of a professional athlete, what it means to stay focused, eat healthy food, get plenty of exercise and sleep, follow rules, work as a team, and be a good sport, win or lose.

Teachers help students understand the importance of following parent and teacher directives, and when talking about the Saints, they link it to the attention each player must pay to the coaches' play-calling. They discuss the pride one feels in the hard work of a job well done, the discipline it takes to make a wise choice, both on and off the field, and the consequences that ensue if one doesn't.

Is the job of a student so different from the job of a New Orleans Saint? When interviewed, Saints players speak about having faith in their team and giving back to the community. They talk about developing self-confidence and leadership and overcoming

adversity, values important in a game, but even more important in life. And parents report something incredible: Dinner conversations that include the whole family. Brothers are amazed at how much their sisters understand about first-downs and touchdowns. And sisters actually want to hear what their brothers know about Drew Brees and Reggie Bush.

Do the Saints have an impact on education? Yes, indeed. They give us lessons worth teaching and learning.

The second statement is from Cindy Hilbrink of New Orleans. Cindy writes, While city accountants calculate the financial impact of the Saints football team to New Orleans, citizens know, as one writer to the local paper said, that despite failures of Federal, State, and local governments after Katrina, and suggestions that we don't merit help, we are, nevertheless, deserving—deserving of a winning team, of good schools, the best health care, safe roads, bridges and reliable levees.

When the population was only trickling back into New Orleans that summer of 2006 after Hurricane Katrina, when politicians and pundits urged that the city be abandoned, the sign on the dominant building in New Orleans, the Superdome, with its patched roof and iconic status as the symbol of suffering, said, 'Our team, our home.'

Bumper stickers in the Saints' black font read, 'Faith.' Drew Brees, the new quarterback who took a chance on the team and the city, printed T-shirts to benefit children that implored, 'Believe, New Orleans!' A popular Saints song contends 'This is the way we live,' meaning we are enabled to survive by clinging to our faith in this team. Our devotion to the New Orleans Saints, win or lose, keeps our battered spirits alive.

Finally, I want to close tonight with a prayer for the Saints delivered by Archbishop Philip Hannan at the first Saints and Sinners banquet in 1968.

Our heavenly Father, who has instructed us that the Saints by faith conquered kingdoms and overcame lions, grant our Saints an increase of faith and strength so that they will not only overcome the Lions, but also the Bears, the Rams, the Giants and even those awesome people in Green Bay. May they continue to tame the Redskins and fetter the Falcons as well as the Eagles. Give to our owners and coaches the continued ability to be as wise as serpents and simple as doves, so that no good talent will dodge our draft. Grant to our fans perseverance in their devotion and unlimited lung power, tempered with a sense of charity to all, including the referees.

May our beloved Bedlam Bowl be a source of good fellowship, and may "The Saints Come Marching In" be a victory march for all, now and in eternity.

THE AGONY OF THE CENTRAL VALLEY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. DAHLKEMPER). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCLINTOCK) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Madam Speaker, for many months, the Republicans on the Water and Power Subcommittee of the Natural Resources Committee have implored the majority Democrats to hold a hearing in the Central Valley of California to see and hear for themselves the damage that the Federal Government has caused by diverting 200 billion gallons of water from Central Valley farms in order to indulge the environmental left's pet cause, the delta smelt.

After our pleas were met with continued stonewalling, we decided to hold a forum under our own auspices and to invite all members of the California congressional delegation, all members of the Natural Resources Committee and representatives of the Obama administration to come to Fresno to see firsthand what these policies have wrought.

Instead, after we had announced the forum, the Water and Power Subcommittee chairwoman decided to meet on the same day in southern California to extol the virtues of water conservation. Congress has thus made clear its intention to sacrifice the people of the San Joaquin Valley upon the altar of environmental extremism.

Despite heavy rains over the past month, the administration continues to blame a relatively mild drought for the fact that Valley farmers will receive only 5 percent of the water that they are entitled to. This does not explain how, in far more severe droughts than this, Valley farmers have received far greater allocations. Nor does it explain how these massive water diversions can be justified to support the delta smelt if indeed supplies were constrained.

Had the Democrats in the subcommittee come to Fresno, they would have heard and seen the anguish of the people of the Central Valley of California. These water diversions have destroyed a half-million acres of the most productive farmland in America, and they have thrown 30,000 Central Valley farm families into unemployment.

They would have heard the stories of food lines in communities that once prided themselves on being the breadbasket of the Western United States. They would have heard about the frustration of seeing produce imported from China being handed out in these food lines to the very same American farmers who once supplied the very same produce to the entire world.

And they would have seen the anger as the absent Interior Secretary's testimony to the Natural Resources Committee last year was played back, in which Mr. SALAZAR admitted that the Obama administration has the author-

ity to turn the pumps back on, but that it chooses not to do so because that would be "like admitting failure."

There is some good news. This afternoon, the day after our forum in Fresno, the Interior Secretary relented to the extent of releasing 350,000 to 400,000 acre-feet of already allocated water to the Central Valley. Having demonstrated his authority to release the water that Central Valley farmers already own, he now needs to follow through and release the water that is being held hostage to the delta smelt.

Meanwhile, Mr. NUNES of California has introduced H.R. 3105, the Turn on the Pumps Act, which does exactly the same thing that Congress did under far less severe circumstances several years ago for the farmers of New Mexico. Mr. NUNES has filed a discharge petition to bypass that subcommittee and bring the bill directly to the House for a vote. It needs 218 signatures. So far, it has 105, 104 Republicans and one Democrat.

Madam Speaker, I assure you that it is not only the Central Valley that is suffering. The willful destruction of 500,000 acres of American farmland by these massive water diversions, all for the enjoyment and amusement of the 3-inch long delta smelt, is reflected in the rising prices for produce that families are feeling far beyond the congressionally created dust bowl of California's Central Valley.

Nor is the delta smelt doing any better. Despite these massive water diversions, the delta smelt population fell back to the historic low in 2005 and is now well below the high points recorded in the late 1970s. Given these findings, how can anybody argue that the delta pumping restrictions are benefiting the delta smelt?

Madam Speaker, I promised to carry the plea from the many Americans who poured out their hearts to us in Fresno on Monday for Congress to come to the Central Valley and see what their policies have caused. I place their invitation before you.

REBUILDING THE ECONOMY

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

Mr. PERRIELLO. Madam Speaker, I rise today as one of many freshmen who will be speaking during this hour because a little over a year ago, we came in on a wave of change. Many of us came into politics for the first time, certainly to the Federal Government for the first time, because we believed this country needed a new kind of politics, not just a politics of right or left, but a politics of right and wrong. For too long, both parties had failed to rise to the challenges of our time. Energy independence, redefining our competitive advantage—there were so many challenges to take on. And a year later, we are not satisfied.

Tomorrow night, the President of the United States will come and join us here in this body to speak and give us a report on the state of the Nation. Well, the Nation is in pain. Working and middle class families are in pain, and we haven't done nearly enough to show people the results of standing up for the working and middle class.

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There are many things that the change was about, but certainly at the heart of it was a desire for a new era of accountability, accountability for the private sector, accountability for government, and even accountability for consumers and bad decisions that had been made.

But most importantly to this was a need to shift our economic policies from speculation on Wall Street to job creation on Main Street. Changing the name plate on the door from Hank Paulson to Tim Geithner does not represent a change of economic policy. We need to understand what it will take to have actual economic accountability and job growth in this country.

We believe in this House, the people's House, we have taken dramatic steps to put working class and middle class people ahead of the most powerful among us. But the pain continues. In my district over the last 5 years we have seen people's utility rates go up 93 percent by Appalachian Power and others. We get calls every day, 20 percent increases in their health insurance premiums, bank fees, credit card fees, Comcast fees, all going through the roof while the working and middle class pay the price.

We have taken steps here to stand up and say someone is going to stand up for Main Street, demand that accountability and that economic relief that we thought was part of the change. We hope tomorrow night to hear more about your willingness to lead in these areas.

But we also must switch this focus to Main Street because we are in a jobs crisis. We need a wartime-like mentality of how serious this job crisis is. And we took dramatic efforts a year ago that have helped to stop the bleeding, to help turn from some of the most dramatic job losses in American history, certainly modern American history under the last administration, to stopping that bleeding so that we could begin the recovery. But we know much more needs to be done. We are not satisfied.

I hear time and time again the banks are still not lending. If we need to do direct lending, if we need to do more to get the lending going to small and medium-sized businesses, we have to understand that in America's economy today two-thirds of job creation comes from small- and medium-sized business. They may not have the political power and control over both parties in this town, but small- and medium-sized businesses create that job growth. We need to get job creation on Main Street