

whipped the Taliban, had them completely on the run. And then we kind of took our eye off the ball in Afghanistan and started looking at Iraq, and the Taliban has made a resurgence, and they have become powerful again in Afghanistan.

In meeting with leaders from the Northern Alliance—even though Secretary Clinton and former Secretary Albright did what they could to keep us from meeting because, apparently, when this administration throws our allies under a bus, this administration wants them to stay under the bus. Some of us believe if somebody has been our ally, has helped fight our enemy, then they need to remain our friends. These are Muslims. These are our friends, and their enemy is our enemy. And I'm told by some of the military, American military leaders, that the Northern Alliance has plenty of weapons; but they don't have all the weapons that they had when they defeated the Taliban before. We do not have to stay in Afghanistan. But if we do not want to have to come back and fight the Taliban again, the thing to do is rearm and reempower the enemy of our enemies.

Afghanistan has never been strong and never had a strong central government. What made us, in our arrogance, think we could force a strong centralized government that would work in that country? It is a very tribal nation. In the northern area, this administration wants to call our allies, our former allies warlords, war criminals, blood on their hands. They were fighting for us and with us. So in this administration's effort to manipulate the U.S. media, they leak all kinds of stories about how terrible our allies were. They're fighting terrible people. They're fighting people who were training others to come kill thousands and thousands of Americans. These are not nice people, and war is not a pleasant thing.

The Northern Alliance leaders had two asks: one, help us get a constitution amended so that we get to elect our regional leaders. Each province in Afghanistan should be able to elect their local governors. Each province should be able to elect the mayors of the towns within that province. Let them select their own police chief. Let them do as the United States came together to do, not so much in 1983 with Articles of Confederation, but in 1987 with our U.S. Constitution that allowed people to elect local government officials, State government officials, and national officials.

We have a constitution that has been set up in Afghanistan that basically lets the Karzai administration appoint the regional governors, the mayors. They select the police chiefs. That is a system fraught with corruption. No matter how honest anybody is going in, including President Karzai, how in the world could you stay honest and above corruption when you have set up a system that lends itself to corruption?

Well, that's what's happening. So it doesn't seem so much to ask, let the Northern Alliance, as every other area of Afghanistan, elect their local leaders, elect their governors, and then those regional areas become strong again.

And then just as States fuss when the Federal Government of the United States tries to get too powerful, as we've seen with ObamaCare, let's empower those regional provincial governments in Afghanistan to be powerful enough to call down their national leaders when they are corrupt. Let's empower them to fix their own problems, and you don't have to have massive numbers of American troops to do that, but you do have to be smart in the way you deal with a country that has lots of your enemies that want to kill you.

So they asked, let us elect our local, regional leaders. Give us enough equipment where we can defeat the Taliban again, for you and for us.

Now, in meeting and talking to people in Afghanistan, they knew, as did the Baluch leaders in southern Pakistan, that the Taliban is being supplied and equipped with armaments. IEDs that are dismembering and killing our soldiers in Afghanistan are being supplied through the southern area of Pakistan.

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This is an area of Pakistan that hadn't been Pakistan until 1948 when international leaders arbitrarily took pencils and just drew boundary lines, and they included most of Balochistan in with Pakistan. The Balochistanis did not want to be there. They have a very mineral-rich area that is supplying Pakistan with most of their minerals. And yet the Pakistan Government is so badly mistreating the Baluch people. They raid, they torture, and they terrorize the Baluch people in southern Pakistan.

And if Pakistan is going to so terribly mistreat our Muslim friends in southern Pakistan, in the Balochistan area of Pakistan, then it's time to push for an independent Balochistan that will be a nation of Muslim friends of the United States, and we will remain their friends because their enemy is our enemy, and we won't have to sacrifice American troops, American lives, and massive amounts of American treasure like we have been doing. You simply empower the enemy of our enemy and let them do the work for us.

That is the solution. That would be in keeping with holding dear the American lives that have been lost in fighting the Taliban in Afghanistan. That would be true to our beliefs and our desire only to fight those who want to destroy what we are and who we are. That would truly honor those who have given so much in honor of this country.

And with that, Mr. Speaker, I have a friend, Mr. MO BROOKS, here. I yield back the balance of my time so Mr. BROOKS can be recognized.

PAYROLL TAX DECEPTION

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CANSECO). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 5, 2011, the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. BROOKS) is recognized for the remainder of the hour, 15 minutes, as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. BROOKS. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

In the House today, H.R. 3630, the so-called "payroll tax holiday," passed. Later it passed the United States Senate, meaning it passed the United States Congress. But on the House floor today, I joined 91 other Republican budget hawks, each of whom shares my concern for the financial stability of our Nation and a risk of a Federal Government insolvency and bankruptcy. Each of us budget hawks voted "no."

In December of 2011, Alabama Senators RICHARD SHELBY and JEFF SESSIONS and I voted "no" on the deceptively named payroll tax bill. I am pleased today that I was part of a united Republican delegation from the State of Alabama to vote "no" on H.R. 3630.

ROBERT ADERHOLT, Republican from Haleyville, voted "no." SPENCER BACHUS, Republican from Birmingham, voted "no." MIKE ROGERS, Republican from Anniston, voted "no." MARTHA ROBY, Republican from Montgomery, voted "no." And JO BONNER, Republican from Mobile, voted "no."

On the Senate side, Alabama Senator RICHARD SHELBY voted "no," and Alabama Senator JEFF SESSIONS voted "no." Each of these individual Congressmen and Senators voted "no," again because they share a deep-rooted concern for the financial stability of our country and the impact this legislation can have on that.

In sum, I voted against H.R. 3630 for a variety of reasons, but I'm going to mention three. First, H.R. 3630 disproportionately targets and burdens American Federal workers, takes their hard-earned money and diverts it to those who don't work for it. That's not fair, and that's not good policy.

Second, America's seniors have asked me to protect Social Security and Medicare benefits because they paid for and earned them during their working lifetimes. Americans support Social Security because everyone contributes their fair share to their own Social Security retirement benefits. Social Security is not welfare. Social Security is an earned entitlement.

H.R. 3630 undermines Social Security's and Medicare's foundation by threatening 10 percent funding cuts totaling \$120 billion per year, which will, if continued beyond this fiscal year, breach America's commitment to our elderly and will force significant Social Security and Medicare benefit cuts. We cannot expect the benefits while cutting the revenue that provides those benefits.

Third, and most importantly, the name "Middle Class Tax Relief," which

is on the title of H.R. 3630, is deceptive and it is false. There is no tax cut. Rather, Mr. Speaker, I want the American people to understand that it is 100 percent a loan. Let me delve into that a little bit deeper. But as I do so, let me mention this: in the private sector, if a commercial institution had done what Congress did today, it would constitute flagrant violations of truth in advertising, truth in lending, and deceptive practice statutes. But as we all know, Washington is all too often immune from such constraints. H.R. 3630 is false advertising and deceptive because it is not a tax cut. H.R. 3630 is a loan that risks America's solvency and which the American people must pay back with interest.

In this regard, the Congressional Budget Office and Joint Committee on Taxation reports revealed two troubling aspects of H.R. 3630: first, according to the CBO's and JCT's estimates, enacting H.R. 3630 would change revenues and direct spending to produce increases in the deficit of \$101.1 billion in fiscal year 2012—\$101.1 billion in fiscal year 2012—and we are already 4 or 5 months through with this fiscal year. So that gives you an idea of what it's like for the remainder.

Further, H.R. 3630 would direct the Office of Management and Budget to exclude the budgetary effects of H.R. 3630 from its scorecard of balances under its Statutory Pay-As-You-Go Act of 2010. So what is H.R. 3630 doing? Well, it's instructing the Office of Management and Budget to not count the deficit impact of this legislation on its full scorecard of balances.

In sum, the Congressional Budget Office report confirms that every penny of the so-called "tax cut" must be paid back with interest. Now, where I come from, if you're given money that you have to pay back with interest, that is called a loan; and that is exactly what the American people will have to do.

My parents taught me about debt. Debt never rests. Debt is working against you 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 52 weeks a year for however many years it takes you to pay it off in full. Too much debt enslaves you. Your creditors and your debt become your masters, and you become their servant.

This is what debt does to every American family, and it is doing that slowly but surely to America. As you all know, we blew through the \$15 trillion mark in November of 2011, and sometime this year we are going to blow by the \$16 trillion debt mark. That debt is not free. There is no free lunch.

According to the CBO report, H.R. 3630 racks up debt at the rate of over \$12 billion per month in FY 2012. Now, if I had a printed copy of H.R. 3630—but the speed of this place sometimes does not empower you to have that—according to the CBO report, if we were to have printed H.R. 3630 on sheets of gold—which we probably should have done because it costs American taxpayers roughly \$500 million per page in

additional debt burden and payments—that's the cost of that bill per page.

□ 1300

Why would Washington do this to America? What is Washington's motive for this deception? Why don't we call things what they are? Why don't we call a payroll tax a payroll tax rather than a Social Security and Medicare funding tax, which is what it really is? The answer is simple: poll data, pandering to voters, and the 2012 elections.

Why does Washington use the phrase "payroll tax" rather than what so-called "payroll taxes" are—Social Security and Medicare funding taxes? Because polls show voters don't understand what the payroll tax is, but by golly they know what Social Security and Medicare funding taxes are. Yet, 100 percent of the so-called "tax cuts" in H.R. 3630 are cuts to Social Security and Medicare funding taxes. In other words, Washington politicians use the phrase "payroll tax" because they know using the more accurate phrase "Social Security tax" would cause American voters to rise up to protect our Social Security and Medicare system.

Worse yet, H.R. 3630 deceives America's working families into believing they are reaping a windfall when in fact they are being saddled with a burden, a burden that will hamstring our children, grandchildren, and America's future with another layer of heavy, taxing, onerous debt. What Washington won't tell the American people is that H.R. 3630 is another debt-busting bill that further empowers China and other American predators to become our master while enslaving America and the American people with generations of oppressive debt burden payments.

Mr. Speaker, America yearns for leadership, leadership that involves adult, mature conversations with American voters about the financial condition we are in and what H.R. 3630 is really about.

There are simply too many in Washington who pander to voters in an election year for political gain. H.R. 3630, Mr. Speaker, I would submit, represents the worst of Washington, not the best, and not what the people deserve.

I cannot speak for other Congressmen, but as for me, today I and 90 other Republican budget hawks stood strong for America's future. We voted to kill H.R. 3630, stop the deception, stop pandering to voters, and save America from another mountain of oppressive debt that threatens us with insolvency and bankruptcy.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message in writing from the President of the United States was communicated to the House by Mr. Brian Tate, one of his secretaries.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate agrees to the report of the committee of conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the amendments of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 3630) "An Act to provide incentives for the creation of jobs, and for other purposes."

PEAK OIL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 5, 2011, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. BARTLETT) is recognized for 30 minutes.

Mr. BARTLETT. Mr. Speaker, when I looked at the television this morning and at that little crawler across the top of one of our stations, I noticed that oil was \$103 a barrel—\$103 a barrel and we're in a recession. What's happening here?

So I've got a chart here that goes back a few years—in fact, it ends in, what, 2008. There we have oil at something less than \$100 a barrel. But if you extended this chart out just a little bit, you would see that it had jumped up to \$147 a barrel, and that's of course aided by the housing bubble collapse. The economy came tumbling down and the price of oil dropped down to something under about here, \$140 a barrel. Now it has crept back up slowly, slowly, as supply was not able to keep up with demand, until we now have oil at \$103 a barrel and we're in a recession.

This is an interesting chart because it was maybe predicting something that we were sure was going to happen at some time or other, but we weren't sure when it was going to happen, and that's a phenomenon called peak oil. Peak oil is that highest production that you can achieve for a country—it occurs in a country, it occurs in a region, it occurs in the world. That peak for us occurred in 1970.

Today, in spite of all that we have done in the most creative, innovative society in the world, the United States, today we produce half the oil that we did in 1970, and we've drilled more oil wells in our country than all the rest of the world put together. Well, here we see that the two entities which do a really good job of tracking the production and consumption—which are the same; we don't have any big stores anywhere of oil, so the consumption is the same thing as the production of oil—and they looked like they had plateaued. They had been going up and up and up. Every time we needed more oil, we could produce more oil. But we ran out of our ability to do that. And as the production stagnated and the demand kept going up, wow, look what happened to the price. It really spiked in the price, and it went up to \$147 a barrel.

We weren't sure then that this might not have been just a little ripple in the upswing of production of oil, but we