

banks got the brunt of a lot of this because the big banks can afford the extra regulation and compliance. The small banks cannot. So, what the President's bill did is it ignored Fannie and it ignored Freddie—the problems—and then it went after banks. It made Wall Street happy in many ways. Many of them got on board and endorsed it. And then who took the brunt of the burden, the regulatory burden? Small-town banks. Small-town banks.

Mr. GRIFFITH of Virginia. You said that Wall Street backed it, but I can guarantee you, Main Street didn't back it. Main Street had problems with it. I feel personal about this because as a young lawyer right out of law school, I took some risks. I had to go to the bank. The bank that I had been dealing with wouldn't work with me on buying a building. But one of my community banks stepped up to the plate, and they said, do you know what? We know that as long as you're alive, you'll pay this loan. Even if business isn't good, we count on you because we have known you since you were a kid, and we know exactly that you're going to be there, and you're going to do things.

Without that money, I daresay that I wouldn't have had a successful law practice for 28 years. A lot of times people don't think of lawyers as businessmen, but if you're a sole practitioner like I was for many, many years, you've got to make the payroll, you've got to pay your loans, and you've got to do the things that you have got to do. Well, guess what's happening? That loan wouldn't have been made to me today.

Another young man in a situation like I was in who wanted to go out and practice on his own and make his way in his hometown wouldn't be allowed to do that under the current regulatory scheme—and that's that job plus the jobs of all the people who I had working for me in that office as I went forward with my practice. So you're absolutely right in what you say.

Further, I have to get back to your Regulatory Freeze for Jobs Act. I have said for some time I wish I had introduced the bill. But I have said for some time that if we would put a freeze on new regulations and say to the American entrepreneur, the business people out there if you invest in the United States now, we will give you a window where you don't have to worry about any new regulations, we would turn this economy around like that, and we would see that unemployment rate not just drop by point one or point two, but we would see it drop down to your 6 percent that you've put in there, and I think we would even see it drop below that 6 percent if people knew that they could count on having, not no regulation, but reasonable regulations, and not have to worry about new regulations during this time of economic stress.

Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas. I thank the gentleman from Virginia. I know we're running short on time, so I just

want to say to the folks listening out there, wherever you may be, these are not new ideas. Some of the ideas you've heard tonight on tax reform, regulatory reform, energy exploration and making the Federal Government live within its means and investing in infrastructure, these are not ideas that just came up this week. You may ask yourself, why haven't we passed these a long time ago? Why haven't we worked on this before? Why are we just talking about it now? We have been for over a year. For over a year we have been working on these issues.

Many of these ideas we've passed. Let's take tax reform. We talked about that in our budget over a year ago—it will be a year, I guess, in April. Regulatory reform, I can't count the number of bills—not including mine, I just introduced mine—but we have passed bill after bill after bill that deals with regulatory reform. What about energy exploration? I literally can't count the number of bills that we've passed that deal with energy exploration, particularly the Keystone pipeline, bill after bill after bill.

If there's any softening in the President's position on the Keystone XL pipeline, you can bet it's because we have been relentless in this House—relentless in this House—pushing the President to allow for the construction of that pipeline. We've got a long way to go, but we'll keep pushing.

On the issue of the budget and living within our means, we've been fighting this battle for over a year. So none of this is brand spanking new. A lot of these ideas we've been fighting for for over a year, and we'll continue to. But we've got to keep talking about them, keep talking about them.

So what's happened after we passed them? Well, a significant number, about 30 or so, have passed this House, and they go right down to the other side of the building, and they sit in the Senate. Many of us grew up in the 1970s and saw the little cartoon, "Schoolhouse Rock," the little bill sitting on the Capitol Hill steps out here somewhere. That little cartoon taught me the fundamentals of our democracy, how a bill becomes law. It passes this House, and then what happens? Well, it has to go down to the Senate.

Unfortunately, they haven't passed a budget out of the Senate in over a thousand days. So you can bet they haven't passed our bills, either. So we've addressed a lot of this stuff. And we're going to keep talking about it and keep pushing and keep pushing. But a lot of it is sitting right down there in the Senate waiting for action, going nowhere. So if you're wondering what's happened to these ideas, that's where they are. And we are continuing to work on them here, continuing to pressure the Senate and the President to try to work with us to get this stuff done, because these pillars—tax reform, regulatory reform, energy exploration, getting the Federal Government to live within its means and hav-

ing a commonsense budget, and as part of that, addressing our infrastructure issues, all those together, they all relate to jobs. So we'll keep fighting for jobs.

I yield back the balance of my time.

□ 2010

FREEDOM UNDER ASSAULT

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

Mr. GOHMERT. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

These are the best of times and in some ways the worst of times. Our freedoms are under assault, and some people in places of leadership do not appreciate the threat to our freedoms and therefore are naively assisting those who would take them away.

We know that in recent days in Afghanistan we had some soldiers who were given the responsibility to burn Korans which were being used by prisoners to write messages of an incendiary nature to other prisoners. Well, it's my understanding of shari'a law that to write in such a Koran could be considered a desecration; yet there's been no protest, no outrage over prisoners using the Koran to pass inflammatory messages to other prisoners.

We've also seen the death of Americans as a result. Two officers, along with others, have been killed and injured. Our Commander in Chief has seen fit to apologize to those who house the killers of our two American officers.

When I think about the feelings of the family members of the two American officers who were serving, to have a commander not do as Lincoln and so many Commanders in Chief have done in the past wherein they sent those troubling letters to grieving families to thank them for their service and to truly grieve with the families, no, in this case, the Commander in Chief sent messages instead to the home of the killer.

Now, we're led to believe by some internationally that, gee, it just overwhelmed the killer of the two officers. But then we hear that he may have taken a silencer with him to work. Well, where I come from, courts that I've been in to prosecute, my court as a judge, my region as a chief justice, that would be considered evidence of premeditation, of first degree murder; and yet we apologize to those who think like the murderer.

I haven't heard a demand for an apology from Afghanistan and from the leaders of Afghanistan, who would not be in office but for the lives and sacrifice of American soldiers. They wouldn't be there but for American soldiers, yet no apology from Afghanistan. So I think we have to look a little deeper at what is really going on here.

We know that in the United States it's been deemed to be just fine to stick a cross that symbolizes the death and sacrifice of Jesus Christ in a beaker of urine. Now, some of us believe that anybody that would do such a thing without repenting before they leave this life will have a special price to pay by the Judge of all judges, by that same Creator which gave us our inalienable rights. But not only was that done; it was funded by the United States Government NEA funds.

We've been told repeatedly that there is nothing unconstitutional about burning an American flag, that flag for which so many millions of Americans have given the last full measure of devotion. We're told that it doesn't violate our Constitution to burn American Bibles, that that's just fine under our Constitution. Yet we even have great Americans who have risked their life for this country, who see the death and loss of lives, say you know what, maybe we ought to have a law that says you can't burn a Koran or you can't shoot at a Koran.

Some may recall that on May 22, 2008, there was a U.S. soldier that shot at a Koran. That sparked unrest, and there were two civilians and a Lithuanian that were killed as a result of that. Some people may remember last year when a pastor in Florida burned a Koran; it sparked rioting and 11 were killed, including seven U.N. workers.

What's really going on here? Well, I think it's important to look back to the Organization of Islamic—what used to be Islamic Conference—now it's been changed to Islamic Cooperation—and we can find some things. I've got a chart here to show.

This is from the Third Extraordinary Session of the Islamic Summit. It outlines the 10-year Program of Action to Meet the Challenges Facing the Muslim Ummah in the 21st Century. This is the Islamic Summit Conference results. It's important to note that the term "Islamophobia" was invented for just such occasions to try to demonize Americans—or so-called "Westerners"—who might try to say there's such a thing as freedom of speech, freedom of religion, who would seek to subjugate our First Amendment rights to the Islamic Conference, their rules and shari'a law.

The plan, the 10-year plan from December 2005, the plan is, here at number two:

Affirm the need to counter Islamophobia through the establishment of an observatory at the OIC General Secretariat to monitor all forms of Islamophobia, issue an annual report thereon, and ensure cooperation with the relevant governmental and non-governmental organizations, NGOs, in order to counter Islamophobia.

Endeavor to have the United Nations adopt an international resolution to counter Islamophobia, and call upon all States to enact laws to counter it, including deterrent punishments.

That's right. This is in compliance with the 10-year plan from 2005 to subjugate Americans' First Amendment

rights under our Constitution to shari'a law.

□ 2020

It's not a terribly complicated effort, but it is brutal. It has cost so many lives, all in an effort to not only show disdain for actions of Westerners regarding the Koran, but also to push to get the U.N. and all states such as the United States to adopt laws to punish what shari'a would consider any inappropriate use or abuse of a Koran.

I happen to think as a Christian it's terribly inappropriate to abuse a Koran. I would encourage people not to do so. I would likewise say that it is a terrible thing to abuse a Bible and to abuse a flag. It shouldn't be done. As a servicemember, prosecutor, judge, chief justice, I took an oath to support and defend the Constitution of the United States, and that means all rights under our Constitution.

Just so people don't forget, I think it is appropriate to remember what is in the First Amendment:

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech or the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.

We're supposed to have the right to freedom of speech. The Supreme Court has said that means you can burn a flag, you can burn a Bible, you can burn a Koran. But there is a movement in all 57 states—that's right, 57 states of the OIC—to get the U.N. and all countries to subjugate their freedoms to shari'a law. Sure it's okay to burn a Bible, burn a flag, but not a Koran. It's wrong to do so, but it's not illegal.

We're told as of today that the Taliban says the airport blast in Afghanistan was revenge for Koran burnings. This article today points out that 40 people have been killed in protests and related attacks since the incident became known this past Tuesday, including four U.S. soldiers. NATO, France, Britain, and the U.S. have pulled their advisers from Afghan ministries out of concern that the anti-foreigner anger might erupt again. After all we've done, it's not over. These people feel they still must subjugate our First Amendment rights to shari'a law.

The First Amendment should be pretty clear. It should be noted that until the 1950s when Lyndon Johnson basically got tired of churches yapping at him over what they deemed as moral issues, he shut them up by adding an additional provision added to the tax laws that basically forbade any church or such organization from getting involved in politics. My children were surprised, based on what they had been taught in public school, that for most of this country's history, churches were the bedrock, churches were involved in every great movement that occurred, both in the Revolution, in the civil rights movement that resulted in the abolition of slavery, in

the civil rights movement of the 1950s and '60s. Lest we forget, Martin Luther King, Jr., was an ordained Christian minister. He knew and espoused the true way, truth and light.

The Cairo Declaration on Human Rights in Islam was established in 1990. When we hear about the cause for human rights under shari'a law, it is important to understand what that means. This is from the Cairo Declaration on Human Rights in Islam from August of 1990. Article 24 says:

All the rights and freedoms stipulated in this Declaration are subject to the Islamic shari'a.

Article 25:

Islamic shari'a is the only source of reference for the explanation or clarification of any of the articles of this Declaration.

That's what we're talking about. When the term "human rights" is utilized, it's important for people to understand that under this declaration of human rights that is still being forwarded today and thrust at us, it's important to note that those are considered human rights only under the definition of shari'a.

When we're told about the OIC believing and pushing human rights, that means no one has the right to desecrate a Koran in any way, although they can burn Bibles and American flags all day long. It means no one has the freedom of speech to draw a cartoon about Mohammed because if they do, they have the human right to be executed.

If someone is a Muslim and they pronounce that Jesus Christ has become their Lord, then they have the human right to be executed. If someone is a woman testifying under the laws of shari'a, she has the right to have her testimony only count as half that of a man. Under these terms, if a woman inherits from a male, she has the human right to receive just one-half of the inheritance that a man would. Under shari'a, as to those women on whose part you fear disloyalty and ill conduct, admonish them first, next refuse to share their beds, and, last, beat them. If a husband is displeased with his wife, the woman has the human right to be beaten.

This goes on and on. I'm surprised that the women's rights movement has not been more assertive in pointing out the inequalities that occur in countries that espouse shari'a and the threat that it imposes to women's rights all over the world and in America.

Under shari'a, to bring a claim of rape, a Muslim woman must present four male Muslim witnesses in good standing. Islam places the burden of avoiding illicit sexual encounters entirely on the woman. In fact, under shari'a, women who bring a claim of rape without being able to produce four male Muslim witnesses, admitting to having had illicit sex, if she or the man is married, this amounts to an admission of adultery and she should be punished. Some believe she should be stoned to death and at a minimum

flogged if she is raped and can't produce four men of Muslim good standing on her behalf.

□ 2030

She has the human right to be flogged or in some eyes to be stoned to death.

There are those who are saying we should get out of Afghanistan now. Actually, we could have done that a long time ago if a different course had been pursued. It is not inappropriate to note that in so many circumstances the enemy of our enemy should be considered our friend.

Along with DANA ROHRBACHER and STEVE KING, we met twice with Northern Alliance leaders, and although these brave leaders and their soldiers, their horse soldiers, did what some intelligence and special ops individuals have indicated, performed acts of heroism and gallantry such as they'd never seen before on their behalf and on behalf of America.

The Taliban was initially defeated, people forget, when we had initially less than 200, at no point more than 1,500, American special ops and intelligence just embedded with the Northern Alliance, assisting them as the enemy of the Taliban.

Our friends, the Northern Alliance, they're Muslim. They're our Muslim friends. But they did not want the intolerance of the Taliban and were willing to pay any price, just as the Founders were, to prevent having the Taliban take them over and, as they had done before, burn films, burn books, burn art, dictate to the women, prevent their freedoms. The Northern Alliance helped us by basically being the people who defeated the Taliban. We provided them the arms to do it, we provided them the aerial support, and they did it.

We disarmed them, told them they had nothing to worry about. We added over 100,000 troops and became occupiers. We tried to nation build. We gave them a constitution that provides for shari'a law.

Where is the apology to Afghan Christians for us getting them a constitution that does not permit public churches? The last Christian church in Afghanistan has closed. At last account, I'd seen there was one acknowledged Jewish person living in Afghanistan.

Now there's intolerance. We have a \$12.5 billion government in Afghanistan. That's their budget, and they provide about \$1.5 billion of their own. You know what happens to that government when we pull out? That's why the Taliban is telling people, even on Afghan television, We're going to be in charge as soon as the U.S. pulls out.

There are ways to deal with this issue. If you just look at the map, you get a good idea what we're talking about.

During a recent trip to Afghanistan and meeting with Baluch people—let's first look at the map itself.

Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iran, India. Now, before 1948, this area in here was Baluchistan. In 1948, the arbitrary lines

that were drawn put Baluchistan in with Pakistan. This used to be a Baluch area. As a recent Pakistan Daily News editorial pointed out, most of Pakistan's natural resources come from this area. As people have advised us in Afghanistan when I was over there recently, the Taliban are being supported by supplies, arms. They're getting their support from southern Pakistan into southern Afghanistan. They're coming through the Baluch area.

The Baluch don't want that. They're Muslim. They're our friends. They want to be our friends. They would be wonderful friends. They have been terrorized by the Pakistani Government for decades, and we've stood by and didn't seem to care, the world has.

Well, perhaps it is time to recognize an independent Baluchistan, where we'd have a friend who would not keep supplying the enemy of America, those people that helped train and prepare for 9/11 to kill as many thousands of Americans as they could.

We don't want to leave Afghanistan in the hands of the Taliban and all of the American life and treasure be for nothing. But there is an easy answer. We leave, but we empower the enemy of our enemy, the Northern Alliance and the Baluch people. Let them take care of their own area. Let them prevent the Taliban from taking over. Let them prevent Pakistan from becoming such a focused enemy as they have unabated. Let them worry.

India wants to be our friend.

If we look at the area of Pakistan, well, this shows the different major ethnic groups. Pink here is the Baluch people; green is the Pashtun. And, of course, only a tiny percentage of the Pashtun people make up the Taliban, but virtually all of the Taliban is made up of Pashtun. They do come over here into Pakistan. Then we have brown as the Punjabi and the yellow as the Sindi.

Northern Alliance is up here. You've got a number of different groups up there, including Uzbeks. But these are people who do not want the Taliban to ever take over. They're the enemy of our enemy, and that's where we can do some real good. It's time to stop the support of those who would take away our First Amendment rights.

There's an article, this is from CNN, May 20, 2009:

Military personnel threw away, and ultimately burned, confiscated Bibles that were printed in the two most common Afghan languages amid concerns that they would be used to try to convert Afghans, a Defense Department spokesman said Tuesday.

The unsolicited Bibles sent by a church in the United States were confiscated about a year ago at Bagram Air Base in Afghanistan because military rules forbid troops of any religion from proselytizing while deployed there.

Such religious outreach can endanger American troops and civilians in the devoutly Muslim nation.

Why would it endanger civilians if they have the rights that Americans say we're fighting for? Why? We're burning Bibles, the American military did, back in 2009?

I was given this Bible by my aunt, told that it was provided during World War II to my uncle, says, "May the Lord be with you." It's a New Testament, and inside the front cover it says:

As Commander in Chief, I take pleasure in commending the reading of the Bible to all who serve in the Armed Forces of the United States. Throughout the centuries, men of many faiths and diverse origins have found in the sacred book words of wisdom, counsel, and inspiration. It is a fountain of strength, and now, as always, an aid in attaining the highest aspirations of the human soul.

Signed by President Franklin D. Roosevelt.

That wasn't signed by President Obama. It was signed by Franklin Roosevelt, and it was given to our soldiers.

Mr. Speaker, in conclusion, let me just say, if the President takes more action to demean the American rights and to eliminate our own rights, then it's time for the President to apologize, not to Afghanistan but to the American people.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. JACKSON of Illinois (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of business in the district.

Mr. BILBRAY (at the request of Mr. CANTOR) for today on account of a family medical issue.

Mr. CULBERSON (at the request of Mr. CANTOR) for today on account of illness.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 8 o'clock and 40 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Tuesday, February 28, 2012, at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

5095. A letter from the Acting Under Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting a letter on the approved retirement of Admiral Robert F. Willard, United States Navy, and his advancement to the grade of admiral on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

5096. A letter from the Acting Under Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting a letter on the approved retirement of Lieutenant General John D. Gardner, United States Army, and his advancement to the grade of lieutenant general on the retired list; to the Committee on Armed Services.

5097. A letter from the Associate General Counsel for Legislation and Regulations, Department of Housing and Urban Development, transmitting the Department's final