

organizations, with some Egyptian officials accusing them—without offering any evidence—of trying to subvert Egypt's political process. Without belaboring the point, their work was no secret as they had nothing to hide. They were helping to build the capacity of Egyptian organizations engaged in peaceful work for democracy and human rights, supporting the development of political parties, and working with Egyptian groups to provide non-partisan voter education.

The military argues that since these groups were not registered, they were in violation of Egyptian law, but this is a transparently specious excuse for shutting them down. Their repeated applications for registration were neither granted nor denied. The government simply chose to ignore them.

Egyptian officials also insist that this is simply a matter of upholding the rule of law, but the complaint against these organizations was issued by a Minister with no direct authority over legal matters, and a negative propaganda campaign was unleashed in the state-controlled media. The conduct of the raids, seizure of the files and computers, interrogation of the employees, and the no-fly order have not been conducted consistent with legal standards but instead seem to be politically motivated. No warrants have been issued, no charging documents made public, and no inventory of seized property made available.

Many suspect that the force behind this crackdown is Minister of International Cooperation Faiza Aboul Naga, who was described in a Washington Post editorial this week as “a civilian holdover from the Mubarak regime” and “an ambitious demagogue [who] is pursuing a well-worn path in Egyptian politics—whipping up nationalist sentiment against the United States as a way of attacking liberal opponents at home.” Given Minister Aboul Naga's recent statements, I strongly believe that no future U.S. Government funds should be provided to or through that ministry as long as she is in charge. As the chair of the Appropriations Committee's Subcommittee on the State Department and Foreign Operations, I am confident there is strong support in Congress for this position.

A related issue is the Egyptian military's continued use of vaguely worded emergency laws to silence dissent. While it is encouraging that the head of the military, General Tantawi, announced plans to lift the 30-year state of emergency, that is only a first step.

As I have mentioned, for decades the United States and Egypt have been friends and allies. While we have differed over issues of democracy and human rights, our two countries have worked together in pursuit of common goals. Our partnership needs to be strengthened and broadened to respond to the interests and aspirations of the Egyptian people themselves. Our long-standing legacy of cooperation with

the Egyptian Government is now in jeopardy, and it is in the interests of both countries that this crisis is promptly and satisfactorily resolved and that we focus instead on moving forward to build an even stronger and enduring relationship.

In December, President Obama signed into law the Consolidated Appropriations Act for 2012. Section 7041(a)(1) of division I of that act provides that prior to the obligation of \$1.3 billion in fiscal year 2012 U.S. military aid for Egypt, the Secretary of State shall certify that “the Government of Egypt is supporting the transition to civilian government including holding free and fair elections; implementing policies to protect freedom of expression, association, and religion, and due process of law.”

These unprecedented requirements, which I wrote, were included for two reasons. First, we want to send a clear message to the Egyptian people that we support their demand for democracy and fundamental freedoms. Second, we want to send a clear message to the Egyptian military that the days of blank checks are over. We value the relationship and will provide substantial amounts of aid, but not unconditionally. They must do their part to support the transition to civilian government. If the assault against international and Egyptian nongovernmental organizations continues, several of the requirements for certification could not be met.

Egypt has an extraordinary history dating back thousands of years. Anyone who has stood at the base of the pyramids cannot help but be in awe of what that society accomplished centuries before Columbus arrived in America. It is a destination for thousands of American tourists and students each year. It has the potential to be a strong force for democratic change and moderation in the Middle East and north Africa.

I hope the Egyptian authorities fully appreciate the seriousness of this situation and what is at stake. They need to permit these organizations to reopen their offices, return the confiscated property, end investigations of their activities and the activities of Egyptian groups, and register them without conditions so they can continue to support the democratic transition.

I ask unanimous consent that the Washington Post editorial be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Washington Post, Jan. 31, 2012]

EGYPT'S WITCH HUNT THREATENS A RUPTURE WITH THE U.S.

(Editorial)

There is a grotesque incongruity in the tour around Washington this week of an Egyptian military delegation even as seven Americans who work for congressionally funded pro-democracy groups are prevented from leaving Cairo and threatened with criminal prosecution. What makes it worse

is that the ruling military council refuses to recognize the seriousness of the crisis it has created in the U.S.-Egyptian alliance.

The persecution of the Americans, which has been escalating since their offices were raided Dec. 29, is an extraordinary provocation by the generals who succeeded Hosni Mubarak. Despite repeated appeals, including by President Obama, military council chief Field Marshal Mohammed Hussein Tantawi has failed to deliver on promises to call off the witch hunt and return confiscated funds and property. Over the weekend, three of the Americans, including the son of Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood, moved into the U.S. Embassy compound in Cairo out of fear for their safety.

Meanwhile the Egyptian military delegation, headed by Fouad Abdelhalim, defense minister for arms affairs, is here on a business-as-usual mission to discuss security cooperation—including the weapons purchases Egypt makes with the \$1.3 billion in U.S. military aid it receives each year. The generals regard this funding as an entitlement, linked to the country's peace treaty with Israel. They appear to believe that Washington will not dare to cut them off, even if Americans seeking to promote democracy in Egypt are made the object of xenophobic slanders and threatened with imprisonment.

Preserving the alliance with Egypt, and maintaining good relations with its military, is an important U.S. interest. But the Obama administration must be prepared to take an uncompromising stand. If the campaign against U.S., European and Egyptian NGOs is not ended, military aid must be suspended.

Administration officials say Gen. Tantawi has been warned repeatedly that the aid money is at risk. But they tend to blame Congress, which attached conditions to the 2012 military funding over the administration's objections. Before aid is disbursed, the administration is required to certify to Congress that Egypt is holding free elections and protecting freedom of expression and association. Officials acknowledge that no certification will be possible while the prosecutions continue, and that funding could run out in March. But the legislation provides for the certification to be waived by the State Department on grounds of national security. That course must be ruled out.

The campaign against the International Republican Institute, National Democratic Institute and Freedom House, along with a half-dozen Egyptian and European groups, is being led by Minister of International Cooperation Faiza Aboul Naga, a civilian holdover from the Mubarak regime. Ms. Aboul Naga, an ambitious demagogue, is pursuing a well-worn path in Egyptian politics—whipping up nationalist sentiment against the United States as a way of attacking liberal opponents at home. The regime's calculation has always been that it can get away with such outrages because U.S. policymakers will conclude they can't afford a rupture in relations with Egypt. But if such a break is to be avoided, the generals must be disabused of the notion that U.S. military aid is inviolate.

PAYING A FAIR SHARE ACT OF 2012

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I rise today in support of the Paying a Fair Share Act, also known as the Buffett rule. This legislation, introduced yesterday by my good friend from Rhode Island, highlights an important conversation about fairness and tax policy in this country.

Now, some of my friends across the aisle have some interesting ways of discussing the principle that millionaires

and billionaires should pay the same percent of their income taxes as middle-class families. They call it class warfare; they call it a political stunt. But in reality it is neither of those things. The Paying a Fair Share Act is common sense—the principle that everyone has a right to earn as much money as they can in America, as long as they are contributing their fair share.

We must have a sincere discussion about the distribution of tax burdens in this country. I am proud to be an original cosponsor of the Paying a Fair Share Act, because it addresses this issue head on.

New York is a large, diverse State full of very different people with very different views—a fact of which I am extremely proud. But all across the State people agree on the basic principle that a Tax Code which allows the most privileged of our society, people making tens and hundreds of millions of dollars a year, to pay less than 14 percent in taxes—significantly less than the average middle-class family—is broken.

With the introduction of the Paying a Fair Share Act, we now have before us legislation that can significantly reduce our debt and deficit without also breaking the backs of middle-class Americans. By ensuring that millionaires and billionaires pay at least 30 percent of their income in taxes—a rate similar to many average Americans—we can reinstitute tax fairness in this country, a principle that our Tax Code has sadly lacked since the Bush tax cuts ballooned our debt by cutting taxes for the ultra wealthy.

I invite my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to take part in this conversation. I consider the Paying a Fair Share Act as the beginning of a conversation, not the end of it. As the co-chair of the Senate Philanthropy Caucus, I was pleased to see that my colleague from Rhode Island included language that ensures we continue to promote charitable giving and I would have liked to have seen a similar provision for State and local income taxes. Regardless, I know we will have the opportunity to build upon this proposal as it moves through consideration in the Senate and I look forward to working with my colleagues to improve it.

The issues of institutional unfairness in our Tax Code and our debt are not going away—not until we act. I hope my colleagues on both sides of the aisle can take the Paying a Fair Share Act as the beginning of a new chapter in the national debate, one that ends with a fairer Tax Code, deficit reduction, and a message to the American people that their government will not rest until we have created a stronger, more prosperous, and fairer American economy.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

RECOGNIZING THE ARKANSAS LIGHTHOUSE FOR THE BLIND AND THE ABILITYONE PROGRAM

• Mr. BOOZMAN. Madam President, today I wish to recognize Arkansas Lighthouse for the Blind and the AbilityOne program, two important partners in our efforts to help blind Americans and those with other severe disabilities find meaningful employment.

The AbilityOne Program, formerly Javits-Wagner-O'Day, helps more than 47,000 people who are blind or have other severe disabilities put their skills and talents to work. It is the largest source of employment for people who are blind or have other severe disabilities in the country.

There are more than 600 nonprofit agencies throughout the United States, including Arkansas Lighthouse for the Blind, who participate in AbilityOne. These agencies produce over \$2.3 billion in products and services purchased by the Federal Government.

Before entering public service, I practiced optometry in Rogers, AK. Assisting people with vision problems was more than a career for me, it was, and remains, a commitment. It led me to help establish a low vision program at the Arkansas School for the Blind in Little Rock and to offer my services as a volunteer optometrist at an area clinic that provides medical services to low-income families. I see a tremendous amount of passion and commitment in those who give their time and services to Arkansas Lighthouse to the Blind.

Having visited the Arkansas Lighthouse for the Blind, and seeing firsthand the folks who work there and the products they make, I could not be more proud of the work done by these men and women.

I applaud any organization that helps people who are blind or severely disabled find employment. The same job that a colleague or I might take for granted is a lifeline for those living with a disability. The products and services produced through Arkansas Lighthouse for the Blind and other organizations across the country also prove that someone with a disability can lead a productive life and make major contributions within their community. They provide a valuable service and I offer my continued support for their efforts.●

TRIBUTE TO JEAN PACE

• Mr. PRYOR. Madam President, it is my great pleasure today to recognize an Arkansan and a dedicated public servant on her approaching 75th birthday. Jean Pace, the longtime mayor of Mammoth Spring, AR, will celebrate her birthday on February 11, 2012. Family and friends will gather to celebrate not only Jean's birthday but also her tireless public service that has spanned 37 years.

Prior to her time in public office, Jean was drawn to Mammoth Spring for a teaching job. Needless to say, she fell in love with the town and its people and still lives there today. She spent 15 years teaching in the school district and played a significant role in developing the school's gifted and talented program as well as the music and band programs. Jean's love of music extended beyond the classroom as she also taught hundreds of children and adults piano lessons in her free time.

Though Jean loved inspiring her students each day in the classroom, she ultimately decided to pursue a greater role in the community and ran for mayor. Jean has now served 22 years in the mayor's office, and the city and surrounding area have seen substantial improvements with her at the helm. Mayor Pace has a reputation for being relentless in her pursuit of grant monies and in her efforts to improve the quality of life for the residents of Mammoth Spring. Her time and efforts have paved the way for such things as a new fire truck for the fire department, funding for the Aquatic Conservation and Education Center at Mammoth Spring National Fish Hatchery, and various improvements at the State Park. Her tenure as mayor also saw Ozarka College open a new location in Mammoth Spring, which has provided additional educational opportunities to Mammoth Spring residents.

While her work on behalf of the city is how most people know Mayor Pace, I would be remiss not to mention possibly the toughest and most rewarding job Jean has held. That is the job of mother and grandmother to her wonderful family. Jean's family includes her kids, Suzanne Pace Kimes and George Spencer Pace; their spouses, Curt Kimes and Ellen Pace; and two grandkids, George Sheffield Pace and Dalton Christine Pace. I know they will all enjoy being together to celebrate Jean's 75th birthday next week.

Mr. President, I ask all my colleagues to join me in wishing Jean a happy 75th birthday and thank her for her 37 years of public service to Mammoth Spring.●

REMEMBERING EVELYN LAUDER

• Mr. LAUTENBERG. Madam President, late last year we lost Evelyn H. Lauder, a business leader, women's health advocate, refugee of nazism—and a friend.

Evelyn was born in Vienna, Austria, in 1936, the only daughter of Ernest and Mimi Hausner. Two years later, after Nazi troops invaded Austria, the Hausners fled to England, where Evelyn's mother was sent to an internment camp on the Isle of Man.

In 1940, after Mrs. Hausner's release, the family sailed to the United States. They settled in New York, where Evelyn attended public schools and Hunter College. She then married Leonard Lauder; had two sons, William and Gary; and for a while worked as a schoolteacher in New York.