

ON WATCH IN WASHINGTON

Intercessors for America's PRAYER ALERT

March 2, 2011

National Security / Economy

Pray for Defense Secretary Robert Gates to be receptive to the letter he receives from Members of Congress regarding concerns about Chinese-U.S. defense contracts. Pray that the Lord would prevent U.S. lawmakers and businessmen from making impulsive and unwise decisions that could undermine national security. Pray for protection for U.S. soldiers and for prudent measures that would guard their lives and ensure their effectiveness in combat.

"So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall!" (1 Corinthians 10:12)

CHINA SEEKS U.S. DEFENSE CONTRACTS AND HOLDS MORE U.S. DEBT THAN REPORTED

When nine Members of Congress recently learned that Chinese-owned defense companies intend to seek U.S. defense contracts, they immediately sent a letter to Defense Secretary Robert Gates recommending caution. [The Wall Street Journal reported on February 4](#) that China's lofty ambitions in the aerospace industry include partnering with a U.S. firm to offer the AC-313, China's largest domestic helicopter, as "the next generation of Marine One." Both companies are also discussing a replacement training jet for the Air Force. If the contract moves forward, it may be one of the most lucrative military aviation contracts this decade. The replacement jet would be used to train pilots to fly the U.S. F-22 and F-35 stealth fighters, and the U.S. would probably buy around 400.

U.S. officials and lawmakers warn against this cooperation, citing concerns over long-term national security and China's unclear strategic goals. Members of Congress wrote that the unwise move would place the defense supply chain in serious jeopardy in the event of a future sustained conflict, allowing the Chinese government access to sensitive U.S. technologies, and putting U.S. soldiers at risk. Meanwhile, John Kirkland, a lawyer and representative for U.S. Aerospace, stated, "We want China to supply aircraft to the United States because we think it makes economic sense." He insisted that the methods used would guarantee that the aircraft would not compromise national security and would comply with the Buy American Act.

[Fresh figures](#) indicate that China's holdings of U.S. debt is larger than reported, reaching \$1.16 trillion by the end of 2010 - \$270 billion more than what was guessed. Beijing holds 26.1 percent of the total of \$4.44 trillion held by foreigners. Japan is second and Britain is third.

World Economy

Pray for continued investment in small-scale agriculture so that communities in developing countries as well as more prosperous nations would use their resources wisely to sustain themselves. Pray for a reversal of the conditions that have led to rising food prices, and for protection for the world's poor. Intercede for ways to anticipate the need and reach out to those who are hurting.

"Whoever shuts their ears to the cry of the poor will also cry out and not be answered." (Proverbs 21:13)

WORLD FOOD PRICES: "NO ROOM FOR COMPLACENCY"

When world food prices peaked in January, the UN food agency predicted that the trend was unlikely to let up before summer. Experts now report that prices are at [dangerous levels](#) and will continue to rise, causing turmoil in hard-hit countries. Food prices have increased substantially in Central Asia, and unrest in the Middle East is already aggravated in part by rising costs, [says World Bank President Robert Zoellick](#). He says there is no room for complacency, and challenges international leaders to beware of policies that could exacerbate the problem.

Experts cite financial speculation, bad weather, increased oil prices, export restrictions, unrest, and a growing demand for biofuels as the reasons for soaring prices. Global aid agency Oxfam reports that 50 to 80 percent of a person's income in a developing country is spent on food, so the outcome of higher prices would cause serious risk for poor communities. Oxfam is challenging governments in at-risk areas to start programs to support and invest in small-scale agriculture. Zoellick predicts that "given the poverty levels ... there is a real stress point that could have social and political implications."

Education

Pray for the Holy Spirit to work in Zachary Kopplin's heart, granting him understanding that "the universe was formed at God's command." Intercede for the Louisiana Family Forum to be given the words to speak in defense of legislation that promotes open and objective discussion regarding Intelligent Design and creation. Intercede that Louisiana classrooms would truly be a place of learning and a place where students can exercise critical thinking skills.

"By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible." (Hebrews 11:2)

LOUISIANA STUDENT BATTLES CREATIONISTS

Zachary Kopplin, a senior at Baton Rouge Magnet High School, is working with state Sen. Karen Carter Peterson (D-New Orleans) to gain support to [repeal the 2008 Louisiana Science Education Act \(LSEA\)](#) signed by Governor Bobby Jindal. The 2008 Act allows school boards to approve supplemental classroom materials that critique scientific theories such as evolution, the origins of life, global warming, and human cloning. Under the LSEA, teachers, principals and school administrators are encouraged to promote "critical thinking skills, logical analysis, and open and objective discussion." However, Kopplin argues that the law is "embarrassing," undermining the integrity of sound science education, and he plans to team with Sen. Karen Carter Peterson in April to influence the Louisiana state legislature to reverse the Act and endorse life science textbooks that teach "real science" as opposed to Intelligent Design.

Kopplin's supporters and church-state separation proponents are praising his battle with the Louisiana Family Forum, (an affiliate of Focus on the Family and an advocate of Intelligent Design), comparing him to David in a fight against the "Goliath" of the Religious Right. Jindal has been accused of enacting a law that subjects school boards to costly, unproductive litigation defended at taxpayers' expense.

Rule of Law

Intercede for Congress as a vote may take place this week on whether to defend the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) in court. Pray for a clear understanding of the Constitution and for godly leaders to be given boldness as they defend truth based in Scripture and seek to preserve the rule of law. Give thanks for the efforts of the American Center for Law and Justice as well as the Family Research Council – pray that God would bless their efforts and guide their arguments on behalf of traditional marriage.

“Follow justice and justice alone....” (Deuteronomy 16:20)

OBAMA ADMINISTRATION REFUSES TO DEFEND FEDERAL DEFINITION OF MARRIAGE

Last week, Attorney General Eric Holder released the news that the Obama Administration would [no longer defend the federal definition of marriage](#) found in the [Defense of Marriage Act \(DOMA\)](#) because Obama has decided that Section 3 is unconstitutional. (According to Section 3, the federal government defines marriage as a legal union between one man and one woman.) Following the announcement, the Department of Justice (DoJ) delivered a letter to Members of Congress informing them of the decision. For the time being, however, the law will be enforced by the Administration only until it is repealed by Congress or until the courts declare “a definitive verdict against the law’s constitutionality.” The Defense of Marriage Act was originally signed into law by President Bill Clinton in 1996 authorizing that no state is required to treat as marriage a same-sex union considered marriage in another state.

Jay Sekulow, Chief Counsel for the American Center for Law and Justice (ACLJ), reported that his office has been in regular contact with congressional leadership, and he anticipates a vote this week in the House on whether they will defend marriage and DOMA in court. He states:

The President is the democratically elected chief executive. He is not a king. He is not even a judge. *He has no power to declare a law unconstitutional!*

Article II, Section 3 of the U.S. Constitution states that the President "shall take care that the laws be faithfully executed." If this is allowed to move forward unchecked, President Obama's actions will set a horrible precedent: that a U.S. president can disregard what Congress has done. Our very system of government - with its checks and balances between the legislative, judicial, and executive branches - will be undermined and crippled.

Please understand: This is not just about defending marriage. This is not about elections or political parties. This is not even about President Obama's personal policies. *This is about protecting our constitutional republic.*

The Family Research Council (FRC) also raises concern over the observation that only a few hours after the DoJ’s announcement, litigants overturning Proposition 8 in California filed a “Motion to Vacate Stay” in the Ninth Circuit, producing a 23-page document that cited the Attorney General’s letter twice. While some may say the timing is simply coincidence, the FRC is suspicious. They write:

If there is a quiet partnership, the alliance would be both unethical and highly damaging to America's rule of law. Regardless of your political leanings, it should be obvious that a Department of Justice that collaborates with opponents of federal law to strike it down is clearly an example of a political system run amok. DOJ's job is to defend laws that Congress enacts--not help to undermine them.

[Read the FRC letter](#) sent to the DoJ requesting a record of all correspondence between the DoJ and opponents of Proposition 8 during the last month.

UPDATE: UNION PROTESTS CONTINUE

Pray in agreement with Capitol Hill Prayer Partners: Thank God for the courage of the Governor and legislators in Wisconsin for holding their ground. Ask that the Lord would protect them and give them wisdom. Pray that the people affected would not resort to fear, violence, or revenge, and that God would open their eyes to the truth that their livelihood comes from HIM, and not from man.

“You shall remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you power to get wealth, that he may confirm his covenant that he swore to your fathers, as it is this day.” (Deuteronomy 8:18)

The Wisconsin Assembly [passed a controversial bill](#) that will strip most public workers of their collective bargaining rights; however, the political standoff over this huge decision promises to continue in the days ahead. Yesterday, Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker introduced a budget that would strip aid from local governments and school districts, possibly incurring 12,000 layoffs over the next two years. Last week, Democratic governors launched sharp criticism toward Gov. Walker during a National Governors Association gathering in Washington, and Obama met with a dozen of them on Friday to discuss the issue of employee compensation, benefits and bargaining rights – “the first time in anyone’s memory that the president has scheduled a session with his own party’s governors on the eve of the NGA weeked,” [according to The Washington Post](#).

Meanwhile, the protests are spreading to other states as more union members bargain against state and local governments over wages and benefits funded by taxpayers. On Tuesday, [thousands of union members swarmed the Ohio Statehouse](#) to protest a measure that would significantly curtail bargaining powers of government workers. In response, the Ohio state senate is expected to introduce a measure that could surpass the bill passed in Wisconsin.

[The Religious Freedom Coalition](#) observes:

In the last week or so a huge crack emerged in the rule of law in the United States, and it seems no one recognizes this could signal the end of the nation as we know it. In two states, Wisconsin and Indiana, Democrats fled their states so that laws could not be passed by the newly elected Republican majorities. Democrats announced they may do the same thing in other states to block state assemblies with Republican majorities from passing legislation. The Democrats are saying: "We lost the election, so we are going to take actions to stop the democratic process. When we get back in the majority we want democracy to return." It doesn't work that way. Once the democratic process has stopped, it has stopped.