



SHOCK THEATRE -- FAUX SHOCK AND AWE

One of the great lines from Casablanca occurs when Rick Blaine (Humphrey Bogart) is confronted by a regular patron of his gambling bar, the corrupt Prefecture of Police, Captain Louis Renault (Claude Rains), who is threatening to extort Rick by shuttering his establishment.

Rick asks, "How can you close me up? On what grounds?" Renault responds, "I'm shocked, *shocked* to find that gambling is going on in here!" (As Renault makes that faux pronouncement, a croupier hands him a wad of cash saying, "Your winnings, sir," and Renault quietly says, "Oh, thank you very much.")

Sound familiar?

If not, listen to all the Democrat remonstrations this week about the \$165 million of taxpayer bail bonuses scheduled to be paid by AIG. They were so shocked by the discovery of this largess that they even passed legislation to slap a 90 percent tax on any TARP-supported bonuses, despite the fact that such a move would never pass the constitutional sniff test. Of course, mere matters of constitutionality have rarely stopped congressional Democrats.

To his credit, White House economist Larry Summers said, "We are a country of law. There are contracts. The government cannot just abrogate contracts." (Apparently he didn't get the memo from his boss.)

Also worthy of honorable mention, Demo Rep. Charles Rangel, the House's primary tax writer -- the one who's currently under investigation for "tax irregularities" -- insisted that the tax code should not be used as a "political weapon." Unfortunately, he's about 90 years too late with that proscription.

Leading the chorus of the "shocked and outraged" is Rep. Barney Frank (a.k.a. "Bonnie Fwank"), who, without so much as the aid of an Obamaprompter, protested (phonetically transliterated), "These bonuses are going to people who scwewed this thing up enawmouswy, who made tewwibew decisions." Fwank added, "In high school, they wouldn't have gotten wetention, they would have gotten detention." (When it comes to rhetorical poetics, Jesse Jackson has nothing on Bonnie.)

Let's review, class.

First, it was the Democrats, in particular the chairman of the House Financial Services Committee, Barney Frank, who "who screwed this thing up enormously, who made terrible decisions." (For supporting evidence that would convict Frank, even in San Fran's Six Circuit Court of Appeals, read Frank's own words in "[Economics 101](#)" under the section "Housing crisis history," in which he defends his big campaign patrons Fannie and Freddie.)

Second, on 16 September 2008, one Timothy Franz Geithner (a.k.a. "The Candy Man"), then president of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, now secretary of the Treasury for one Barack Hussein Obama (a.k.a. "Barry Soetoro"), authorized \$85 billion to bail out AIG.

The terms of that bailout specifically authorized the bonuses that are currently being protested, but let's cut Geithner some slack. The poor guy can't even figure out his own taxes (\$49,000 in arrears at last count), so we shouldn't hold him to a higher standard in regard to complex concepts such as executive bonuses.

Third, the shock being feigned by Obama and Senate Banking Committee Chairman Chris Dodd (a.k.a.

"Sugar Daddy") is, to borrow an idiom from Alice, "curiouser and curiouser."

Peculiar, say I, because Obama's people met with Dodd's people last month to hammer out the details of Obama's trillion dollar ["stimulus bill"](#), which, combined with his \$410 billion Obamanibus Spending Bill, \$3.6 trillion budget, \$1.5 trillion socialized health care bill and \$2 trillion carbon "cap-and-tax" folly, amount to an 8.5 trillion dollar ruse to hasten his objective of ["fundamentally transforming"](#) the United States of America" into a socialist state. (Here we might recall the telling words of Obama's chief hatchet man, Rahm Emanuel: "Rule 1: Never allow a crisis to go to waste. They are opportunities to do big things.")

But I digress.

As a result of the February confab with Obama and company, Dodd stripped a measure from the "stimulus bill" which would have restricted the AIG bonuses in question and replaced it with the Dodd Amendment, which explicitly exempted "contractually obligated bonuses agreed on before February 11, 2009" from executive compensation restrictions. (Surely this was unrelated to the fact that Obama and Dodd were the big winners of AIG campaign sweepstake graft last year -- receiving \$104,332 and \$103,100 respectively.)

Dodd now asserts, "One way or another, we're going to try to figure out how to get these resources back." And not a minute too soon.

Got it?

Now, Obama is calling on Geithner to "pursue every single legal avenue to block these bonuses and make the American taxpayers whole," insisting "that everyone, from Main Street to Wall Street to Washington, play by the same rules. That is an ethic that we have to demand." Obama adds, "How do they justify this outrage to the taxpayers who are keeping the company afloat?"

If ever did the proverbial pot call the kettle black!

This phenomenon of feigning shock, and then shifting blame, when caught red-handed in folly that would otherwise result in a populist mutiny, is a favorite tactic from the Demo playbook. It was authored by the Great Prevaricator, Bill Clinton, and has been further refined by Barack Obama, et al. Near as we can tell, the objective of this obfuscation is to make claims that are so blatantly hypocritical as to call into question whether there is any hypocrisy at all.

Earlier this week, I asked our editors to submit descriptive terms to apply to this faux "shocked -- *shocked*" Demo-diversion. Here are a few of their responses: Demaneuver, Liberuse, Demododgery, Fauxdacity, Hopocriits, Demofuge, Obamawink, Imposterous, Lefthoax, Obamageddon, Opprobrious Obamoprobrium, and my personal favorite, Uberdonkeydung!

Obama's memoirs should be entitled, "Origin of the Specious," and the sooner it is published, the better! In the meantime, feel the shock!