Yesterday's Odd Coalition Of Odd Ducks Who Voted Against Eric Cantor's "Part A" Of John Boehner's "Plan B"

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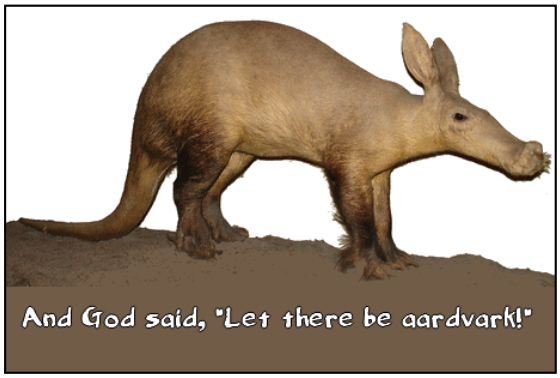
Yesterday's Odd Coalition Of Odd Republican Ducks Who Voted Against Eric Cantor's Part A Of John Boehner's Plan B

By Michael Matthew Bloomer, Friday, Dec. 21, 2012.

Yesterday afternoon the House passed the Spending Reduction Act of 2012 (H.R. 6684), thought of here as Part A of Plan B.[2. Here's The First Portion Of The Fiscal Cliff "Plan B" That Just Barely Passed The House, Michael Matthew Bloomer, *They Will Say ANYTHING!*, Dec. 20, 2012.] Its provisions add more human services cuts to fill the fiscal hole the bill creates by paring defense-related cuts from any sequester that may develop at a later time. (See HR 6684 text here)[1. *Text of* H.R. 6684, GPO, Introd. Rep. Eric Cantor, Dec. 19, 2012.]

The bill, of course, will get no hearing in the Senate, so it's another example of a GOP stunt to make a political point. This, as we all know, is habitual for both sides. In this case, Republicans wanted to be seen as mildly reasonable so as to portray President Obama as intractable. Nobody seems fooled.

Yet, it's interesting to know which of the 21 Republicans voted against Cantor's proposal. Categorizing this group is difficult. It includes certifiable Congressloons like Tea Partiers Louis Gohmert (R-TX); Paul Broun (R-GA); Jeff Duncan (R-SC); Jim Huelskamp (R-KS); Joe Walsh (R-IL), involuntarily retired via the results of the November election; and new guy Thomas Massie (R-KY) who appears to already have crossed the border between certifiably loopy and clinically mental after but a single month in Congress.[3. This border crossing may tie or beat Mad Louis Gohmert's record. Massie was elected on November 6, 2012 in two races: (1) a special election to fill out Geoff Davis's term following his abrupt resignation on July 31, 2012, and (2) the general election for the seat in the 113th Congress. He proposes letting the sequester take place in January, which is a starting point to understand his vote against H.R. 6684. On November 8, 2012 on Kentucky's CN/2 television show Pure Politics Massie said, “I think we need to go through with those cuts, I don’t like how they are distributed but they are agreed to in a bipartisan fashion and we need these cuts if we are going to bring it in to the unsustainable spending we’ve got.”]



However, the Tea Partiers are joined by moderates, i.e. what passes for "moderate" in the present Republican party form, people like Walter Jones (R-NC) who has been trending leftward for six years; Tim Johnson (R-IL), the man with a low-for-a-Republican 68.7% American Conservative Union rating for his 11 year tenure, and who is retiring from Congress this January; Jaime Herrera Beutler (R-WA); and Chris Gibson (R-NY).

We'll not know until after Christmas when Congress returns whether this strange combination of moderates and wingnuts will draw more Members to its ranks, whether for the right reasons (that spending cuts are too draconian and tax increases not large enough), or for the wrong ones (that spending cuts are not draconian enough and tax increases are too draconian). If it does develop into a broader coalition surely it will look less like a confereration of odd ducks and more like a congressional version of the aardvark. . .

Below is the official rollcall vote for H.R. 6684. See how *your* congressperson voted.