

General Petraeus and his report on the surge in September before deciding what to do about Iraq.

When I heard that remark, I thought to myself, I wonder what the President would like us to do while we are waiting? Does he think we should take up knitting? Should we empty out our committee rooms and use them for ballroom dancing lessons? Should we have a sign on the door of the House of Representatives that says, "Gone Fishin'?"

The President's remark was, of course, outrageous. The American people did not send us to Washington to wait and to do nothing. They sent us here to take action, to end the occupation of Iraq, and that is what we must do.

We cannot wait, because American troops continue to die. More than 600 have died since the troop surge began last winter.

We cannot wait, because at least 13,500 Iraqi civilians have died since the escalation began, and that is according to very conservative estimates.

We cannot wait, because the war is costing a staggering \$10 billion every single month, more than \$60 billion since the escalation began.

We cannot wait, because the violence in Iraq is forcing tens of thousands of new refugees to flee their homes every single month.

And we cannot wait, because the escalation has only escalated the violence. April, May and June produced more American military deaths than any other 3-month period since the war began in Iraq.

Instead of telling the Congress to wait, the administration should be saying to the Iraqi government, stop waiting. Stop waiting, and start working on the political solutions to Iraq's problems. Our troops have done their part, but the Iraqi government has been either unwilling or unable to do its part, and our leaders seem to refuse to hold them accountable.

So we cannot allow the administration to sing that old tune, "See You in September," because the American people have made it clear: They want this occupation to end, and since the administration won't do it, then Congress must.

The House will consider a troop redeployment bill this week. I introduced a bill, H.R. 508, way back in January when the escalation first began, to end the occupation. H.R. 508 calls for fully funding the safe, orderly and responsible withdrawal and redeployment of our troops within 6 months, and it guarantees full funding for the healthcare needs of our veterans.

The bill also includes provisions to help the Iraqi people get back on their feet, maintain stability and prevent a worsening of the civil war. It would accelerate multinational assistance to Iraq for reconstruction and reconciliation in that shattered land. And because our involvement in Iraq has taught us that we must take a new ap-

proach to foreign policy, my bill absolutely rejects preemptive war, which clearly doesn't work. Instead, it calls for diplomatic efforts to help Iraq and help its neighbors to achieve political, not military, solutions to regional problems.

Mr. Speaker, the administration has abrogated its responsibilities, and Congress has waited in the wings too long. Now it is time for us to take the stage of history and put America on a new and better course. It is past time to bring our troops home.

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MEETING THE ENERGY NEEDS OF AMERICA IN A COMPREHENSIVE WAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MORAN of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to call the House of Representatives, the Congress, the administration, this country, to action.

Just this month, the price of oil hit \$75 per barrel, and it seems that the proverbial, "While Nero fiddles, Rome burns," in this case it is, "While Congress fiddles, prices at the pump continue to escalate," with a tremendous consequence to the consumers across America.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that we address the energy policy, the energy needs of this country, in a comprehensive way. And although we have tried that on a number of occasions, it seems to me that our efforts have been less than what is required and need dramatic attention.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, tonight I call for a broad approach for what we do to reduce the price at the pump, and clearly conservation is a component of that. We need as a country to make certain that we have policies in place that encourage conservation, that we do not waste energy. And in fact this week I will cosponsor legislation that establishes CAFE standards to try to improve the efficiency of our automobile fleet done in a way, Mr. Speaker, that is satisfactory, provides common sense and good scientific basis for the direction we need to go, something that is not unreasonable but is workable for the automobile industry and for the consumer.

Clearly, renewable fuels is an important component. We in Kansas have a lot to offer when it comes to renewable fuels, particularly as we have moved in the direction of ethanol and biodiesel. But I call for greater action, particularly in the area of cellulosic renewable fuels, cellulosic ethanol in which we can utilize the waste product of agriculture to meet our country's energy needs and not compete with the food supply and the use of corn, for example, to feed livestock.

Renewable fuels matter greatly to rural America, but they matter greatly

across the country. It is about jobs in rural communities and about utilization of our agricultural production, and it is about the environment, and it is about trying to do something about the tremendous burden we face in importing oil.

Mr. Speaker, I also propose that we encourage greater exploration and production. Too often in this country we have an attitude that says we cannot drill and explore in our backyard, and yet we complain about the price of fuel. The opportunity continues to exist in this country to explore and find greater oil and natural gas and utilize our reserves. It also is an opportunity for us to pursue other sources of energy such as clean coal technologies and nuclear power. Again, we take so many things off the table and then complain that we can't afford the price.

Finally, I ask that we pursue once again increasing our refining capacity. The last refinery in this country was built in 1976. In Kansas in the 1980s we had 14 refineries in our State. Today we have three, and one of those three was closed because of flood waters. The consequence was a 14-15 cent increase in the price of gasoline per gallon.

It is time that we develop the capacity to meet the consumers' needs. Mr. Speaker, just last year in 2006 we spent \$218 billion in purchasing oil from countries abroad, countries whose political circumstances are volatile, countries who have joined together to make certain that they control the supply and increase the price, and yet it seems we do nothing to reduce our dependence on foreign oil.

It is clear to me that our national security is harmed by our policy, or lack of policy. It is clear to me that the economic consequences of our failure, of our fiddling while Rome burns is dramatic.

Mr. Speaker, again I ask the leadership of this House to pursue policies of a broad, comprehensive approach to reducing our dependence upon foreign oil and making a difference for the consumer in the United States, improving our economy, and increasing our national security.

WHITEWASH FROM THE WHITE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. McDERMOTT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, the President intends to stay the course in Iraq. His latest quote is we might be able to bring soldiers home "in awhile," and the White House is circulating a memo that they see progress. This is another whitewash from the White House.

When they talk about progress in Iraq, remember they misled us before. CNN Larry King Live, May 30, 2005, the vice president said: I think they're in

the last throes, if you will, of the insurgency.

By then, 1,000 U.S. soldiers were dead. USA Today, November 24, 2005, the headline is: Officials more hopeful on Iraq drawdown. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice told Fox News on Tuesday that the U.S. would probably not need to maintain its current troop levels in Iraq "very much longer."

By then, there were 2,000 Americans dead.

USA Today, January 4, 2006, the headline is: Bush, Cheney stump seeking public support. Bush met with military leaders at the Pentagon and reiterated previously announced plans to cut U.S. troop strength in Iraq. "The adjustment is underway," he said, suggesting further cuts would come if Iraqi security forces improved.

By then, 2,200 Americans were dead.

USA Today March 26, 2006, the headline is, Rice speaks of possible troop drawdown. "I think it is entirely probable that we will see a significant drawdown of American forces over the next year. It's all dependent on events on the ground," the chief American diplomat said.

By then, 2,300 Americans were dead.

The Washington Post, June 15, 2006, the headline is: Bush Sees Progress in Iraq. In a Rose Garden news conference just over 6 hours after his surprise whirlwind visit to Baghdad, Bush said, "I sense something different happening in Iraq," and predicted that "progress will be steady" towards achieving the U.S. mission there.

By then, 2,500 Americans were dead.

USA Today, October 1, 2006, the headline: Bush Sees Progress in Iraq War Effort. President Bush said Saturday he is encouraged by the increasing size and capacity of the Iraq security forces, touting progress on a key measure for when U.S. troops can come home.

By then, 2,800 U.S. soldiers had died.

Fox News, Sunday, January 11, 2007, Chris Wallace interviewed the vice president:

Mr. Vice President, why should we believe you this time that you have it right?

Mr. CHENEY responded, Well, if you look at what has transpired in Iraq, Chris, we have in fact made enormous progress.

By then, 3,000 Americans were dead.

In the months since the Vice President saw enormous progress, another 600 U.S. soldiers had died in Iraq. Over 3,600 U.S. soldiers are dead, 26,000 seriously wounded, and 40,000 will suffer with post-traumatic stress disorder, and the White House keeps telling the American people that we are making progress.

There is no credibility left whatsoever in the White House. None. The White House cannot whitewash the truth any longer. The American people are exasperated by a Commander in Chief who is blind to what is happening in Iraq.

U.S. soldiers have not failed, but this President has. U.S. commanders have

not failed, but this administration has. The American people know it and they want only one new order given: Get U.S. soldiers out of Iraq. That means by early spring next year. It would be a travesty of justice if it takes until the general election of 2008 for the American people to throw every Republican out in order to stop the war. We are 17 months away from a new President being sworn into office. That is another 2,000 U.S. casualties if we follow this President. Ten soldiers are dying every day. Ninety soldiers are gravely wounded every day. A hundred civilian Iraqis die. How many more must die before we stand up for our soldiers? Before we stand up for our national interests and get our soldiers out of Iraq? Bring them home.

Mr. Speaker, we have got to get the President to bring them home. We also ought to think about how many Iraqis have died in this whole thing.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BURTON of Indiana addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

HONORING DR. BILL MCGAVRAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CONAWAY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Dr. Bill McGavran for his 30 years of service as a neurosurgeon in Midland, Texas.

Thousands of citizens in West Texas owe Dr. McGavran a debt of gratitude for his tireless work. Nearly every night for 25 years Dr. McGavran served as the on-call neurosurgeon in the ER, saving countless lives.

Dr. McGavran's commitment to helping others reaches beyond Texas. He has shared his skills with colleagues and patients half a world away in impoverished communities in South America.

Prior to his residency, he served in the United States Navy off the coast of Vietnam and Japan. Dr. McGavran is also an active member of the Midland community as deacon of the First Presbyterian Church and member of the symphony and chorale board of directors.

He is devoted husband to Gloria McGavran and father of two daughters, Catherine and Melissa.

The 11th District of Texas owes great thanks to Dr. McGavran for his exemplary service to the community and his patients, and I am proud to represent him in the Congress of the United States.

IRAQ POLICY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gen-

tleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. SESTAK) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SESTAK. Mr. Speaker, even for those convinced the surge in Iraq is a mistake, or at a point where our goals cannot realistically be attained, the manner in which we implement a decision to leave that country is critical to our Nation. How the United States manages its transition from a major war to the aftermath of our withdrawal is crucial for our strategic security.

And therefore, a Congress mandating a new security policy through the force of law owes a careful explanation to the country why and how it is to be done, including dealing with what would occur in the aftermath.

Americans may be tired of this war, but as a group they still expect it to be brought to an end that salvages as much as possible from the situation and protects our broader interests in the region and the world.

This strategic approach is not just about "getting the troops home." Rather, the important concept to pursue is a strategic redeployment from Iraq that enhances our security by giving us the leverage to begin to unify Iraqis and bring about a regional accommodation that works toward that nation's stability.

However much Americans may desire to reduce forces in Iraq quickly, this Nation must still face the aftermath of what will happen in the region after redeployment by the force of law. And while some may try to characterize this as President Bush's war, it is the whole country's war in terms of how its consequences will affect us. For example, a careless redeployment due to haste most endangers our 160,000 troops and estimated over 100,000 civilian contractors in Iraq.

Withdrawal is when military forces are at their most vulnerable, something our Nation paid heed to when it took the 6 months necessary to redeploy less than 10,000 troops safely from Somalia in the 1990s. In Iraq, there is one road to Kuwait for thousands of convoys and much planning left to do for such a redeployment to occur safely.

And some ideas for a drawdown will prove less viable than some assume. For instance, maintaining residual forces to train Iraqis may well not work for the safety of U.S. troops embedded in an Iraqi military whose loyalty is suspect at best and fighting motivation questionable. Would we then need to retain large combat forces for their protection, and if so, how many?

Let's therefore understand the full limitations of such ideas before supporting them without careful strategic thought.

Such strategic considerations suggest that the precise shape of a strategy to redeploy matters a great deal. Responsibility should be assigned: To the Iraqis to assume accountability for their country; to regional nations to demonstrate accommodations towards