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Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable AMY KLOBUCHAR, a Senator from the State of Minnesota.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Creator of the Universe, help us to find meaning in our work. Train us to see Your purposes behind our task, motivating us to focus on pleasing You.

Empower our Senators. Give them the will and strength they need. Provide them with patience so they will neither despair nor grow weary in well doing. Give them confidence that in following You, Eternal Lord, they are certain of ultimate triumph. Let Your peace guard their hearts and Your wisdom direct their steps.

We pray in Your great Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable AMY KLOBUCHAR led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. BYRD).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U. S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, May 1, 2008.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule 1, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable AMY KLOBUCHAR, a Senator from the State of Minnesota, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ROBERT C. BYRD,
President pro tempore.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Madam President, following my remarks and those of Senator MCCONNELL, if he decides to make such remarks, there will be a period of morning business for up to 1 hour, with Senators to be allowed to speak for up to 10 minutes each during that time. The Republicans will control the first 30 minutes and the majority will control the final 30 minutes. Following morning business, the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 2881, the Federal Aviation Administration Reauthorization.

FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF "MISSION ACCOMPLISHED"

Mr. REID. Madam President, 5 years ago on the deck of an aircraft carrier returning from the Middle East, America and the world witnessed perhaps the greatest act of hubris our country has ever seen in wartime. Resplendent in a flight suit, landing theatrically in a fighter jet, President Bush declared: "In the battle for Iraq, United States and our allies have prevailed." Above him was a banner, printed by the White House, with the idea coming from Karl Rove. That banner proclaimed "Mission Accomplished."

With families fleeing from Iraq by the tens of thousands to live as refugees, now approaching 2½ million—mission accomplished? With no government in place, with towns destroyed, with infrastructure in shambles—mission accomplished?

When President Bush put on his flight suit, 139 American troops had lost their lives. Today, the toll has reached 4,058 or 4,059. In April, with the highest death count in 7 months, 51 Americans were killed.

When President Bush landed on the runway of the USS *Abraham Lincoln*, 548 Americans had been wounded. Today that count is far more than 30,000, many of those grave injuries.

When President Bush announced that "major combat operations have ended," the American taxpayers had spent about \$79 billion in Iraq. Today, \$526 billion and counting, we are spending \$5,000 every second, 7 days a week, every week of the month, every month of the year. Those costs are going up, not down, with experts such as Nobel Prize-winning economist Joseph Stiglitz predicting \$3 trillion will be the cost of the war, with every penny of it borrowed—from Japan, from China, from Saudi Arabia, even from Mexico.

In May, 2003, many of our allies had already begun to stand apart from us on the war. Today, our moral authority in the world has been gravely damaged. Not one American looks back on the 5 years since that aircraft stunt with any sense of satisfaction. Our country looks back with grief, sadness, yet with a fierce and unwavering commitment to finally change the mission and responsibly end the war in Iraq and bring our troops home.

That day aboard the USS *Lincoln*, our President told us the war would not be endless. He said: "Americans, following a battle, want nothing more than to return home." He told the brave men and women aboard that carrier that home was their direction that day; that:

After service in the Afghan and Iraq theaters of the war, after 100,000 miles on the longest carrier deployment in U.S. history, you are homeward bound.

Madam President, let me again read that quote:

After service in the Afghan and Iraq theaters of the war, after 100,000 miles on the

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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longest carrier deployment in U.S. history, you are homeward bound.

To the men and women aboard the *Lincoln* that day, that speech must seem a distant memory. Could they have imagined that day that many of them, and their brothers and sisters in arms, would now be in their third, fourth, and fifth tours of duty? The "Mission Accomplished" speech will rightly be remembered with great anguish by all.

Look at this. This chart, sadly, is a little behind but it makes the picture. I indicated that wounded troops are more than 30,000 now. Troops in Iraq on that day were 5,000 more then, with the troops, some of them, coming home.

Cost of the war to the taxpayers—you can see that.

What do you American people think about the war in Iraq, was it worth fighting? You can see the numbers.

The estimated number of Iraqi civilians killed—Johns Hopkins University did a study. Their study says over 200,000 Iraqis have been killed. The number of Iraqis who have fled their homes is almost 5 million. The number of Iraqi security forces—we have trained them, we paid for them—is almost half a million.

Iraqi prison population.

Number of daily attacks by insurgents and militias in Iraq: to date it is about 55.

The number of multiple-fatality bombings in Iraq in May of 2003: zero. Now look at that.

Suicide attacks: almost 1000.

The price of oil: in May of 2003, it was \$26.03 a barrel. Yesterday we had a little drop in the oil price. It is down from more than \$120 a barrel the last few days to only \$115 a barrel.

The price of gas then was \$1.50. If you are lucky, you can find it someplace in the United States for \$3.62. That is the average.

George Bush, DICK CHENEY, and Donald Rumsfeld will be written in the pages of history as the men who rushed a peaceful, deliberate nation headfirst into war without the slightest notion of what it meant to run or to end it. Five years later, the cost of their hubris is staggering—in lives lost and damaged, dollars spent, moral authority squandered.

Let's think back to the men and women aboard the USS *Abraham Lincoln* that day 5 years ago; the excitement they must have felt by a Presidential visit; the encouragement of his words; the satisfaction of heading home to their families after a job well done.

They did their jobs, but the Commander in Chief didn't do his—as he has not done his job here at home, with record gas prices, record oil prices, and an economy spiraling into recession. I met with a number of homebuilders yesterday in room S-219. Have we reached the bottom in the housing market? They said: No, we are not close yet. About 50 million Americans are uninsured for health costs.

On this fifth anniversary, a sorry moment in our country's history, we pause to honor the troops aboard the USS *Abraham Lincoln* and all our troops, their brothers and sisters in arms who fought and sacrificed and continue to fight in Iraq. They deserve not the false hope of a slogan engineered by Karl Rove, the President's chief slogan maker, but the real hope of a responsible end to a war that has raged far too long.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to a period of morning business for up to 1 hour, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each, with the Republicans controlling the first half and the majority controlling the final half.

The Senator from Colorado is recognized.

ENERGY PRICES

Mr. ALLARD. Madam President, here we go again. We all know the Senate has limited time left this year to debate important legislation. It is becoming more and more clear the Democratic leadership is staunchly opposed to doing anything that would alleviate the seemingly endless upward pressure on energy prices. Given their unyielding desire to increase taxes on much of the energy industry, I can only assume the Democrats in Congress believe that steadily increasing energy prices simply provide political fodder upon which they can capitalize. Democrats in both Chambers appear beholden to the environmental agenda, a radical agenda that wholly disregards America's economy.

Oblivious to prices at the pump and indifferent to from whom we import our oil, far-left environmentalists and their cohorts in Congress are failing in their duty to the American public. The Congress has stymied efforts to produce trillions of cubic feet of natural gas, trillions of barrels of oil, and prevented the construction of new refineries, nuclear powerplants, and hydroelectric facilities through public policies that limit energy supply. We cannot afford to take any option off the table.

The security concerns of America and our businesses and consumers still demand energy. In oil alone, we consume over 20 million barrels a day. Since we only produce just over 8 million barrels per day, the gap must be made up by purchasing oil from hostile or undemocratic nations, such as Venezuela, Saudi Arabia, and Nigeria to meet our energy needs. We spend over

half a trillion dollars each year importing foreign oil, and it is far past time to rectify this unhealthy dependency.

The global price for petroleum reaches new highs every day and petroleum-related imports have caused our trade deficit to increase by billions of dollars.

According to a study by the Congressional Research Service, in 2005 and 2006 alone, our trade deficit rose by \$120 billion. As oil prices continue to rise and domestic energy production is further obstructed, America's trade balance will only fall deeper into the red.

As a Senator from energy rich Colorado, I am on the front lines of the battle to increase our domestic energy production. The Democrats continue to delay efforts to tap into a natural gas reserve below the Naval Oil Shale Reserve, often referred to as the Roan Plateau, that contains approximately 8.9 trillion cubic feet. We need this clean source of energy now.

Moreover, below the vast lands of Colorado and Wyoming lies roughly 1.5 trillion barrels of potentially recoverable oil. This amount dwarfs the reserves of Saudi Arabia and other petrich nations, and new technologies continually emerging would allow us to responsibly extract this oil to help meet our demands. The benefits to Colorado and the American economy would be tremendous.

Additionally, national environmentalist groups have succeeded in pressuring Members of Congress to mandate a lock-down of what could be an immense treasure chest of oil in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

In subverting the widespread local support of Alaskans and in prohibiting the potential extraction of 5 to 15 billion barrels of oil, environmentalists stubbornly resist even moving forward with comprehensive testing that could result in the environmentally responsible development of parts of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

The U.S. Geological Survey announced this month that 3 to 4 billion barrels of technically recoverable oil exists under North Dakota and Montana's Bakken Formation. This is 25 times more than was estimated to exist in 1995. These numbers are staggering, and there are other examples where our aversion to responsible development defies common sense.

Of course, we must continue our dedicated efforts to explore alternative sources of energy to meet our demands, but it is possible to develop sections of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, extract natural gas from the Rocky Mountain west and harvest resources offshore in economically feasible ways and also protect our natural wonders.

We should not take increased production of any domestic oil off the table. The longer we completely deny access to domestic supplies, the more we exacerbate our current energy shortages.

We cannot solve the problem of soaring gas prices facing America today with one solution, but we certainly