

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 petro-rich 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

should not allow the relentless push of environmentalists' narrow agenda to make this crisis even worse. What will the average gallon of gas in America have to cost for the Democratic leadership in Congress to step to the plate with a comprehensive solution for our consumers?

We should seek to develop our renewable resources along with oil, gas, clean coal, nuclear, and hydroelectric energy in a manner that prevents foreign interests from taking over energy for their own purposes.

It is time for congressional leaders to be a part of the solution and not the problem. It is time to put every idea on the table. It is time for common sense.

In the State of Colorado, we have a plethora of energy sources. We obviously rely on renewable energy because we have lots of sun and wind, we have hydroelectric, we have uranium to produce nuclear power. None of these or our rich resources in petroleum and coal that exist throughout the country should be taken off the table.

For us to subject ourselves to a harsh extreme environmental agenda does not make sense. This country should continue to work to develop all of those resources. Obviously, the future of this country is on the renewable side, but we have to deal with today's problems, today's price at the gas pump, and therefore we need to produce domestic resources in addition to supporting the renewable technologies we are currently developing.

If we do that, we will most successfully address the high cost at the gas pump today. Congress should be working with industry to make sure we have more plentiful supplies of gas and petroleum products in addition to developing other sources of renewable energy.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Tennessee is recognized.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Would you please let me know when 5 minutes has expired?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Chair will do that.

TVA APPOINTMENTS

Mr. ALEXANDER. Madam President, Tennesseans like our sports teams, whether it is the Lady Vols, or the Memphis Tigers, or Bruce Pearl's team from Knoxville. But John Calipari or Pat Summitt or Bruce Pearl wouldn't think of sending any of our teams into a big game with two players locked up somewhere—two players missing.

That is exactly what my friend, the Democratic leader, has done for 8.7 million Americans who live in the seven-State region of the Tennessee Valley Authority. Our big game, like most Americans, is gas prices, electric prices, climate change, clean air, national security.

Every Senator is on the floor talking about that; some blaming, some with

solutions. I am going to Oak Ridge on May 9 to propose a new Manhattan Project to deal with clean energy independence.

But our secret weapon in the TVA region is the Tennessee Valley Authority. That is how we get our clean air so we're in compliance with clean air laws and new jobs can come in. It is how we deal with climate change. They have coal-fired powerplants. It is how we deal with large amounts of electricity at a low cost. That has to do with jobs and it has to do with gas prices as well.

Nissan, Toyota, and General Motors all are about to sell us plug-in hybrids that could, by some estimates, reduce the amount of gasoline we use by up to 40 percent. That would deal with gas prices. But who will supply electricity for the plug-in hybrids? The Tennessee Valley Authority. So what happens? The Democratic leader locks up two of our best players and won't let them play in the biggest game we've got. If he did that to two of our Memphis basketball players, or UT Lady Vols, or two of Bruce Pearl's players, there would be a revolt in Tennessee, and I hope there is a revolt about this.

Here is what has happened: In 2004, after several years of debate, we created a new board for the Nation's largest public utility—the Tennessee Valley Authority. The President appointed nine members. They were unanimously approved. Two had short terms; they served with distinction and the President nominated them for reappointment. The Environment and Public Works Committee unanimously, under Chairman BOXER, brought them to the floor. They are ready for approval, ready to go to work. But the Democratic Leader has sent me a letter that basically says he will not allow them to be confirmed because they are Republicans. That astounds me. I ask unanimous consent to put that letter in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

U.S. SENATE,

Washington, DC, April 14, 2008.

Hon. LAMAR ALEXANDER,
Dirksen Senate Office Building,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR ALEXANDER: I am writing to you to advise you of my concerns regarding appointments to the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA).

As you know, the TVA was reconfigured in P.L. 108-477, the Omnibus Appropriations bill enacted December 8, 2004. The inclusion of that substantive legislation in this appropriations vehicle expanded TVA membership to 9 members from 3 members. This omnibus legislative rider gave appointive authority entirely to the President with no bipartisan representation.

I expressed my concerns regarding this situation over a year ago when the first slate of 6 TVA nominees was sent to the Senate. I asked the President to consider using one of the remaining positions for a Democratic candidate. Despite that request, the President nominated 3 additional Republicans for the TVA. Before the Easter recess, we confirmed one of those remaining 3 TVA nominees.

Given the inadequacy of bipartisan representation on the TVA and our recent approval of 7 Republican nominations to the TVA, I do not support proceeding with further TVA confirmations at this time.

Sincerely,

HARRY REID,
Majority Leader.

Mr. ALEXANDER. The Democratic leader's decision to block these nominees because of their party affiliation overturns 75 years of Federal law and custom. Since 1933, Federal law has never made politics one of the considerations for TVA appointments.

Most Presidents have appointed members of their own party, sometimes political independents—such as Bishop William Graves, one of the two nominees for reappointment who is being locked up.

Bishop Graves is not even a Republican. He is the most experienced member of the TVA board, coming from the largest customer, Memphis Light, Gas and Water, and he is the presiding bishop of one of the largest religious denominations in America.

I have sent a letter to the majority leader. I ask unanimous consent it be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

U.S. SENATE,

Washington, DC, April 30, 2008.

Hon. HARRY REID,
Majority Leader, U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR REID: Your decision to block Senate confirmation of the President's renomination of Bishop William Graves of Memphis and Susan Williams of Knoxville to the Tennessee Valley Authority Board of Directors astounds me. If you succeed, you would overturn seventy-five years of federal law and custom.

Your actions insult the Mid-South's largest city, Memphis. Until Bishop Graves' appointment in 2006, a Memphian had never served on the TVA board.

Your actions are an affront to more than one and a half million African Americans in the seven-state TVA region. Until the appointment of Bishop Graves the presiding Bishop of the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church—an African American had never served on the TVA board.

Your actions are the kind of disheartening playpen partisan politics that disappoint the American people and are causing them to cry out for change in the way Washington does its business.

Since the founding of TVA in 1933, federal law has never required presidents to appoint TVA directors from one political party or another.

Almost always, presidents have appointed members of their own political party. As is the case with Bishop Graves, members have often been political independents.

TVA is the nation's largest public utility, with more than \$9.2 billion in annual revenues and 8.7 million customers. In 2004, after several years of debate, Congress created a new TVA board and a modern governance structure.

Bishop Graves and Susan Williams were original members of the new board, nominated by the President and confirmed by the Senate. They have served with distinction. The President has now renominated them. The Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works has again unanimously recommended them.