

In the Democratic bill, on the other hand, Mr. Speaker, we targeted all parts of the oil supply chain, from the crude producer, to the refiner, to the distributor. We said if they engage in excessive profits, like 255 percent over the last 12 months, we are going to go after those profits. That is price gouging, market manipulation, geographic price arrangements that they make from the refinery. And those excessive profits, and I think people would agree with me that 255 percent is excessive, would then be put into a fund to help the Low Income Heating Energy Assistance Program, LIHEAP as we call it.

So we take the extra money and put it in there to help people heat their homes. We finally, for once, give the FTC, the Federal Trade Commission, the authority to stop price gouging. We allow the State attorneys general to enforce Federal law, and we maintain environmental standards.

So this bill is back. We as a party, Democrats, are asking for a clean up-or-down vote on our bill. Let us put forth our bill, which is to stop the price gouging, market manipulation, the excessive regional pricing that goes on; and let us have a clean up-or-down vote on it.

In the meantime, the Democratic Party is also asking, and, in fact, the letter is being circulated today, that we bring in the oil executives and ask them to explain to us how do they justify a 255 percent increase. Even a 46 percent increase is a tremendous amount of increase in the last 12 months when inflation is running at about 3 to 4 percent. So these are the questions we have, and we would like a free, clean up-or-down vote.

As high gas prices persist, hard-working Americans are preparing for a cold winter during which they will likely face a doubling of home heating costs. These serious concerns underscore the need for this Congress to work together in a bipartisan manner. Let us investigate and crack down on the price gouging and other forms of market manipulation, and then maybe we will not see the headlines that we have seen in the last week about what the oil companies have made in the third quarter. The third quarter goes from, of course, July, August, September. In those 90 days, July, August, September, Exxon-Mobil's profit was \$9.92 billion.

□ 1900

That is the largest amount ever by a U.S. company, and 75 percent more in profits than they made last year.

Shell Oil Company, they generated \$9 billion in the third quarter, an increase of 68 percent from last year. These are excessive profits.

Conoco Phillips generated \$3.8 billion in the third quarter, an 89 percent increase from last year.

Again, we do not mind anyone making a profit. Inflation is running 3, 4, 5 percent. But 89 percent over one year?

British Petroleum generated \$6.53 billion in the third quarter. These are

profits. That is after paying for everything else. They cannot say it costs more. But these are profits, over and above.

And Chevron generated \$3.6 billion.

The earnings of the world's five largest publicly traded oil companies this quarter have put them on track to earn \$100 billion this year.

Mr. Speaker, I hope this Congress can work together and pass a real energy program to help all Americans.

SUPPORT FOR ALITO NOMINATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SCHWARZ of Michigan). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. FRANKS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. Mr. Speaker, these are historic and great days in America because President George W. Bush has nominated Judge Samuel Alito to the United States Supreme Court.

Mr. Speaker, this is a man of outstanding character and one who has more experience as a sitting judge than any nominee for the Supreme Court in the last 70 years. As always, extremists on the left are viciously attacking this highly qualified nominee because he shares a judicial philosophy with this duly elected President.

Mr. Speaker, what is at stake here with these judicial nominations is the Constitution itself, that miraculous document by which we guard our God-given rights in this country; and what is also at risk is keeping secure the American dream for future generations.

In this day, we sometimes forget that the American dream is actually about human dignity and freedom and self-governance. It is not about the left's moral relativism, which means that those without conscience have a license to do anything without consequence, regardless of its harm to others.

True freedom actually means having a system of self-government that protects the rights of innocent people to live and to be free and to pursue their dreams in their own way, as long as they do not desecrate the lives and rights of others. The choice that faces us in these pivotal times is whether or not we as a people are still capable of understanding and guarding the fundamental rights that undergird our freedom.

Mr. Speaker, I have great hope that we still are. Liberal activists on the courts have been undermining the Constitution and America's fundamental rights of liberty and life and property for decades.

Just yesterday, the liberal Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals ruled, "There is no fundamental right of parents to be the exclusive provider of information regarding sexual matters to their children. Parents have no due process or privacy right to override the determinations of public schools as to the

information to which their children will be exposed while enrolled as students."

Mr. Speaker, for these liberal judges to say that parents have no right to determine what their children are taught about sex, or anything else, for that matter, is outrageous. America has rejected this sort of bankrupt, liberal extremism at the ballot, and now the left is desperately trying to hold on to the courts to force this extremist agenda down the throats of all Americans.

The liberal, secular left wants to take the words "under God" out of the Pledge of Allegiance. They want to completely dismantle marriage and family. They want to end voluntary prayer, any kind of traditional voluntary religious expression in public places.

They teach your children in school that it is "mainstream" in America to use abortion and even partial-birth abortion as a means of birth control. They are saying to the parents of America that if your underage daughter is impregnated by a man, he should be able to take her to have an abortion without your knowledge or permission, that it is none of your business.

Mr. Speaker, those attacking Judge Alito are so far to the left that they cannot even see the majority of us here in America, and it is so important that the people of this country understand what the left means when they say "mainstream" when they say that Judge Alito is out of the mainstream. They are talking about his rulings in cases where the overwhelming majority of Americans agree with him. That is the very definition of "mainstream."

Mr. Speaker, for the sake of this Republic, we must invite those leftists who insist on smearing Judge Alito's reputation to step into open debate where the bright light of truth can shine on their ideology and expose to the people of America exactly how far out of the mainstream they really are.

Mr. Speaker, it is time for this debate. It is long overdue. The future of the American people living in freedom depends on it.

CAMPAIGN TO MINIMIZE LIES THAT LED TO IRAQ WAR

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, I rise to support the minority leader's attempt to get oversight. She stood here today and asked in a resolution, which was not voted on by the House, was not allowed to be discussed by the House, that the Republican leadership conduct oversight of an executive branch controlled by the same party which is in contradiction to the established rules of standing committees and the congressional precedent.

It is time for this House to begin an investigation of the executive branch.