

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