

You cannot get that type of return on Wall Street. That was about a 10 percent return. You cannot get a return like that on any other investment where you give \$86 million to influence the people's House and get \$14.5 billion of hard-earned taxpayer money, and energy is trading at \$75 a barrel.

I understand if you want to help the oil and gas companies at \$17 a barrel, \$25 a barrel to help them drill for energy. At \$75 a barrel, I would expect Exxon and Mobil and Chevron and Phillips, all who are making not just good money, historic record prices, would actually be able to go on their own and drill without the taxpayers having to pay for it.

So not only are we paying a record amount of \$3.50 a gallon, not only are they making record profits, but at \$75 a barrel, the taxpayers are paying them \$14.5 billion. So the American consumer pays more at the pump, and they pay more on April 15 because of what this Congress did. Over the last year, in less than 1 year, energy went from \$2.09 to \$3.30, but that is only one example.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. EMANUEL. I yield to the gentleman from Indiana.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I just want to say that we are drilling for oil in Texas, California, Oklahoma, and Nebraska. How did the gentleman vote when we wanted to drill in the ANWR, which is 3.5 times the size of Texas? We could have gotten almost 2 million barrels of oil a day, and it would have helped these prices.

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, I voted against that; and I vote against giving them \$14.5 billion because I do not believe there is a worse example of corporate welfare, only to be followed by the prescription drug bill and the corporate tax bill that was a \$5 billion problem. You all handed out \$145 billion to corporate interests. Only in Washington do you try to resolve a \$5 billion problem that cost you \$145 billion, and it still did not resolve the original \$5 billion problem.

I bring this all up for one simple point: For the last 5 years, this is supposed to be the people's House, and when that gavel comes down, it is supposed to open the people's House, not the auction house. And from the prescription drug legislation to the energy legislation to the corporate tax bill, you have sold off America's interests. Billions of dollars have been spent lobbying the people's House, and it shows when you go from product to product, from line to line. That is what has happened here.

Now all of a sudden everybody is worried about how we are going to deal with the energy problem. When you had an energy bill, you hailed it as a great victory for the American people. Since that time energy has gone up more than a buck a gallon at the pump.

But that is also an example of what has happened with the corporate tax

bill and the pharmaceutical bill. People have used their influence. I do not bemoan what the energy companies have done. I do not bemoan what the pharmaceutical companies have done. I do not bemoan what the HMO industry has done. I do not bemoan what corporate interests have done to influence this Congress. What I bemoan is what the Congress has done for that money and what they have done to the American people's interests. And what is happening here, because now this week I think it is ironic we are all talking about energy, this Congress is going to bring up a lobbying bill. That piece of legislation has become the incredible shrinking legislation. It does nothing. The Washington Post called it "a watered down sham. Simply a joke."

USA Today writes, "Congress still doesn't get it. After more than a year of negative headlines about political corruption and money-soaked alliances with lobbyists, House leaders are weakening their already anemic excuse for reform."

It doesn't deal with an independent Office of Public Integrity. It does not ban gifts from lobbyists. It does not close the revolving door for Members who leave here. It does not deal with disclosure of lobbyists' solicitation of campaign checks.

The lobbying legislation we are dealing with is exactly the energy legislation we dealt with. The two are the same pieces of legislation. Those who have given and they are giving their checks because all that is left on K Street is checks. There are no checks and balances left in this system.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 5020, INTELLIGENCE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2007

Mr. PUTNAM, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 109-438) on the resolution (H. Res. 774) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 5020) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2007 for intelligence and intelligence-related activities of the United States Government, the Community Management Account, and the Central Intelligence Agency Retirement and Disability System, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

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

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

THE SITUATION IN IRAQ

Mr. LEACH. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to address the House for 5 minutes and to revise and extend my remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Iowa?

There was no objection.

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

Mr. LEACH. Mr. Speaker, with mounting sectarian tensions and unabated insurgent violence, I rise today to discuss the deeply troubling situation in Iraq and its implications for the national interests of the United States.

Sometimes it is harder to know how to end a war than to start one. Just as it is important to think through the "why" of committing troops to a conflict, we must also think through the "why" of ending an engagement. Timing is a key element of both considerations.

Perspective is always difficult to bring to bear on events of the day. Developments of this week, however, could provide Washington with a seminal opportunity to stimulate a rethinking about the philosophical basis for a war that we initiated, with the goal of assessing how a great power can and should disengage.

Many people have noted analogies between America's involvement in Vietnam and the U.S. intervention in Iraq. My sense is that a number of these analogies are quite frail. But the one I am most concerned about relates to America's extraordinary difficulty in disengaging from Vietnam.

A key problem for Washington in trying to wind down its commitment in Vietnam was how to develop a mutual accommodation with the other side that would lessen the prideful pitfalls that often occur when political figures are forced to reassess policies. In the end it was the Paris Peace Accord which facilitated the withdrawal of American troops.

A negotiating avenue in a third-country capital does not appear to lend itself to a resolution of the Iraqi situation at this time. Nonetheless, I find it remarkable that in an autobiographical tome Henry Kissinger wrote that in December 1968, shortly after Richard Nixon had asked him to be his National Security Council Director, he met with the President-elect to discuss the direction of the new administration's foreign policy. They determined together, he noted, that their policy would be to get out of Vietnam.

After reading this passage I asked him years later at a Library of Congress symposium why they did not just proceed to do that. Kissinger looked at me for a moment and then uttered words I will never forget. "Young man," he said, "we meant with honor."

I then asked him if honor required escalation. "Absolutely," he responded.

In the Iraq circumstance, the executive branch has provided three broad rationales for American intervention. First, it hinted that there was an Iraqi connection to the attacks on 9/11. Then

it suggested that America and the world faced an imminent threat from Iraqi weapons of mass destruction. When these two justifications for the U.S.-led invasion turned out to be without foundation, the administration fell back on the goal of spreading democracy in Iraq and the broader Middle East as the basis for ongoing U.S. engagement.

From an American perspective, the case for extending the reach of democracy abroad always has a ring of validity, although many have concluded that imposing democracy from the outside is not a proven or necessarily compelling art form. Intriguingly, however, it would appear that today in Iraq democracy building provides a credible rationale for American disengagement even though it was a secondary and possibly flawed basis for original intervention.

In the aftermath of elections held 3 months ago, the Iraqis have finally formed a government which will have under its jurisdiction, although perhaps not complete control, a newly formed Army and a fledgling police apparatus. Based on three elements, credible national elections, a new government and a new infrastructure of security, the U.S. is positioned to begin and, almost as consequently, to announce a steady process of disengagement.

In the middle of the Vietnam War, Senator Aiken proposed that we simply declare victory and get out. This may have been good politics then, but there is no basis for suggesting victory was at hand. Ironically, the formation of a new government today may provide the most promising claim of some success in Iraq. Not to take advantage of the circumstance could be a lost opportunity. This may indeed be the last timely movement for decisive decision-making.

Lyndon Johnson knew his Vietnam policy was failing, but he chose to pass it on to a successor who proceeded to escalate an already escalated conflict. To the degree there is relevance to Presidential precedent, it would seem far wiser for this administration to set the conditions and proceed with withdrawal rather than leave such a decision to a future President.

The reason a democracy-based framework for disengagement needs to be articulated is that it allows the United States to set forth a basis for ending the occupation that is on our terms and on our timetable. If we don't develop and announce a plan and a rationale for disengagement, we could at some point find ourselves withdrawing with the other side claiming it forced us out through destructive anarchy, i.e., insurgent attacks and suicide bombings, or through the insistence of the elected government in Baghdad.

Democracy implies consent of the governed and when a large percentage of the Iraqi people want us to leave, as opinion polls indicate is the case today, the U.S. should be hard-pressed to follow the original neo-con strategy

of establishing and maintaining a semi-permanent military base in the country.

Here a note about the Crusades is relevant. While Americans use the word loosely and conjure up quaint cartoon images King Arthur and his knights, citizens of the Muslim world consider the Crusades living history, and it is no accident that Osama bin Laden refers to us as crusaders. For al Qaeda, the pushing out of U.S. forces would be an extension of the Crusades, an act of multi-century consequences. That is why it is so important to apply reason and public reasoning to the disengagement process.

This war has precipitated a great loss of confidence in and respect for the United States around the world. Quite possibly Iraq will be a better country because of America's intervention. But if we hang around too long, the Iraqi government and our government may suffer consequences even more negative than has so far been evidenced. Indeed, with each passing day of occupation, it appears our presence is increasingly inspiring more instability than stability.

It is true that precipitous withdrawal might be counterproductive and that precise timetables have disadvantages. But it is difficult for me to believe anything other than the declaration of a credible plan and reason for disengagement, coupled with a steady drawdown policy, is the wisest course of action today.

In a novel development, Congress has required the establishment of an "Iraq Study Group," under the aegis of the U.S. Institute for Peace, to be chaired by former Secretary of State James Baker and former Representative Lee Hamilton. At the risk of presumption, I would hope the perspective outlined above will be one of the approaches it and the Administration review. There are risks in too abrupt a departure; but a prolonged occupation leads too easily to the kind of retributive civilization clash that misrepresents America as well as peoples of the region.

20TH ANNIVERSARY OF CHERNOBYL DISASTER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, tomorrow, April 26, the world will commemorate the 20th anniversary of the world's worst nuclear disaster at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant in the Ukraine when it was under Soviet control.

The explosion released into the air radiation equivalent to 90 Hiroshima-size bombs in the heavily populated areas of northern Ukraine, southern Belarus and southwestern Russia.

□ 2000

Millions of people throughout the world were affected by this disaster, and millions more continue to live with its consequences on a daily basis. Some have written about the North European countries being affected by what has been termed "white winds," the white winds that came from

Chernobyl. Radioactive contamination continues to harm the health of men, women and children throughout our world. It is critical that we do not allow ourselves to forget the looming consequences of Chernobyl, which are with us still today, lest the tragedy repeat itself. We must remind our fellow Americans and the world that those problems continue to exist, and the countries that were affected by Chernobyl require assistance in resolving them. In order to achieve this goal, the Congressional Ukrainian Caucus, in cooperation with the Chernobyl Challenge '06 Coalition, is organizing a series of events at the end of this month to commemorate this solemn anniversary. I am very pleased to cooperate with our co-chairs of the Congressional Ukrainian Caucus, CURT WELDON of Pennsylvania, Congressman SANDER LEVIN of Michigan, Congressman ROSCOE BARTLETT of Maryland, along with myself. Tomorrow, April 26, at 10 a.m. here in the Rayburn House Office Building foyer will be a 1-day photo exhibit entitled "Chernobyl 20." The exhibit will include photographs by some prominent artists illuminating the human stories behind the Chernobyl catastrophe and highlighting the dignity and hope of its survivors. We welcome the public to come tomorrow and view this photo exhibit in the Rayburn House Office Building foyer. It begins at 10 a.m. and will remain there the entire day.

On April 27, the following day, Thursday, from 2 in the afternoon until 6, in HC-6 here in the Capitol, a congressional briefing will feature expert testimony on Chernobyl issues including radiation and health, agriculture and food, environment, economics and U.S. assistance and the containment of the fourth unit reactor. The ambassadors of Ukraine, Belarus, and Russia will provide brief remarks to inform about the current situation with respect to Chernobyl and their countries. If citizens are interested, they can contact our office at our Web site, rep.kaptur@mail.house.gov for information.

On Thursday, April 27 as well, from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. in the evening, in B369 Rayburn House Office Building, the Chernobyl Challenge '06 Coalition, in cooperation with our Congressional Ukrainian Caucus, will hold a congressional reception and Members of Congress will have an opportunity to speak. Again, if citizens are interested they can contact our Web site at rep.kaptur@mail.house.gov.

The Congressional Ukrainian Caucus is very grateful that for the briefing that will be held on Thursday, from 2 to 6 in Room HC-6, the Capitol Building, that some of the following speakers will appear, from the Chernobyl Children's Project International and the Children of Chernobyl Relief and