

DO YOU REMEMBER THE “PEACE DIVIDEND”?

In a press release issued today, Dr. Steven Porter, who opposes Republican Congressman Phil English in PA-03, asked, in light of the news that Bush’s Iraq war bill would likely top \$1 trillion, if we remember the “peace dividend.”

“That was the benefit,” Porter explained, “which would accrue to the American people when the Berlin Wall fell and the cold war ended. It was the time when money would be freed up for domestic programs like infrastructure repairs and health care.

“Strangely, it never happened. In fact, it was just about the same time that a host of things occurred to move America profoundly in the opposite direction.

“It was strange that around the same time the Supreme Court in the Buckley v Valeo decision said that money was the equivalent of free speech. This, of course, made it possible for special interests in the military, pharmaceutical, energy, agricultural, and insurance industries to buy off the candidates of both major parties so that now our government represents them and not the people.

“It was strange that at the same time so many industries were helped by Congress to globalize and outsource American jobs.

“It was strange that at the same time the American media was, as it is being now with Rupert Murdoch’s purchase of The Wall Street Journal, allowed to consolidate into fewer and fewer hands and that the level of education in the American public school system was allowed to fall to unheard-of depths.

“It was strange that at the same time advertising regulations concerning prescription drug products were relaxed.

“It was strange that at the same time the neo-conservatives of the Project for the New American Century ascended to the fore with their ill-conceived philosophy of American military and economic domination and that the disputed election of 2000 allowed them to come to national political power.

“It was strange that the tragedy of 9/11 should give those neo-cons exactly the issue they needed to invade Iraq and launch a military occupation which has increased global terrorism and made America the most hated nation in the world.

“Or maybe it is not so strange.”