

Their new ad claims that their intention is to import Canada's government controls.

The truth is, Canada is now utilizing the purchasing power of the U.S. government. One way the Canadian government keeps brand name drug companies from price gauging is to see at what price drug companies sell their products in other countries.

In Canada, the price cannot exceed the median price charged in other developing countries. Starting this year, the U.S. price Canada will use in the international comparisons is the U.S. Federal supply schedule price. We now have Canadians benefitting from the purchasing power of the United States Government. But Americans cannot benefit from that. This is an outrage that Canadians can benefit from U.S. Government discount that we refuse to give our own Medicare recipients.

I have introduced legislation that would give U.S. seniors access to lower prescription drug prices that seniors in all other countries enjoy, the International Prescription Drug Parity Act. The senior citizens in the district that I am fortunate to represent and in every district know that they are simply being robbed.

Senior citizens across this country expect every Member of Congress to address this situation. Addressing the issues of cost and affordability for prescription drugs as well as finding a reasonable approach to offering drug coverage to Medicare recipients is absolutely essential.

TRAGIC LOSS OF U.S. MARINES

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

Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, this past Saturday evening, we suffered a tragic loss in America when a Marine Corps V-22 Osprey crashed in a test mode and killed all 19 Marines on board the aircraft, a tragic loss of life.

All America has joined with the Commandant of the Marine Corps, General Jones; the leaders in the Pentagon; and the President in mourning the loss of these brave Americans.

This tragic incident is now under full investigation. Today I arranged for a full briefing for our colleagues where the Marine Corps presented a full up-to-date assessment as to what has taken place, what facts we know about the incident, and what initial thoughts are occurring in terms of what caused the accident.

It is obviously too early to tell, but we expect that within a few weeks we will know the basis upon which a decision can be made about the cause of this terribly tragic accident.

But, Madam Speaker, before we even removed all of the remains of these brave Marines, we have political opportunists around the country taking shots at the program and making wild and outlandish statements.

One such person, Madam Speaker, is a former Reagan Republican officeholder who served as Assistant Secretary of Defense by the name of Lawrence Korb. Mr. Korb wrote an op-ed in The New York Times on April 11 that is filled with misinformation factually incorrect, is a disservice to the Marine Corps, and to all brave Americans who wear the colors of this Nation.

He is the defense equivalent of an ambulance chaser. Before the investigation has even begun, he is trashing what General Jones calls the number-one priority of the Marine Corps, a capability to replace an aircraft, the CH-46 helicopter, that is 50 years old, was built for the Vietnam War, and which is suffering severe problems because of its age and because of its extended use well beyond the original life expectancy of the program.

In his article, Mr. Korb makes some gross statements that really are a disservice to the Corps and to all brave Marines serving this country. He says that this program was objected to by all senior officials from the Reagan, Bush, and Clinton administrations. That is absolutely incorrect. In fact, it was former Navy Secretary John Dalton would led the fight to keep the V-22 Osprey program alive for the Marine Corps and eventually all of our services.

He says in an article that these aircraft cost \$80 million each. When, if he would have checked his facts, he would have found that the cost is closer to \$40 million per copy and would be lower if we were buying an adequate buy of these aircraft as opposed to having them stretched out at a very low-rate buy. He assesses that Congress only supported the saving of this program because of the jobs that would be retained in America.

Well, I would say to Mr. Korb, either get his facts straight or keep his mouth shut. In fact, it was General Al Gray, the Commandant of the Marine Corps, who testified before Congress that he would never subject his warriors to what the opponents of the V-22 called a dual-sling option.

They said we will bolt two helicopters together and we will ask Marines to fly in those two helicopters to achieve the medium range over the rising capability that the V-22 offers.

Madam Speaker, the kind of rhetoric coming from people like Lawrence Korb is really a disgrace to the American service person and Mr. Korb ought to be ashamed of himself.

What we now need is, first of all, to mourn these families of these brave Marines. We need to let them know that we are going to do everything possible to take care of them and their loved ones and we are going to get to the bottom of what caused this incident. We will overturn every stone and we will use every bit of capability that we have to find out the cause of this terribly tragic accident. And we will relay this information to the families first, to Members of Congress, and then to the American public.

And then once we have all that have data, we will make a decision, we will make a decision based upon information and facts, not rhetoric to allow some columnist to score political points in the New York Times.

Madam Speaker, for the RECORD, I insert the following news release of the Marine Corps dated April 9; the statement of General Fred McCorkle, Deputy Chief of Staff for Aviation for the Marine Corps, dated April 11; and an updated information packet on the mishap, dated April 11 so that the American people can see the real facts of what occurred here as opposed to listening to incompetent people like Lawrence Korb.

[News Release, U.S. Marine Corps, April 9, 2000]

MV-22 MISHAP INVESTIGATION

HEADQUARTERS MARINE CORPS, WASHINGTON, DC.—The Marine Corps is sending an aircraft mishap investigation team, headed by Colonel Dennis Bartels of Headquarters, Marine Corps, to Marana, AZ to determine the cause of Saturday night's crash of an MV-22 Osprey that took the lives of all 19 Marines aboard.

"The entire Marine Corps family grieves for the Marines we've lost in this tragedy and our thoughts and prayers go out to their families," said Gen. James Jones, Commandant of the Marine Corps. "We have sent an expert team to Arizona to quickly investigate the circumstances surrounding this mishap."

Secretary of the Navy Richard Danzig today released the following statement, "Evaluating new equipment and training for war, like war itself, puts life at risk. In peace and war, Marines accept that risk—it is a bond between us. In that spirit, we grieve today for our nineteen lost Marines and embrace their families."

The MV-22 was conducting a training mission in support of Operational Evaluation (OPEVAL) when it went down near Marana, AZ. During the mission, the crew and Marines conducted Non-combatant Evacuation Operations (NEO) exercises as part of the Weapons and Tactics Instructor course, with Marines embarking and disembarking the aircraft. The mission was conducted at night utilizing night vision goggles (NVGs) and forward-looking infrared radar (FLIR) to enhance night operational capability.

Operational Evaluation is a test phase to determine the operational suitability of the aircraft for the Marine Corps. It began in October 1999 and is scheduled to conclude in June 2000.

To date, the four Ospreys involved in Operational Evaluation have completed more than 800 flight hours. During March, the OPEVAL aircraft flew nearly 140 flight hours, an average of 35 hours per aircraft.

The mishap aircraft was part of the Multi-service Operational Test Team, based at Patuxent River, MD, but was temporarily attached to Marine Aviation Weapons and Tactics Squadron-1 at Marine Corps Air Station Yuma, AZ.

The names of the deceased are being withheld pending notification of next of kin.

[News Release, U.S. Marine Corps, April 9, 2000]

NAMES OF ACCIDENT VICTIMS RELEASED

HEADQUARTERS MARINE CORPS, WASHINGTON, DC.—Marine Corps officials are expressing condolences to the families of 19 Marines killed approximately 8 p.m. last night when an MV-22 Osprey crashed near Marana, Ariz.

Killed in the accident were:

Sgt. Jose Alvarez, 28, a machinegunner assigned to 3d Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, of Uvalde, Texas.

Maj. John A. Brow, 39, a pilot assigned to Marine Helicopter Squadron-1, of California, Md.

PFC Gabriel C. Clevenger, 21, a machinegunner assigned to 3d Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, of Picher, Okla.

PFC Alfred Corona, 23, a machinegunner assigned to 3d Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, of San Antonio, Texas.

Lance Corporal Jason T. Duke, 28, a machinegunner assigned to 3d Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, of Sacramento, Calif.

Lance Corporal Jesus Gonzales Sanchez, 27, an assaultman assigned to 3d Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, of San Diego, Calif.

Maj. Brooks S. Gruber, 34, a pilot assigned to Marine Helicopter Squadron-1, of Jacksonville, NC.

Lance Corporal Seth G. Jones, 18, an assaultman assigned to 3d Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, of Bend, Ore.

2nd Lieutenant Clayton J. Kennedy, 24, a platoon commander assigned to 3d Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, of Clifton Bosque, Texas.

Cpl. Kelly S. Keith, 22, aircraft crew chief assigned to Marine Helicopter Squadron-1, of Florence, SC.

Cpl. Eric J. Martinez, 21, a field radio operator assigned to Marine Wing Communications Squadron 38, Marine Air Control Group 38, of Coconino, Ariz.

Lance Corporal Jorge A. Morin, 21, an assaultman assigned to 3d Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, of McAllen, Texas.

Corporal Adam C. Neely, 22, a rifleman assigned to 3d Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, of Winthrop, Wash.

Staff Sgt. William B. Nelson, 30, a satellite communications specialist with Marine Air Control Group-38, of Richmond, Va.

PFC Kenneth O. Paddio, 23, a rifleman assigned to 3d Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, of Houston, Texas.

PFC George P. Santos, 19, a rifleman assigned to 3d Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, of Long Beach, Calif.

PFC Keoki P. Santos, 24, a rifleman assigned to 3d Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, of Grand Ronde, Ore.

Corporal Can Soler, 21, a rifleman assigned to 3d Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, of Palm City, Fla.

Pvt. Adam L. Tatro, 19, a rifleman assigned to 3d Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, of Brownwood, Texas.

"The entire Marine Corps family grieves for the Marines we've lost in this tragedy and our thoughts and prayers go out to their families," said Gen. James Jones, Commandant of the Marine Corps. "We have sent an expert team to Arizona to quickly investigate the circumstances surrounding this mishap."

Secretary of the Navy Richard Danzig today released the following statement, "Evaluating new equipment and training for war, like war itself, puts life at risk. In peace and war, Marines accept that risk—it is a bond between us. In that spirit, we grieve today for our nineteen lost Marines and embrace their families."

The MV-22 was conducting a training mission in support of Operational Evaluation (OPEVAL) when it went down near Marana, Ariz. During the mission, the crew and Marines conducted Non-combatant Evacuation Operation (NEO) exercises as part of the

Weapons and Tactics Instructor Course, with Marines embarking and disembarking the aircraft. The mission was conducted at night utilizing night vision goggles and forward-looking infrared radar to enhance night operational capability.

Operational Evaluation is a test phase to determine the operational suitability of the aircraft for the Marine Corps. It began in October 1999 and is scheduled to conclude in June 2000.

To date, the four Ospreys involved in Operational Evaluation have completed more than 800 flight hours. During March, the OPEVAL aircraft flew nearly 140 flight hours, an average of 35 hours per aircraft.

The mishap aircraft was part of the Multi-service Operational Test Team, based at Patuxent River, Md., but was temporarily attached to Marine Aviation Weapons and Tactics Squadron-1 at Marine Corps Air Station Yuma, Ariz.

PREPARED STATEMENT ON MV-22 MISHAP BY LTGEN FRED MCCORKLE, HEADQUARTERS MARINE CORPS (APRIL 11, 2000)

First and foremost, I would like to say that our thoughts and prayers are with the families of our Marines who were tragically taken from us Saturday night. Obviously, there are no words that can express our sadness and sense of loss in this situation. Our Marine Corps is a tight-knit family, and each of us feels the loss of these Marines. We are with the families now and we will continue to assist them in the difficult days ahead. Our number one concern at this time is their well-being.

While the mishap is currently under investigation, there are some things I would like to relay to you and then I will answer whatever questions I can.

The Commandant has sent Col Dennis Bartels from our staff to lead the expert investigation team. I spoke with Col Bartels last night and he has assured me that the investigation is well underway. There is, however, no determination at this time as to the cause of the mishap. Let me emphatically state that we are committed to finding the truth. One thing I want to clarify from my comments yesterday, the incident was observed on an F/A-18 FLIR but it was not videotaped.

The aircraft was the second in a flight of two aircraft conducting a simulated evacuation operation. It was one of four MV-22s participating in this exercise to support Operational Evaluations (OpEval). OpEval is a DOD requirement specifically designed to validate an aircraft's operational capability to support USMC missions. It requires flights in operational configurations to include flights with embarked troops.

Our most precious asset is our Marines and their welfare is the primary concern of all Marines in leadership positions. Numerous senior service members and members of Congress have flown in the aircraft. I have flown the aircraft and believe it to be safe. It is important to stress that the MV-22 is not an experimental test aircraft. The MV-22 is a proven technology. The Osprey has already completed extensive flight testing that included:

Almost 1200 flight hours of Full Scale Development (1-6), and

1600 flight hours of Engineering/Manufacturing Development (7-10).

The mishap aircraft was one of five production aircraft delivered to the Marine Corps for operational use. The four aircraft participating in OpEval, all delivered in the past 11 months, have accumulated over 840 flight hours conducting operational flights in support of OpEval. This particular aircraft was delivered to the Marine Corps in January of

this year and had been flown over 135 hours to date. The total amount of flight time accumulated by MV-22s to date is over 3600 hours.

The two pilots flying the aircraft were very experienced, veteran pilots from Marine Helicopter Squadron One. One had nearly 3800 hours and the other had over 2100 hours. Both pilots were approaching 100 hours of flight time in the MV-22 and had over 100 MV-22 simulator hours. Additionally, the aircraft was crewed by two of our very finest enlisted Marines.

The aircraft is equipped with a Crash Survivable Memory Unit (CSMU) that records 227 separate aircraft parameters that should provide invaluable insight into the cause of this mishap. These parameters include aircraft performance data (airspeed, altitude, heading, etc), engine performance data and information on any potential system malfunctions indicated. Efforts to retrieve this component from the aircraft are ongoing.

We are distributing a photo of the Marana Northwest Regional Airport that depicts the intended point of landing for the flight of the two aircraft involved. This package also contains a data sheet and information relating to the exercise being conducted.

Throughout this tragic and challenging time, we have been supported by a number of local law enforcement agencies, fire departments and National Guard and reserve units in Arizona. The American Red Cross continues to provide support on the scene. We truly appreciate their superb support in these efforts to take care of our Marines.

Our work as Marines comes with some danger and risks, but we strive to do everything we can to minimize those risks. As Secretary Danzig so aptly stated Sunday, "Evaluating new equipment and training for war, like war itself, puts life at risk. In peace and war, Marines accept that risk—it is a bond between us. In that spirit we grieve today for our lost Marines."

Finally, I would like to conclude by again saying that our thoughts and prayers are with the families of our fallen Marines. We are taking care of the families now and will continue to assist them in every way possible in the difficult days ahead. I will now answer what questions I can at this point.

MV-22 MISHAP INFORMATION

The MV-22 mishap occurred approximately 8 p.m. Saturday night 8 April when a MV-22 Osprey crashed near Tucson, Arizona. The MV-22 was conducting a training mission in support of Operational Evaluation (OPEVAL). Aircraft was second aircraft in two ship flight inbound Marana Northwest Regional Airport (encl 1) about 15 miles NW of Tucson, Arizona. The landing site was a hard surface concrete pad area, free of obstacles and parallel to a 6,900' runway. Safety personnel had conducted a safety site survey and a daytime landing there to ensure suitability.

This mishap aircraft was part of the Multi-service Operational Test Team (MOTT), based at Patuxent River, Md., but was temporarily attached to Marine Aviation Weapons and Tactics Squadron-1 (MAWTS-1) at Marine Corps Air station Yuma, Ariz. OPEVAL commenced in November 1999 with planned completion data of June 2000. OPEVAL is being conducted by the MOTT under the auspices of Commanding Officer, HMX-1, the Marine Corps' aviation OPEVAL agency. In this capacity, CO, HMX-1 reports to Commander Operational Test and Evaluation Force. OPEVAL determines aircraft effectiveness and suitability and must be conducted to the maximum extent possible under the most realistic conditions (DOD 5000.2).

During the mission, the crew and Marines conducted Non-combatant Evacuation Operations (NEO) exercises as part of the Weapons and Tactics Instructor (WTI) Course, with Marines embarking and disembarking the aircraft. The mission profile called for the utilization of the latest version of Night Vision Goggles, (ANVIS-9) and Forward-Looking Infrared Radar to enhance night operational capability. Flight was undertaken in good weather conditions with 17 percent illumination. The flight also served as a training vehicle for the MAWTS current WTI course designated as Assault Support Mission 3 (encl 2). Non-aircrew personnel aboard were part of the Evacuation Control Center for the simulated NEO.

The mishap aircraft was not an experimental aircraft. The aircraft was the fourth of five production aircraft delivered to the Marine Corps. Formal developmental testing of the MV-22 was conducted on the Full Scale Development aircraft (aircraft 1-6) flying 1184 flt hrs and the Engineering and Manufacturing Development aircraft (aircraft 7-10) flying 1600 flt hrs. The mishap aircraft was a Low Rate Initial Production aircraft (aircraft 11-15). The LRIP aircraft have flown a total of 840 flt hrs conducting operational/mission training and evaluation. The MV-22 fleet have flown a total of 3624 flt hrs. The mishap aircraft had flown 135.5 flight hrs since it was delivered to the Marine Corps on 17 Jan 00.

The two previous MV-22 testing mishaps demonstrated the risks inherent in any flight test development program, but the mishap causes were not unique to "tiltrotor technology." The last mishap was in July 1992. The identified design deficiencies were corrected and incorporated in all production aircraft. The MV-22 fleet has flown over 2400 hours (2/3 of all hours) since the last mishap in 1992.

A complete Aviation Mishap Board (AMB) has been convened in Tucson under in accordance with OPNAVINST 3750 under the direction of Col Dennis Bartels from Dept of Avn, HQMC. Team is being supported by joint agencies and the entire Naval Aviation establishment.

Although MV-22s have not been grounded by Commander Naval Air Systems Command, operations have been suspended in order to evaluate the current situation and determine the most appropriate course of action and safe flight operations.

REMAINS—8 REMAINS HAD BEEN RECOVERED BY
1500, 11 APRIL 2000

—The recovery of remains will be done as quickly as possible given the circumstances and requirements to properly identify the Marines and preserve evidence at the crash site.

—15 Aviation Mishap Board personnel on scene.

—15 Naval Aviation Center Personnel on scene.

—Human Resources Personnel from Davis-Monthan.

—Counselors on site to assist.

—HMX-1 Flight Surgeon on site.

—Marine Reserve Unit providing security (6th Eng Spt BN Det A Bulk Fuel).

—Locals have constructed a memorial with flowers.

—There are two Armed Forces Medical Examiners on site.

—10 Trained mortuary affairs personnel from the U.S. Air Force and Armed Forces Institute of Pathology arrived from Washington, DC, Monday.

—Recovery efforts began 0800 this morning.

—Once remains have been properly removed, they will be transferred to Davis-Monthan Air Force Base for shipment to Dover Air Force Base, Delaware.

—Dover serves as the Port Mortuary for all Services.

—At Dover, the remains will be met by Marines from the Marine Barracks Washington, DC.

—After the remains have been identified, they will be assigned an escort (either someone from the Marines' unit or someone designated by the family).

—Memorial services will be held at NAS Patuxent River, MD next week and Camp Pendleton on Monday 17th. Exact times and dates are being coordinated.

—MCAS New River has tentatively scheduled a memorial for the four aircrew at 1400 this Friday.

—If DNA analysis is required, a sample will be taken from the remains at Dover and testing will be done at Rockville, Maryland Institute of Pathology.

—All Marines on board are entitled to be buried at Arlington National Cemetery if the family so desires.

MAWTS-1—ASSAULT SUPPORT TACTICS THREE

Assault Support Tactics Three (AST III) is a long range (180 NM radius) multiple site Noncombatant Evacuation Operation (NEO) conducted at night (on NVGs) in the Phoenix and Tucson Arizona areas. A "real world" scenario forms the two day evolution which is the culmination of the AST Common flight phase of the Weapons and Tactics Instructors (WTI Course) taught at Marine Aviation Weapons and Tactics Squadron One. Additionally, the NEO completes the WTI course's Military Operations in an Urban Terrain (MOUT) package introduced earlier during the Common academics phase.

This particular WTI mission requires a sizeable airborne package consisting of mostly helicopters. Specific numbers for WTI 2-00 are: (7) CH-46Es, (5) CH-53Es, (2) CH-53Ds, (5) AH-1Ws, 1 UH-1N, (3) FA-18Ds, (4) MV-22s, (3) KC-130s for a total of 30 aircraft supporting the NEO. Besides the aircraft required to support the mission a Forward Operating Base (FOB) is established at Gila Bend Air Force Auxiliary Airfield. The FOB is guarded by Stinger Teams, facilitates a Marine Air Traffic Control Mobile Team (MMT), a MWCS Communications Detachment using high power HF, VHF SINGARS, and SATCOM. A Forward Arming and Refueling Point (FARP) is also established at the FOB employing KC-130's Rapid Ground Refueling (RGR) systems. The Tactical Bulk Fuel Dispensing System (TBFDS) is also employed on a CH-53E at a separate austere site to refuel the AH-1Ws and UH-1N.

During the execution, three separate task forces pull evacuees from three different sites located in Phoenix and Tucson. The American citizens once evacuated and repositioned at the FOB where a complete Evacuation Control Center (ECC) completes the processing. Once processing is complete, the KC-130s lift the evacuees back to Yuma, AZ. MAWTS-1 staff members make up the Forward Command Element (FCE). An infantry company that supports WTI make up the security elements and man the ECC at the FOB's consolidation site. Additional Marines dressed in civilian attire make up the non-combatants—totaling up to eighty evacuees. As the mission progresses, all information is relayed through the established command and control system including a Direct Air Support Center (DASC) and DASC(A), an Assault Support Coordinator Airborne (ASC(A)) assists in control of the mission while "real time" information is fed back to the Tactical Air Command Center (TACC). Situational awareness is maintained in the TAC—nearly two hundred miles from the further site!

The NEO training received at MAWTS-1, during the WTI course, is critical since no

where else in the FMF are NEOs practiced to such an extent and magnitude—except during a real contingency.

CMC MISHAP UPDATE FOR 11 APR 2000

AVIATION

—Recovery of remains started 0800 this morning

—Ten bodies recovered as of 1500 11 April

—Should get at least 4 more today

—Crew chief identified by equipment and uniform

—Expect to be complete by 12 April

—Remains to be flown from Davis-Monthan AFB to Dover

—Autopsies and DNA sampling to commence upon return to East Coast

—All Aircraft Mishap Board members and augmentees on site at Marana, AZ

—Armed Forces Institute of Pathology—12 personnel

2 Medical Examiners

10 Mortuary Affairs personnel

—JAG Manual investigators (LtCol Morgan and LtCol (Sel) Radich) from Quantico on scene 11 April

—MOTT (85 Pax) to be transported by C-9 from MCAS Yuma to Pax River Wednesday; C-130 to return team from memorial service at New River to Yuman on Saturday, Pending aircraft status, original test plan called for OPEVAL to resume at China Lake on Sunday

—Aircraft presently cleared for ground turns and taxiing as of 11 April

LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS

—Briefing requested by Rep. Curt Weldon (R, PA 7th Dist.) and others by LtGen. McCorkle set for 1000, 12 April

—Offer made by OLA to Senate side for similar briefing in PM on 12 April if desired

PUBLIC AFFAIRS

—Have received over 1000 media inquiries since the mishap

—LtGen. McCorkle's preliminary press conference 1630 on 10 April

—LtGen. McCorkle gave statement and answered reporters questions at DOD nationally televised press conference at 1330 on 11 April

—Daily briefings at 1430 at the crash site with Maj. Dave Anderson

—Once barriers erected at crash site, most press departed

V-22 "OSPREY" KEY FACTS

The V-22 OSPREY is a joint service, multi-mission, vertical/short take-off and landing tiltrotor aircraft. It performs a wide range of VTOL missions as effective as a conventional helicopter while achieving the long-range cruise efficiencies of a twin turboprop aircraft. The MV-22 will be the Marine Corps' medium lift aircraft, replacing the aging fleet of CH-46 and CH-53D helicopters. The Air Force variant, the CV-22, will replace the MH-53J and MH-60G and augment the MC-130 fleet in the USSOCOM Special Operations mission. The V-22, which is jointly produced by Bell Helicopter Textron and the Boeing Company, is the world's first production tiltrotor aircraft.

FEATURES AND BENEFITS

- Incorporates mature, but advanced technologies in composite materials, survivability, airfoil design, fly-by-wire controls, digital cockpit and manufacturing.

- Has two 38-foot diameter "prop-rotors." Engine/transmission nacelles mounted on the end of each wing rotate through 95 degrees. Combines vertical takeoff and landing of a helicopter with the long range, high speed and efficiency of a turboprop airplane.

- This unique aircraft transitions from the helicopter flying mode to a fixed wing flying mode in less than 20 seconds.

- Speed, range, and payload expand capabilities beyond the limits of helicopter technology.

- Self deployable worldwide, ferry range of 2,100 NM with one aerial refueling.

- Can fly at speeds from hover to 300 knots, cruises at 250 knots.

- Increased speed, maneuverability and reduced vulnerability make it much more survivable in combat than the helicopters it is replacing.

- Carries up to 24 fully combat loaded Marines internally or 10,000 pounds externally.

- Performs missions relevant to post Cold War era:

- Amphibious landing
- Noncombatant evacuation
- Tactical recovery of aircraft and personnel
- Humanitarian relief
- Transporting troops into combat
- Long-range special operations night/all weather

Provides all the above faster from further distances with more survivability than a helicopter

SCHEDULE

- Marine Medium Tiltrotor Training Squadron (VMMT-204) designated June 1999
- Initial operational capability for the Marine Corps—2001

- First USMC fleet squadron scheduled deployment—2003

- USAF Initial operational capability—2004

- Service buys: Marine Corps 360 MV-22s, Air Force 50 CV-22s, Navy 48 HV-22s

1830

ARMENIAN GENOCIDE COMMEMORATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. WILSON). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Madam Speaker, every year we come to the House floor to commemorate and pay tribute to the 1.5 million victims of the Armenian Genocide. Sadly, 85 years after the tragedy began, Turkey still refuses to recognize the Armenian Genocide and apologize for the atrocious acts it committed. Since 1923, Turkey has denied the Armenian Genocide despite overwhelming documentation, and since 1923 there has been no justice for the victims and the families of the victims of the Armenian Genocide.

To those who continue to resist the truth, I can only believe that they have chosen to ignore the hard evidence or to indulge their shame by ignoring the facts. Like the Holocaust, denying the Armenian Genocide cannot erase the tragedy, the lives that were lost, or compensate for driving people from their homeland. For the people of Armenia, the fight continues today, particularly for the Armenians of Nagorno-Karabagh, who are impacted by modern day Turkey and Azerbaijan's aggression toward Armenia in the form of the Azeri blockade against Nagorno-Karabagh. But their actions are not without consequences.

I believe the Congress will continue to provide assistance to the people residing in Nagorno-Karabagh, and we will continue to uphold section 907 of

the Freedom Support Act that denies assistance to Azerbaijan until they end their stranglehold on Nagorno-Karabagh. Our message to Turkey and Azerbaijan must be loud and clear. We will not stand by as you once again seek to threaten the Armenian people.

For my part, I will continue to support assistance to improve the lives of all Armenians; I will continue to remember those who have lost their lives, and continue to commemorate this somber occasion. Lastly, I will continue to hold the Turkish and Azeri governments responsible for their actions past and present. For this reason, I have joined as a cosponsor of House Resolution 398, commemorating the genocide and calling on the President to characterize in his annual message commemorating the Armenian Genocide, the systematic and deliberate annihilation of 1.5 million Armenians as genocide and to recall the proud history of the United States intervention in opposition to that genocide.

I am hopeful that we will see the day when peace, stability, and prosperity are realized for the people of Nagorno-Karabagh and for all Armenians. But until then, the United States Congress must continue to be on the side of what is right, what is just and continue to assist to make sure that history does not repeat itself.

PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, the gentlewoman from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Ms. STABENOW. Madam Speaker, I come today to talk about what I believe is one of the most challenging if not the most challenging issues affecting our seniors and affecting many families across the country. This was spoken to a while ago by the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BERRY), who spoke very eloquently about the challenges of seniors related to the cost of prescription drugs.

What we have seen over the years is a system that started in 1965 under Medicare that has been a great American success story. In 1965, half of our seniors could not find insurance or could not afford health care insurance. Now we have a system for health care for seniors. The challenge before us is that health care has changed, the way we provide health care has changed. In 1965 we were predominantly providing health care in hospitals with surgeries, and the use of drugs was limited to the hospital.

Today, we know that care has changed; and we see home health care, we see outpatient care, and a great reliance on new prescription drugs, wonderful medications that we are very pleased and proud to have developed in the United States. But at the same time we are seeing a growing disparity and a horrible situation for too many

seniors who literally on a daily basis are deciding do I buy my food today, do I get my medications, do I pay the electric bill, how can I keep going and remain healthy and well by having access to my medications? Because Medicare does not currently cover the costs of prescription drugs.

I rise today to urge my colleagues as quickly as possible, we are long overdue, in correcting this problem. We have economic good times. There is no reason that we cannot at this time get it right for Medicare, modernize Medicare, to cover the way health care is provided today; and that means covering the cost of prescription drugs. We are in economic good times, and I believe in these times we have obligations to pay our bills and pay our debts and to keep our commitments.

One of the most important commitments that we have made to older Americans is Medicare, health care for them. Social Security is another commitment, health care for our veterans, all important commitments that we have made. But because of the challenge that I have heard from too many of my constituents all across Michigan, I began months ago putting together something called the Prescription Drug Fairness Campaign. I have asked seniors and families to share with me their stories, if they are having difficulty paying for their medications to call a hotline that I set up for them to share their stories with me, or for them to send me letters and copies of their high prescription drug bills so that we can put a real face and a name and a situation on this problem.

This is not an issue made up by people on the floor of this House or by other politicians. This is an issue that is real for every senior and every family in this country. One of the things that disturbs me the most is the fact that we see such a disparity in pricing. As the gentleman from Arkansas mentioned earlier, we have a situation where if you go to another country, in my State we are right next to Canada in Michigan, I included a bus trip, I invited a number of seniors to join me, to go across the Ambassador Bridge from Detroit to Windsor; and we dropped their costs by 53 percent by crossing the bridge.

There is something wrong when there can be such a disparity. And when you add to that the fact that we are precluded by American law from bringing those drugs, mail order or bringing those medications routinely across the border without seeing a Canadian physician first and going through the Canadian process, we cannot reimport those drugs back into the United States, American-made FDA approved, because of protections that were put into the law in 1987 to protect our own pharmaceutical drug companies who are making the drugs here and benefiting from our research and development and the institutions that we have, the tax system we have that provides tax incentives and tax write-offs,