

mountains of eastern Afghanistan are made of steel, Mr. Speaker; and the ability of the United States of America to manufacture steel, merchantable steel, is at the very essence of our ability to provide for the common defense.

It also strengthens our economy. In Indiana, 30,000 families make their livelihood in the steel industry. Increased efficiency and technological innovation combined with our hard-working employees have made the steel industry the envy of the world. Yet our policies have been rewarding uncompetitive and destructive behavior. Domestic steel production is vital to the national interest; it is vital to strengthening our economy.

I commend the President of the United States today as we anticipate his decision, selective tariffs, using section 201 of the Trade Act. It is important that we support the steel industry in America long term and preserve our ability to produce the arsenal of democracy which gives the enemies of freedom pause and gives the friends of freedom hope all across the world.

PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CULBERSON). Pursuant to the order of the House of January 23, 2002, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, recently the National Governors Association passed a resolution calling for action to prevent the brand-name drug industry from blocking access to lower-cost generic drugs. It turns out that the drug industry is cheating consumers out of literally billions of dollars in prescription drug savings by illegally and unethically keeping generic competitors off the market.

Shocking, is it not, that the drug industry would exploit loopholes in the law to make sure that American consumers continue to pay higher prices than necessary for lifesaving products? We are talking about the same industry that charges Americans two and three and four times what it charges in other countries. We are talking about an industry that pummels American consumers with ads on TV and in magazines and on radio promoting a handful of drugs that just happen to be some of the most expensive drugs on the market.

As a matter of fact, the drug industry's use of direct-to-consumer advertising to manipulate the public is just as insidious as the tricks the industry uses to keep generic competition off the market. The European Union does not permit direct-to-consumer advertising, neither does Japan nor Canada nor Israel. In fact, only one other country in the world, New Zealand, permits direct-to-consumer advertising of prescription drugs. That is because this advertising skews health care towards the newest, most expensive drugs, regardless of whether these drugs are the

best alternative for patients and regardless of the impact on America's health care bill.

The industry claims it is doing consumers a favor, that direct-to-consumer advertising is a breakthrough in consumer education. In 2000, the drug industry advertised 1 percent of its 10,000 available prescription drugs. Ninety-five percent of all direct-to-consumer advertising was spent on just 50 of these 10,000 drugs. The drug industry claims its advertising is highly educational. Direct-to-consumer advertising is highly profitable, hardly highly educational.

Those 50 drugs I mentioned, the ones that were most heavily advertised in 2000, were responsible for half of the \$21 billion increase in prescription drug spending. And about those 50 drugs, they are not for 50 different conditions. Most of those drugs are simply copycat drugs.

We see ads for Vioxx and Celebrex, \$239 million worth, which are alternative treatments for the same condition, arthritis. We see ads for Claritin and Zyrtec and Allegra to the tune of \$227 million, all for the treatment of allergies. Billions of dollars are spent on ads for fewer than 30 health problems. American consumers pay for those ads when we shell out two and three and four times more than consumers in any other country in the world. We pay for those ads when the 50 most heavily advertised drugs account for half of the dramatic annual increase in spending.

Prescription drug inflation is fueling double-digit increases in health care premiums, it is pushing State budgets into the red, and it is forcing seniors into poverty. And behind it all are romantic images of allergy-free people digging in their gardens and playing with their puppies.

The drug industry has a chokehold on the United States. They charge Americans more than any other consumer; they manipulate American consumers with questionable TV and print ads; and they block access to affordable medicines, even though 70 million Americans, many of them seniors, do not have the benefit of insurance and are paying hundreds of dollars out of pocket.

So where is the Bush administration? Why is George Bush not outraged about this? Where is his administration? The administration does not like to be perceived as catering to large corporations at the expense of American consumers. The administration bristles at the notion that it turned to Enron and big oil when it formulated its energy policy. They do not like it when you point out that they turned to the chemical companies when writing their environmental policy, that they turned to the insurance companies when they wrote the Patients' Bill of Rights. And I am sure the administration would vehemently deny that their silence on prescription drug prices stems from their close ties to the drug industry. Well, the proof is in the pudding. This is a

litmus test in the next year what this body does about prescription drug prices, both for the President and for every Member of Congress. We report to the American public, not to the drug industry. If the President and the Congress do not break loose from the drug industry's chokehold and reign in that industry's unbridled greed, then American voters should send us all packing.

It is as simple as that.

SOCIAL SECURITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 23, 2002, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. SMITH) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, we are going to increase the debt limit of the United States in the next several days. Already, the debt limit of the United States, set at \$5.95 trillion, is being apparently violated by having a debt greater than the debt limit set by the United States. I think we need a thorough discussion in this Chamber and in the Senate and certainly in the White House of how do we want to treat debt in the United States; how deep do we want to go in debt; how much, if you will, mortgage do we want to leave to our children and our grandchildren.

It seems that it is reasonable to live within our means, not to say that our spending today is so important that it justifies leaving a larger debt or a larger mortgage to our kids and our grandkids. If we want to spend money, then it is reasonable to say to the American people and be up-front with them that we are going to increase taxes and use those revenues for existing spending rather than, I suggest, hoodwinking the American people by increasing our borrowing. The borrowing is not as obvious as tax increases. Therefore, over the last 30 years, we have said we are going to borrow more and more as government gets larger and larger and, sadly, a lot of that borrowing has come from the trust funds.

Since 1983 when we last changed the Social Security system, and we changed it by increasing taxes and reducing benefits, we have had more revenue coming in from the Social Security tax, the so-called FICA tax, than was needed to pay out Social Security benefits. Just a footnote here to mention that Social Security is a system that is, and always has been, designed to tax current workers and use that money to pay current retirees. As the number of workers per retiree has diminished since we started the program in 1934, we have developed an obvious insolvency in the Social Security system.

I have heard some of my colleagues from the other side of the aisle criticize some things the Republicans are doing. It is easy to demagogue this kind of program that so many seniors find so valuable. We now have over 50

percent of our seniors that depend on the money coming in from Social Security. So it scares the heck out of seniors when anybody suggests, that somebody is going to change Social Security.

Here are the facts: Social Security is going broke. Fifty years ago we had 40 workers for every one retiree. Today, there are three workers paying in their tax for every one retiree. The actuaries estimate that by 2025 there will be two workers paying in for every retiree. And by 2040 there will be one worker for each retiree. Can you imagine the taxes and the burden on that one worker, paying in Social Security, enough taxes to cover the Social Security benefits of one retiree? There is going to be a huge unfunded cost and the burden should not be placed on future taxpayers.

Look. Nobody is going to suggest that we stop our commitment of paying Social Security benefits. So this trust fund is only a booking record of the mandate to come up with the money, starting in 2014 or 2015 or 2016. The only way to come up with the money is to either increase taxes or reduce benefits or increase borrowing. Increasing borrowing is the most politically likely to put our kids even further in debt. It is going to cost a lot of money; there is now an unfunded liability of \$9 trillion in today's dollars of the benefits that are needed to pay Social Security benefits over the next 75 years over and above what is going to come in from the FICA tax. We need to deal with it but it depends on how we deal with it. Do you do nothing? And if you do nothing, the cost is going to be substantially greater than doing something and getting a better return on some of that money paid into Social Security.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, let me just say that the average retiree is going to get a 1.7 percent return on the money that they and their employer invested in Social Security. We can do better than that. There needs to be a transition to earn more for the program rather than demagoguing. Let us come up with ideas and suggestions rather than playing politics, because it is a program that is worth saving.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12 of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 56 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until 2 p.m.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. CULBERSON) at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Daniel P. Coughlin, offered the following prayer:

From the blood-stained lintels, You, Almighty God, led the Jewish people through the doors of freedom to the desert. By the Spirit, Jesus was led into the desert to discover You in prayer and fasting.

Be with the Members of Congress and draw them into the emptiness of imagining and desire where You, our mysterious Lord, always siren Your people. Total dependency upon You, symbolized by the desert, either lifts one beyond present blindness or drowns one in the abandonment of spirit.

As You lead the leaders of this Nation and other nations forward, may the American people follow with all their struggling questions of faith. Bring peaceful agreement to the holy and ancient lands of the Middle East in Your own way, in Your own time, by Your own direction.

In You we place our trust, now and forever. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. CHABOT) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. CHABOT led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

PRIVATE CALENDAR

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This is the day for the call of the Private Calendar. The Clerk will call the bill on the Private Calendar.

NANCY B. WILSON

The Clerk called the bill (H.R. 392) for the relief of Nancy B. Wilson.

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the bill be passed over without prejudice.

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

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This concludes the call of the Private Calendar.

MARRIAGE AND SELF-ESTEEM

(Mr. PITTS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, there is a lot of talk these days about self-esteem. We do not want children to have low self-esteem. Whole curricula are developed about how to increase children's self-esteem.

The truth is, marriage is one of the best mental health programs for children and adults. Children born or raised outside of marriage are more likely to suffer mental health problems, such as depression. Children whose parents are not married have lower school attendance, lower school performance.

Teenagers whose parents are divorced are also more likely to have problems with substance abuse than children whose parents are married.

Married adults are significantly less likely to suffer from the problems of alcoholism and depression than non-married adults.

Mr. Speaker, I am not a mental health expert, but it seems to me that encouraging healthy marriages is a whole lot cheaper and more effective than picking up the pieces of broken marriages after it is too late.

IT IS TIME TO STAND UP FOR AMERICAN JOBS AND AMERICAN STEEL

(Mr. SANDLIN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SANDLIN. Mr. Speaker, it is time to stand up for American families. It is time to stand up for American jobs. It is time to stand up in this country for American steel.

Already, 30 American steel companies have declared bankruptcy, and 47,000 American steelworkers have lost their jobs. Why has that happened? The International Trade Commission has determined that trade violations and steel dumping by foreign countries have caused these losses.

Tomorrow, the administration will decide what needs to be done to punish these foreign offenders. Apparently, the administration is considering an ineffective 30 percent tariff and total exemptions for a number of foreign countries. That simply will not work. Ask the domestic steel industry; ask the steelworkers.

Let us protect American jobs. A 40 percent tariff will protect our domestic industry and provide security to American families. We expect American families and American workers to work hard and to play by the rules. We should expect the same from our foreign trading partners.

HOW MANY TERRORIST OPPORTUNITIES WILL YUCCA MOUNTAIN PROVIDE?

(Mr. GIBBONS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GIBBONS. Mr. Speaker, proponents of transporting 77,000 tons of