

program as quickly as possible. It has been closed to them so far, many of them. We need to open it up with a 2-year look-back provision so that they can get in and have their case reviewed, because to have their child in that situation, to have them not be able to look at them, talk to them, running around flapping their arms, having chronic diarrhea and constipation is something that parents must not live with, and this Government needs to address this problem.

California has talked about it in this report, and the Congress of the United States and the White House need to come to grips with this problem right away.

THE BUSH ADMINISTRATION'S ECONOMIC POLICY

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

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, the latest economic news is out, and it is not good. The trade deficit for March was announced today. It hit the second highest level in history, \$43.5 billion more imports coming into our country than exports going out. What we are exporting are more U.S. jobs.

Why do we have such a high trade deficit? Rising oil prices and continued deterioration in our trade accounts because of NAFTA, especially Mexico as well as Canada. The March trade deficit with Mexico alone was a record \$3.9 billion. The deficit with Canada was the highest since 2 years ago, January 2001.

NAFTA is not working for the United States. NAFTA is the great sucking sound. We are exporting our jobs, not our goods, and we are importing more goods from Mexico than ever in our history.

Unemployment in America has hit a 6 percent high with almost 9 million people out of work now. Just today the Bureau of Labor Statistics put out detailed information on joblessness in America. Where is Ground Zero in the Bush recession? It is the Visalia-Tulare-Porterville area in California with 18.1 percent unemployment. Of metropolitan areas with populations over a million people, the highest unemployment was found in Portland, Oregon, and San Jose, California, 8.4 percent each. I just returned from the San Jose area.

Indeed, of the 272 metropolitan areas for which year-to-year comparisons can be made, the largest declines in employment were found in San Diego, followed by Tulsa, Oklahoma; Flint, Michigan; and my home community of Toledo, Ohio. Ohio is first in our Nation in lost jobs as a percentage of our workforce since George Bush came into office in 2001. No State has suffered more than Ohio from the Bush administration's failed economic policies.

The dollar is hitting new lows in part due to impolitic comments made by

our Treasury Secretary John Snow on Sunday talk shows. Is the Bush administration committed to a strong dollar? They say they are, but many experts are questioning the commitment in light of Secretary Snow's comment on Sunday that a falling dollar should help exporters. In fact, it is hard to make any sense of the Bush administration's economic policy. The administration seems bound and determined to start and hold a losing hand. All they can talk about are tax breaks for the wealthy.

But it is the consumer that is keeping our economy out of a depression. It is the middle-class consumer that made America great. It is the great middle class that fights our wars, makes our goods, delivers our services, and keeps our country strong. But the Bush administration wants to cut taxes for the super-rich, even though we know that that policy will lead to recession and more job losses.

In fact, look at what happened in our country after the first Bush set of tax breaks to the wealthy back in 2001: More and more job losses, over 2 million of them. They talked to us about jobless recovery. What is a jobless recovery? That is all we seem to have are jobless recoveries. Every time this group gets in office, they give us more unemployment. And, indeed, if the Members look back to 1981 when, under the Reagan administration, our Vice President, DICK CHENEY, was the head of the Republican Policy Committee here in the House, they did the same thing. They called it the Economic Tax Recovery Act of July 29, 1981, and do the Members know what happened back then? The minute the same kind of tax program was enacted, guess what happened? More and more and more job losses.

I came here in January 1983 to try to help dig America out of a hole, a job-loss hole as well as a deficit hole. It took us almost 15 years, and now we are back to the same mess we had back then. I say if it is strike one, strike two, and now strike three, they ought to be out.

The Republicans in this kind of trickle-down tax program are really going to gouge the middle class again. So I would say, Mr. Speaker, just take a look at the record. It is the same old story. And what do we get? More job losses, an administration that does not want to extend unemployment benefits to those who have been out of work. They say go find a job somewhere, except for one thing: More and more jobs are being lost every day. And the Buckeye State rings in number one in terms of job losses.

Mr. Speaker, America should do better, and America will do better a year from now when we elect a new President.

THE HIGH PRICE OF PRESCRIPTION DRUGS IN THE UNITED STATES

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

Mr. GUTKNECHT. Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor of the House again tonight to talk about something that needs to be resolved, and we in Congress need to get serious about it, and that is the high price that Americans pay for prescription drugs relative to the rest of the world. And we see this chart here, and again I do not ask people to take my word for this. I would ask them to do their own research, but the interesting thing is millions of Americans are doing that research for themselves, and they are coming to exactly the same conclusion, and that is Americans pay far more than anyone else in the industrialized world for the same drugs.

Let us look at this chart. These numbers are average numbers, and they are from the year 2002. The source is the Life Extension Foundation, but there are other groups doing the same kind of research, getting essentially the same results.

Let us look at some of the drugs that we buy in large quantities in the United States. Cipro, we all know about Cipro after the anthrax scare. It is a very effective antibiotic. It is made by a German company called Bayer. We in the United States usually call it Bayer, Bayer Aspirin, for example. In the United States, the average price for a 30-day supply is about \$88. That same drug can be bought in Canada for \$53.55, but in Germany where they make the drug, they sell it for \$40.75.

Going on down the list, here is another very important drug. It is a miracle drug for many people suffering with diabetes called Glucophage. In the United States, according to Life Extension Foundation, the average price for a 30-day supply is \$124.65. That same drug can be bought in Canada in the same dosage for \$26.47, and in Germany they can buy it for \$22.

Let us look at Norvasc, another very popular drug here in the United States; \$67 here, \$46 in Canada and only \$33 in Europe.

Mr. Speaker, I am not here to say shame on the pharmaceutical industry, and perhaps I should, but the truth of the matter is it is shame on us. We are requiring Americans to pay anywhere from 30 to 300 percent more.

Last week I had down on the floor a little box of some drugs, a very powerful and wonderful drug. It is called to tamoxifen. Tamoxifen is perhaps the best anti-breast cancer drug ever discovered, but let me share this. In the United States, and we checked it out at the local pharmacy here in Washington, for 100 tablets, 20 milligrams, the price was \$360. We can buy that same package of drugs in Munich, Germany for \$59.05; \$60 there, \$360 here, six times more that Americans are required to pay for this life-saving drug.

That is wrong, and we should do something about it.

Let me talk about the law because many people, particularly our friends at the FDA, are hiding behind the law. This is the actual law that they use to keep Americans from importing FDA-approved drugs from FDA-approved facilities, and here is what it says: The Secretary of the Treasury shall deliver to the Secretary of Health and Human Services upon his request samples of food, drugs, devices, and cosmetics which are being imported or offered for import to the United States, giving notice thereof to the owner or consignee who may appear before the Secretary of Health and Human Services, and some more legal goop, but here is what it comes down to. There are three criteria.

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The first is, if it appears from the examination of such samples or otherwise, that one such article has been manufactured, processed or packed under unsanitary conditions. We cannot say that about these drugs.

Or, two, such article is forbidden or restricted in sale in this country in which it was produced or from which it was exported. These are legal drugs in both the United States and in the other countries we are talking about.

Or, three, and this is the last one, such article is adulterated, misbranded or in violation of section 355 of this title. These drugs are legal. We are not talking about bringing in illegal drugs; we are talking about legal drugs from countries that are FDA approved.

It is not shame on them; it is shame on us for letting this situation exist.

Let me just tell you what this amounts to. Our own Congressional Budget Office tells us that, over the next 10 years, seniors in the United States of America will spend \$1.8 trillion on prescription drugs. Simple arithmetic, do the math yourself, we believe, and I think this is being very conservative, if we simply open up markets, as we do with every other product in this country, just open up those markets, we can save a minimum of 35 percent; 35 percent of \$1.8 trillion is \$630 billion. Shame on us.

We are going to be talking here on the House floor in the next several weeks about a prescription drug benefit, maybe under Medicare, maybe under Medicaid. Clearly there are a lot of seniors falling through the cracks. But the issue is not so much coverage; the issue is affordability. We need to do something about it.

I am going to introduce a bill later this week. I hope my colleagues will join me in cosponsoring that bill.

HONORING JOHN P. BROWN, III

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

Mr. STRICKLAND. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate a favorite son of Ohio, a husband, father, grandfather, public servant, and State AMVETS President. I am speaking of John P. Brown, III.

Mr. Speaker, John's life story imbues the kind of selflessness and sacrifice that is indicative of so many of our veterans. He served two tours in Vietnam. He was chosen to serve in the elite Honor Guard at the U.S. Naval Station in Philadelphia. John's contributions did not end there, though. He and his wife have raised a wonderful family, including three children, Charlene, Stephanie and Christopher, and seven grandchildren.

For 31 years, John worked for Ameritech and its predecessors. And more recently, he worked as a military liaison for Ohio's 17th Congressional District.

In Ohio, John's name is synonymous with veterans advocacy. He has given, and he continues to give, greatly to many, many veterans causes. He is a former vice commander for Ohio AMVETS. He is the local post commander, the founder and trustee of the Mahoning Veterans Memorial. He has been the host of a veterans radio talk show for 19 years; and for the last year, he served honorably as the commander of Ohio AMVETS.

John's love of country and commitment to military service is shared by his wife, Jan C. Brown, who is retired from the United States Air Force. Together, J.P. and Jan Brown answer in the affirmative the challenge presented by President John F. Kennedy, "Ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country."

Obviously, I could talk for quite some time about John's accomplishments and contributions, but I think it is more important for us to recognize what a decent, honorable, and rare man John is as a person.

The truth is that our democracy simply could not function without the sacrifice, dedication, and just plain hard work of people like John Brown. Many veterans are in his debt today, and so are many, many Ohioans.

Mr. Speaker, I go to John for guidance and advice regarding veterans health care and other issues important to our Nation's veterans, and he helps me be a better Congressman.

In recognition of John's many accomplishments, he is being honored at an AMVETS testimonial dinner in Youngstown, Ohio, on Saturday Evening. I cannot be at that event; but today, on this floor of the United States House of Representatives, I salute my friend, John P. Brown, III; and I honor his service to our country.

SNATCHING DEFEAT OUT OF THE JAWS OF VICTORY IN AFGHANISTAN

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

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Mr. Speaker, for approximately 5 years I warned this body about the threat that the Taliban regime posed to the United States and the free world and the threat posed by the al Qaeda terrorist network, which was then operating out of Afghanistan. For years I was a voice in the wilderness; and later it was found, of course, that those warnings should have been heeded.

Tonight, I rise to alert my colleagues that our State Department may well be in the process of snatching defeat out of the jaws of victory in Afghanistan.

First and foremost, let us note that we, the American people, have not done right by the people of Afghanistan. These poor people, in their war-torn land, they again have helped us out, but again we have not stepped forward with the type of commitment to rebuild their country and to help them rebuild what would have been warranted by the sacrifices they have made.

Their bravery and their sacrifice helped defeat, not just helped defeat, it dramatically and specifically defeated the Soviet Army that was occupying their country, and that defeat of the Soviet Army was a major factor in the end of the Cold War. After the Cold War and after the Soviet Army left, we walked a way to leave them amidst land mines and rubble.

However, after we were attacked 10 years later by the Taliban and the al Qaeda, the Northern Alliance in Afghanistan, which are the northern tribes, you might say, of Afghanistan, rallied to our side and were instrumental in eliminating the Taliban regime and defeating al Qaeda. Without their support, we would have lost many hundreds, if not thousands, of troops in Afghanistan. These brave people, however, after they helped us defeat the Soviet Union, then they helped us defeat the Taliban, these brave people are still sleeping in the rubble.

We have not built, as Newt Gingrich noted recently, one new mile of road in Afghanistan. Three weeks ago, I was in Afghanistan and drove across the country on the same roads, the hole-pocked roads and horrible conditions that have existed there for years. Not one mile of new road, not one new energy project has been built, although most all Afghans live in the darkness of a nonelectric world.

We need to offer them a way out of their despair. We need to let them know that America's word counts and that they can count on us because they have helped us. We need to repay our debt to the people of Afghanistan. We need to offer them a way to lay down their rifles and pick up shovels and start rebuilding their country.

Instead, we have not done what is right by the people of Afghanistan, and our State Department seems to be not competent to get that job done, because for a year and a half the job has not been proceeding as it should.