

not quite sure of the value what the little purple pill ads or many of those other ads on television are, and I think consumers would be happy to consult with their doctors rather than 30-second ads if they could see the price of their drugs go down. Drugs are going up at about 10 times the current rate of inflation on an annual basis. They are simply not affordable for most Americans.

So yesterday Secretary Thompson announced that the Maginot Line that this administration has created to defend the profits of the pharmaceutical industry, the Maginot Line that said this was an issue of safety, Americans should not be allowed to reimport lifesaving drugs at a fraction of the cost, that they are available in this country, he predicted it will crumble. He predicted that we will see the reimportation of drugs.

Why is that? What happened to his safety concerns? I think the safety concern that has been elevated in their minds right now is the reelection of George Bush who read the polls. Eighty-five percent of the people cannot understand how it is free trade when we export American jobs, but there is no free trade issue when we prohibit the importation of less expensive pharmaceuticals from Canada, our neighbor, that our FDA approved.

And then today in a further indication that their Maginot Line, their protection of this industry, is crumbling quickly, we have two major drug chains, CVS and Walgreens, who have both come out in favor of reimportation. They do not want to see individuals reimporting. They want to protect their businesses. They want to see that they and other wholesale purchasers can go to Canada where it they can purchase drugs more cheaply from a Canadian wholesaler by far than they can purchase them directly from a pharmaceutical company here in the United States. As big as they are, as much as they buy, the price they are charged is significantly higher than the price at which these drugs are sold in Canada.

So the bottom line here is we have people in this country suffering. They cannot afford the drugs they need. Seniors in my district dividing pills in half, couples sitting down at beginning of the month and deciding who will get their pills this month and who will not, despite their jeopardy to their health, and the Bush administration says they are worried about the health and safety of Oregonians or the American public. Their health and safety is definably hurt by the fact they cannot afford lifesaving drugs. And since they cannot document a single instance of problems from Canada, then let us allow Americans to reimport drugs from Canada, and I would be happy if they could do that through their pharmacies because pharmacies are a key part of this chain and consumer information.

The other thing we could do, and of course the Bush administration is ada-

manly opposed to but who knows, maybe they will change there too, is negotiate lower drug prices on behalf of the American people like every other civilized democracy on earth does for all their citizens. There is no other country on earth that allows the pharmaceutical industry to leverage these extraordinary extortionate prices for lifesaving drugs out of their citizens. Only the Government of the United States. But, amazingly, the Bush administration got a clause inserted in the so-called Medicare prescription drug benefit that prohibits the government from negotiating lower drug prices, prohibits the government from negotiating, not mandating, negotiating lower drug prices; unlike every other civilized democracy on earth; unlike the private insurance industry which can and does negotiate discounts; unlike the Veterans Administration, which can and does and gets a good deal for our vets, negotiates discounts; and unlike what we mandate in Medicaid.

But they are saying, no, we cannot do that elsewhere. There would be too much market power, meaning it would bring down the price too much. And then what will happen to the industry? The industry will then have to drive a little tougher deal with all these other countries. Instead of just saying, Oh, they will not pay, you will have to pay, everybody would share the cost of the development of new drugs and Americans could have access at lower prices.

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

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

PRESCRIPTION DRUG DISCOUNT CARDS

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

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, this week enrollment began for the prescription drug discount cards available for the Medicare bill passed last year. For some seniors in my home State of Ohio, this could mean \$600 in prescription drug benefits. That sounds great. We want seniors to look into these cards. If they can get help, that is obviously a good thing.

However, the real story about these cards is found in the details. The discount drug cards will further complicate an altogether too confusing process for America's seniors. Instead of implementing a prescription drug benefit under one program, Medicare, which serves 39 million American beneficiaries, the administration fought to create an unnecessarily complex system that diverts money away from

benefits and gives it to drug companies and the insurance companies. The drug companies under this legislation, this new law, according to bipartisan studies, will profit \$150 billion more than they are already making, and at the same time, this bill gives a \$46 billion subsidy, a \$46 billion direct subsidy, taxpayer dollars, to the Nation's insurance industry.

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That is not any real surprise, considering that President Bush's reelection campaign has received tens of millions of dollars from the drug industry and tens of millions of dollars from the insurance industry.

But this new program will feature 70 cards, 70 choices of private insurance prescription drug cards, by 70 different companies. It is a lot like the multiple HMO system our Republican friends are trying to foist on Medicare beneficiaries.

So here is the deal. Beginning this week, seniors will get notices at their houses. They will get visits, in Ohio, from up to 50 insurance agents, they will get mailings from up to 50 companies, and then they will get to choose these cards.

Now, what we could have is one Medicare card where seniors get a discount negotiated by the government, the way they do it in every other country in the world, as the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) said, one card with prices negotiated by the government on behalf of 40 million beneficiaries. But the Bush administration way, in part because one of his best friends and biggest contributors owns one of these card companies, but let us get back to this, the Bush administration is going to give you a choice of 50 cards.

Now, you buy one of these cards. Pick this card. This card perhaps might have a 30 percent discount or a 20 percent discount on Fosamax. This card here might have a 15 percent discount on Zoloft, or this card here might have a 12 percent discount on Celebrex.

Then you choose this card. You can only choose one card. You pay \$30 for this card that you get to choose, one of these 50 cards, as these insurance agents come to your home and these mailings come to your home and these fancy brochures come to your home. You choose one card; you pay \$30. And then this card company can actually change what drugs are covered by this card any week during those 52 weeks, during that year, or it can change the percent discount.

So you get this card, this one right here, because it has got a pretty good discount for Fosamax and Vioxx and Zoloft, three drugs you are taking, it has a 15 percent discount. But then after you pay the \$30, three weeks from now the card company can say, well, we are not going to cover Vioxx anymore, we are going to cover Celebrex, and we are not going to give you a 20 percent discount on Fosamax, we are

going to drop it to 10 percent. You have no control over that.

So it is a question of do you want to choose among 50 cards, the way that President Bush and his big contributors in the drug industry, the insurance industry and the insurance discount card industry want, or would you rather have one Medicare card, where the government has negotiated a good discount? That is the way Canada does it, and that is why my constituents in northeast Ohio, why they drive to Canada. Canadian drugs are 30 percent, 40 percent, 50 percent cheaper, same drugs, same dosage, same manufacturer. So you got one card, or you got a choice of 50 cards.

Now, there is one other part of this bill, Mr. Speaker, that is really pretty incredible. As I mentioned, in this bill we give, taxpayers give, out of our pockets, reach into our pockets, \$46 billion direct subsidy from taxpayers to insurance companies.

Think about what we could do, instead of that \$46 billion going to the insurance industry, with their huge executive bonuses and stock options and marketing costs and all that, instead of \$46 billion going to the insurance industry, if that money went to Medicare beneficiaries for their drug costs, that would be almost \$1,200 for every one of the 39.5 million Medicare beneficiaries. So we are giving \$46 billion directly to the insurance industry instead of taking care of our seniors.

Again, the question is, why would this possibly happen? How could Congress be this stupid, how could Congress be this greedy, how could Congress be this out of touch, to choose this, over this? It has got a whole lot to do with how much campaign contributions George Bush has gotten and how much campaign contributions my friends on the other side of the aisle have gotten from the drug industry and the insurance industry.

REMARKS ABOUT IRAQ WAR BEING UNWINNABLE ARE APPALLING AND INEXCUSABLE

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

Mr. FOLEY. Mr. Speaker, I do take some exception, and I am here to speak on another subject, but as the author of the discount card, I find it very practical, very reasonable, and very meaningful for seniors in my district, the fifth largest Medicare-eligible population in America. We will get on that at another time.

Why I am here today is obviously having read the Roll Call this morning and seen the headlines, I am furious by the remarks that were attributed to one of my colleagues that said the war in Iraq is unwinnable. "Unwinnable" was the comment made.

What is more mind-boggling is the remarks are attributed to someone who has served this Nation as a veteran

during the Vietnam War conflict, and we respect him immensely for his service to this country.

There are some, though, in this process who have recently spoken in the national media comparing this conflict to Vietnam. I find the comparison absurd. It is also deliberately partisan rhetoric.

But if there is one lesson we should have learned from Vietnam that should carry over here in this Chamber today, it is that disparaging what our soldiers are doing in Iraq is tantamount to giving comfort to the terrorists and comfort to the enemy.

Saying this conflict is unwinnable will make no difference one way or the other to what we do in Iraq, but it has a devastating effect on American men and women who are in Iraq now doing what we in this Congress have asked them to do. Congress voted on a resolution to go into Iraq. We are there. We have sent more troops there to bring peace and democracy to Iraq. We are not risking our lives as Members of Congress; they are, as will the thousands of other Americans who may follow to bring liberty to Iraq.

Whether anyone here agrees or disagrees with the reasons we went to Iraq in the first place, the simple fact is that we are there now and we have to accomplish the goals that free Iraqis are asking of us.

We are fighting terrorism at its doorstep. If someone disagrees with that, so be it. But no one should ever forget that what they say has a direct impact on the men and women who are in Iraq at our behest.

To tell them they are over there risking their life and limb for something unwinnable is just unbelievable. On a very basic level, it is like a coach telling his team of Little Leaguers that they do not have a chance of winning the game, but go out there and play anyway. Let us waste some time.

I know that is a poor analogy, because we are not talking about Little League. This is the big league. This is life and death. This is America's finest young men and women serving this country.

For that reason alone, I find it stunning that anyone in this body could say something that will have absolutely no effect, other than to undercut the morale of our troops in Iraq and cheer on the terrorists.

I went to a funeral in my district of a young man who was killed in Iraq 2 weeks before he was to return home and marry his high school sweetheart. It was a very, very tearful day for everyone in the room.

When I approached his parents, I felt remorse, obviously, because I had voted to send their child to that place. They did not look at me with bitterness. They were proud of their son. They were proud he died doing what he wanted to do since he was a little boy, and that was defend the flag that flies over this building.

I did not sacrifice anything in Iraq, but these people did. They knew that

the cause that their son perished under was just and was noble and was right. For him and all the others who have perished in this conflict, these kinds of words of "unwinnable" are simply political rhetoric designed to influence the outcome of this next election.

But I urge all of my colleagues, Democrats and Republicans and citizens alike, while there are people in harm's way from this country in that nation and everywhere on the globe, we respect that, and let us not make their burden more difficult by giving the enemy even an inkling that they may be winning. That succeeded in Spain during this recent election by bombing a train and killing people.

Those that say that they were attacked simply because the Spanish were in Iraq have not looked at the entirety of what is happening. Jordanians are being attacked, if you will. There were plans to attack their intelligence service. Saudi Arabia was the target last week of a terrorist attack. These things are happening because of terrorists, not because of Iraq, but because they want to undo the way of life that we respect.

So I take umbrage with the comments that this is unwinnable, and I ask us all to join in salute for our strong, brave men and women in the field.

IRAQ WAR ACCOUNTABILITY AND LACK OF OVERSIGHT IN THE HOUSE

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

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I listened to my colleague who previously spoke, and I really do not understand why he says what he says. There is no reason why any Member of this House of Representatives should not speak the truth. The Iraq war is unwinnable, it has been a total failure, and if we recognize that fact, then we will not continue to make the same mistakes.

Now, that is not to suggest that there is not an exit strategy or a way of leaving Iraq that will not accomplish some goals and that will not perhaps make the situation for the Iraqis better. But for us to sit around here and suggest that somehow the conduct of this war by the President or the Vice President or the Secretary of Defense is helping the cause is simply not true, and we have to speak out and say that.

Since the very beginning, with its refusal to truly internationalize the war, the Bush administration has shown nothing but arrogance towards anyone outside its inner-circle, whether that be Congress or the international community; and, unfortunately, the administration is now paying the price and our U.S. troops in Iraq are paying with their lives.

There seems to be a sense from Republicans here in Congress that anyone who questions the actions of the Bush