

No—they wanted to have private plans negotiate with drug companies—the same approach taken in the MMA. The VA system was not a model for any Medicare prescription drug plans considered on the Senate floor.

Finally, let me address the idea of importing cheap drugs from Canada.

First, nobody has a greater desire than I to make prescription drugs more affordable, particularly for our seniors and the disabled, who depend so heavily upon pharmaceuticals for their quality of life. I co-authored the 1984 bill which, in essence, brought generic drugs to the marketplace to become the force for competition and affordability that they are today.

My colleagues seem to forget that the MMA does include a provision to permit the importation of prescription drugs from Canada once a program is in place that is approved and certified for safety and cost by the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). The law also calls for the Secretary to establish a 13-member task force that will study proposals to make re-importation safe and cost effective.

HHS Secretary Tommy Thompson has stated he is hopeful the panel's study will be completed by the end of this year. We shouldn't overlook the fact that the FDA has documented many cases of what appeared to be FDA-approved imported drugs that in fact were contaminated or counterfeit, contained the wrong product or incorrect dose, were accompanied by inadequate directions, or had outlived their expiration date.

These drugs would be at a minimum ineffective, and could actually be harmful or fatal.

The FDA is also concerned with the safety of allowing companies which are not licensed by states to practice pharmacy to sell prescription drugs without any limitation on the amount or frequency of drug imports permitted for individuals.

In addition, reimportation legislation as it is written would allow risky drugs that are currently available in the U.S. only under strict safety controls to be reimported at any amount or frequency to anyone—even those who are at high risk to be seriously injured by the medication.

The FDA underscored these concerns in the Judiciary Committee's hearing on drug importation last July. The agency stressed that opening our tightly regulated, closed system of prescription drug distribution will open the door to counterfeit and otherwise adulterated or misbranded drugs being widely distributed to an unwitting American public.

Mr. William K. Hubbard, the Associate Commissioner for Policy and Planning for the FDA testified before the Senate Judiciary Committee on this important matter. I would like to take this opportunity to read some of his testimony to my colleagues:

FDA remains concerned about the public health implications of unapproved prescrip-

tion drugs from entities seeking to profit by getting around U.S. legal standards for drug safety and effectiveness. Many drugs obtained from foreign sources that either purport to be or appear to be the same as U.S. approved prescription drugs are, in fact, of unknown quality. Consumers are exposed to a number of potential risks when they purchase drugs from foreign sources or from sources that are not operated by pharmacies properly licensed under state pharmacy laws.

Patients also are at greater risk because there is no certainty about what they are getting when they purchase some of these drugs. Although some purchasers of drugs from foreign sources may receive genuine product, others may unknowingly buy counterfeit copies that contain only inert ingredients, legitimate drugs that are outdated and have been diverted to unscrupulous resellers, or dangerous sub-potent or super-potent products that were improperly manufactured. Furthermore, in the case of foreign-based sources, if a consumer has an adverse drug reaction or any other problem, the consumer may have little or no recourse either because the operator of the pharmacy often is not known, or the physical location of the seller is unknown or beyond the consumer's reach. FDA has only limited ability to take action against these foreign operators.

These safety concerns are real, and I strongly believe that if we truly care about seniors and other patients who depend upon prescription drugs, we should not expose them to what currently amounts to pharmaceutical Russian roulette.

Now the FDA is working with some of my colleagues on legislation that would give the FDA greater resources, limit the scope of imports, and provide greater power to the FDA to police imports. In recent public comments, former Commissioner Mark McClellan has said these measures would give the agency the ability to assure the safety of prescription drugs imported by Canada.

In addition to these safety concerns, however, I am also concerned that re-imported drugs pose a threat to the innovation Americans—and the rest of the world—have come to expect from our pharmaceutical industry. Canada and other countries with lower drug prices generally import superior American products, but impose price controls to keep costs down.

However, it can cost as much as \$1 billion to produce a new drug, test it, win FDA approval, educate doctors, and make the drug available to patients. No pharmaceutical company could go through this immensely expensive process without a chance to recover some of its costs, which will not be possible if we impose in America—however indirectly—Canadian-style price controls. I do not believe that sacrificing the safety and future supply of our drugs by reimportation is the right answer to the high cost of prescription drugs.

I hope that I have cleared up any misunderstandings that Medicare beneficiaries have about the MMA law. Again, we gain nothing by spreading mistruths about the Medicare bill.

The only thing that results from those types of charges is confusion of

Medicare beneficiaries—the very people who all of us are trying to help. And that is regrettable.

ANTISEMITISM

Mr. SMITH. Mr. President, I speak about antisemitism, an ancient pestilence that has torn at the fabric of society for too long. Specifically, I have become concerned with the dissemination of antisemitic attitudes through political cartoons.

Last month, on the eve of Rosh Hashanah, I stood in this chamber along with a bipartisan group of my colleagues to speak about the cancerous effect that antisemitism continues to have on humanity. As I stated then, it is of the highest priority for our Nation to stand up against this venomous invective and bigotry directed at the Jewish people.

It is an unfortunate reality that some newspapers in the Arab world blatantly promote antisemitism. For my remarks, I had prepared several posters of cartoons that appeared in Arabic-language newspapers to illustrate to my colleagues their insidious nature, but in the end, I found them too unsettling to display.

What I find disconcerting, however, is the fact that this sentiment is creeping into political cartoons both in Europe as well as here in the United States. Newspapers across the country and the world have published cartoons that have gone beyond reasonable differences of opinion and expanded into the realm of antisemitism.

For example, I have seen a cartoon of a man lying on the ground, bleeding and clutching a small Palestinian flag. Impaled in his back is a large American flag with its stars arranged to form the Star of David. This graphic image, insinuating that an Israeli-controlled America has killed the state of Palestine, is appalling.

In Italy, the Newspaper La Stampa ran a cartoon depicting an Israeli tank rumbling toward a baby Jesus, who is crying "Surely they don't want to kill me again?!" This is not a criticism of policy or leadership. This is nothing other than an antisemitic attack thinly veiled as political parody.

In the Greek Newspaper Ethnos, a cartoon appeared showing two Israeli soldiers stabbing captive Arabs. One of the Israeli soldiers is depicted as saying to the other "Don't feel guilty, brother. We were not in Auschwitz and Dachau to suffer but to learn!" How can that be construed as anything other than bigotry? This kind of hatred is simply unacceptable, and I urge my colleagues in the Senate, as well as leaders across the world, to make every effort to end this terrible plague of hatred.

RELATIONS WITH KYRGYZSTAN

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, I make special note of the visit to the United States by the distinguished

President of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan, Askar Akaev. President Akaev was in the our country for the opening of the session of the United Nations and also traveled to Utah to discuss the reforms taking place in his country and to talk about the efforts his nation is taking in the war on terrorism. Today we face a global war against terror, a war we cannot win alone. It is in that spirit that we should recognize and support democracies worldwide, particularly those burgeoning democracies for which freedom is a new concept. The Republic of Kyrgyzstan, is just such an example.

A small country of 5 million in Central Asia, the Kyrgyz Republic has been one of the most progressive countries in the region, especially amongst the countries which once made up the former Soviet Union. Plagued by an inflation rate of 88% in the year 1994, Kyrgyzstan under the leadership of President Akaev was successful in carrying out a number of market reforms, which allowed it to lower that inflation rate to 15 percent in just three years.

President, Askar Akaev was first elected in October of 1990 and is internationally recognized for his promotion of science, human rights and democracy world wide. He has received many International Awards, including the Grand Cross of the Order of Liberty and Unity from the Association for Unity Latin America in 1995, the Prize of Javaharlal Neru's International Foundation for Unity also in 1995, the Prize of Crans Montana World Forum in 1996 and the North American-Kyrgyz Business Councils International Leadership Award in 1997. More recently, however, President Akaev's wife and first lady, Mairam Akaeva was awarded an honorary doctorate by Utah Valley State College during a trip to the United States late last month. She is also internationally known for her efforts with women and children, spreading the value of education, which is highly regarded in the Kyrgyz Republic, which enjoys a literacy rate of 98 percent.

I thank President Akaev's commitment to the war on terrorism and express our gratitude for providing a military base for our troops in his country. There are a number of companies with operations in the region that have helped supply our troops with what they need to prevail.

As we continue to search for allies in this critical region of the world, it is important to commend those who are trying and slowly succeeding with new found freedoms and economic opportunities.

BULLETPROOF VEST PARTNERSHIP GRANT PROGRAM

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I am pleased that late last night the House of Representatives passed H.R. 2714 with the Leahy-Hatch amendment to reauthorize the highly successful Department of Justice Bulletproof Vest

Partnership Grant Program. I thank the Chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, Senator HATCH, for joining me on this amendment. This bipartisan legislation now goes to the president for his signature into law.

Our amendment contains the same legislative language as the Campbell-Leahy-Hatch Bulletproof Vest Partnership Grant Act of 2003, S. 764. The Bulletproof Vest Partnership Grant Act passed the Senate by unanimous consent on July 15, 2003, and has been awaiting consideration by the House of Representatives since then.

This measure marks the third time that I have had the privilege of teaming with my friend and colleague Senator CAMPBELL to work on the Bulletproof Vest Partnership Grant Program. We authored the Bulletproof Vest Grant Partnership Act of 1998, which responded to the tragic Carl Drega shootout in 1997 on the Vermont-New Hampshire border, in which two State troopers who did not have bulletproof vests were killed. The federal officers who responded to the scenes of the shooting spree were equipped with life-saving body armor, but the state and local law enforcement officers lacked protective vests because of the cost.

Two years later, we successfully passed the Bulletproof Vest Partnership Grant Act of 2000, and now we will go 3-for-3 this time around. Senator CAMPBELL brings to our effort invaluable experience in this area and during his time in the Senate he has been a leader in the area of law enforcement. As a former deputy sheriff, he knows the dangers law enforcement officers face when out on patrol. I am pleased that we have been joined in this effort by 12 other Senate cosponsors, including Senator HATCH.

Our bipartisan legislation will save the lives of law enforcement officers across the country by providing more help to state and local law enforcement agencies to purchase body armor. Since its inception in 1999, this highly successful Department of Justice program has provided law enforcement officers in 16,000 jurisdictions nationwide with nearly 350,000 new bulletproof vests. In Vermont, 60 municipalities have been fortunate to receive funding for the purchase of 1,905 vests.

The Bulletproof Vest Partnership Grant Act of 2003 will further the success of the Bulletproof Vest Partnership Grant Program by re-authorizing the program through fiscal year 2007. Our legislation would continue the Federal-State partnership by authorizing up to \$50 million per year for matching grants to state and local law enforcement agencies and Indian tribes at the Department of Justice to buy body armor.

We know that body armor saves lives, but the cost has put these vests out of the reach of many of the officers who need them. This program makes it more affordable for police departments of all sizes. Few things mean more to

me than when I meet Vermont police officers and they tell me that the protective vests they wear were made possible because of this program. This is the least we should do for the officers on the front lines who put themselves in danger for us every day. I want to make sure that every police officer who needs a bulletproof vest gets one.

HONORING FAVORITE TEACHERS

Mr. DAYTON. Mr. President, nearly 4,000 Minnesotans honored their favorite teacher at my Minnesota State Fair booth this summer. I would like to honor these teachers further by submitting their names to the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

Forest Lake Senior High School—Alan Anderson, Charles Anderson, Ann Astrup, Rena Benedict, Lee Anne Brockman, John Buck, Jamie Bullock, Julie Busby, Tiffany Busby, Sara Cameron, Julianne Carver, Charles Chalberg, Benjamin Chamberlain, Jenny Coates, Michael Coffee, Colleen Collins, Coleen Colton, Mary Colvin, Anne Dahl, Robert Dettmer, Judy Dittberner, Diane Dugas, Terryl Eikren, Nancy Ellias, Patrick Ellias, Chad Erichsrud, Megan Espe-Och, Alesia Fabini, Benjamin Fisher, Daniel Forsythe, Kristin Gorczynski, Charles Gunderson, Heather Guy, Richard Hahn, Larry Harris, Sara Hartman, Elizabeth Haven, Henry Hebert, Holli Hebl, Dana Herman, James Herman, Judy Hill, Thomas Hipkins, Kristine Hovland, Jennifer Hreha, Susan Jarrett, Ryan Johnson, Joseph Jurasin, Maria Kaiser, Paul Karlsson, Janelle Kendrick, Anthony Kowalewski, Gail Law, Bruce Leventhal, Jeffrey Lewis, Marcus Lewton, James Lindstrom, David Livermore, Laura Livermore, Robyn Madson, Christine Magnan, Robert Marzlof, Larry Matzdorf, Tracy Maxwell, Victoria McDougall, William McElrath, Kenneth Mikolajcyk, Michael Miron, Kristen Nellis, Timothy Newcomb, Thomas Newell, Kelly Nicholls, William Olson, Marilyn Orlich, Nancy Sonnon-Pechmann, Kristina Prescott, Cynthia Riesgraf, Nicolle Ristow, Lyn Ruetten, Ryan Rutten, Barbara Schellinger, Laura Schuster, Theresa Snodie, Kristen Soderlund, Suzanne Stennes-Rogness, Dorothy Sunne, Brenda Swanson, Larry Syverson, Sandra Teichner, Donald Thompson, Larry Tietje, Ronald Tungseth, Bradley Ward, Paul Wieland, Jeffrey Wilson, and Kelly Wing.

Century Junior High School—Mark Allaman, Sherri Alm, Penny Baker, Karleen Boettner, Susan Brown, Nancy Calkins, Katrina Callan, Patricia Cheyne, David Daniels, Steven Ekdahl, Reid Fore, Tiffany Freeman, Kristina Granias, Kristin Gustafson, Joel Hall, Michael Hall, Megan Halverson, Kathleen Hellen, Jennifer Hesse, Richard Hofstede, Kay Jackson, Bonnie Johnson, Brian Johnson, Kathryn Johnson, Paul Kendrick, Glen King, Joy Kleppe, Carolyn Kluk, David Kryzer, Maury, Laqua, Tracy Larson, Karen Lewis, Susan Lidstrom, Stephanie Lourey, William Loushine, Jeri Lovett, Michelle Lynch, Alice Lysaker, Geoff McLaughlin, Lance Meier, Joen Moen-Pearson, Kelly Nuss, Deborah Paul, James Pearson, Pauletter Perkovich, Linnea Peterson, Lynn Randazzo, Brian Rigwald, Pamela Robson, Carol Rupar, Alecia Sand, Justin Sheider, Pamela Schultze, Jan Stauffer, Sandra Swenson, Vicky Trampe, Christopher Vogel, Scott Walcker, David Walker, Louise Walker, Lois Weber, Cynthia Weiss, and Edward Zweber.

Southwest Junior High School—Janelle Bernauer, Donald Bjerke, Margaret Burns-