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A VOTE FOR CAFTA IS A VOTE FOR NATIONAL SECURITY

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, as all of us know, CAFTA was finished last year and will soon be taken up by the Congress.

While trade is a critical component of CAFTA, we must recognize that CAFTA is more than just about trade. We have a national security imperative in passing CAFTA. It is an important component of U.S. efforts to address the conditions that breed instability, terrorism, and international criminal activity.

We must help ensure that the countries in Central America have the ability to fight the threats to their democratic institutions. Helping their economic growth is a critical factor to achieving success.

CAFTA is the vehicle for achieving such important U.S. foreign policy and security objectives. CAFTA's defeat would harm not only trade, but antiterrorism and antinarcotic efforts as well.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the passage of CAFTA. A vote for CAFTA is a vote for U.S. national security.

COMMERCE AND CENSORSHIP

(Mr. BROWN of Ohio asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, as Congress considers the Central American Free Trade Agreement, we can look on the other side of the world on what our trade agreements and trade policies have wrought.

USA Today has an editorial today I will read from for a moment: "Part of the Internet's magic is the freedom it bestows to travel as far as your mind can take you. But not if you're in China.

"Software giant Microsoft has agreed to block certain words: democracy, freedom, and human rights among them," on the Internet as part of its new Chinese Internet portal. They have been joined by Yahoo and by Google.

So, Mr. Speaker, write in the words "democracy" or "freedom" or the phrase "human rights," and what comes up on your screen as those words are blocked? It says, "This item should not contain forbidden speech, such as profanity." Human rights, freedom, democracy? That is profanity?

Mr. Speaker, these trade agreements we have signed, coupled with our striving for freedom around the world and what our businesses say about their

wanting to promote freedom and democracy, sound a bit hollow.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MARCHANT). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

THE HIGH COST OF PRESCRIPTION DRUGS FOR AMERICANS

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, once again I rise to talk about an issue that altogether too many Americans know more about than perhaps some folks here in Washington, and that is the almost inexcusable high prices for prescription drugs here in the United States. The more we learn about this subject, the more frustrating it becomes, because what we have learned over the last 5 or 6 years is it is not just that Americans pay high prices for prescription drugs; it is that people in industrialized countries like Germany and France and Switzerland pay so much less than we do.

What I have here is a chart, and I know these letters are almost too small to see on the television cameras, but let me point out a couple of the numbers. This is a chart of comparative prices that we got from a pharmacy in Frankfurt, Germany, called Metropolitan Pharmacy; and then we got prices from a local pharmacy in Rochester, Minnesota, for exactly the same drugs made in the same plants under the same FDA approval. What we see are some amazing differences.

Look at, for example, the drug Nexium, 30 tablets, 20 milligrams. In Germany, you can walk in with a prescription and buy that drug at the Metropolitan Pharmacy for \$60.25. That exact same drug in Rochester, Minnesota, will cost you \$145.33.

Let me just say that prices do vary from pharmacy to pharmacy; but I would guarantee that here in Washington, D.C., the price would probably be at least \$145.33.

Let us take the drug Zocor, 30 tablets, 10 milligrams. In Germany you can buy that drug for \$23.83, but here in the United States you would have to pay \$85.39.

Now, that is bad enough. But if you total all of these up, these are 10 of the more commonly prescribed drugs in the United States and Germany, the total for those drugs for a month's supply in Frankfurt, Germany, \$455.57. Those same drugs here in the United States, \$1,040.4. That is a 128 percent difference.

Now, this chart actually gets more interesting, because we have pharmacists all over the world now who send us their prices on a regular basis

so we can compare what is happening to drug prices. One year ago, when we compared a basket, now the drugs changed slightly, because some of these drugs went off patent, and so the basket of drugs changed slightly, but 1 year ago, the difference between the basket of 10 of the most commonly prescribed drugs in Germany was \$430, and here in the United States it was \$866. It was exactly a 100 percent difference.

The point I want to make here is during that period, during that 1-year time period, what happened was the value of the dollar relative to the euro actually came down.

Now, I am not a monetarist, I do not quite understand these exchanges sometimes, but the people who do tell me that actually what should have happened is the price differential between the United States and Germany should have gotten less. It actually got worse.

People ask, well, how could that happen? How could it be that the difference between what Americans pay and Germans pay actually got worse? Well, the reason is Americans are held hostage. The American market is a captive market, because not only do we give the pharmaceutical companies, which I believe we should give them the rights that they have in terms of their patent rights and so forth, I do not think that we should do anything to hurt people's patent rights; but what we have done in the United States is different than just giving them patent rights. Intellectual property deserves patent protection.

For example, we know that when Intel comes out with a new computer chip, that first chip off the line can cost \$500 million, but we do not tell Intel that you can also control that product after you make the first sale. In other words, if they sell that chip to a distributor in Japan for \$25 and they want to sell it to American manufacturers for \$75, they cannot control what that distributor in Japan does. We have open markets.

That is what we want to create here in the Congress. We have a majority of the House and a majority of the Senate who believe that it is time to stop holding Americans captive. We understand that these drugs cost a lot of money to develop.

We as Americans are willing to pay our share in terms of developing those drugs; but, unfortunately, Americans pay in three different ways for these drugs. First of all, we pay in the prices, and they are inflated. They are the highest prices in the world for these drugs. Secondly, we pay, in some respects, through our Tax Code, because when companies develop these drugs here in the United States, they get to write off all of the cost of those research and development dollars.

But, third, and this is also important, Americans pay more than any other country through our tax dollars to help develop these drugs. This year, we will spend over \$20 billion through various

agencies, the National Science Foundation, the various groups at NIH, and even through the Defense Department, to help develop these miracle drugs.

So in some respects, we pay for them in the prices we pay, we pay in the Tax Code, and we pay in the research that we pay for.

It is time to give Americans access to world-class drugs at world-market prices.

SMART SECURITY AND IRAQ'S SOLDIERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, on April 12 at Fort Hood, Texas, President Bush told an audience of thousands of servicemembers that, for the first time, Iraqi soldiers outnumbered U.S. soldiers in Iraq. Specifically, he put the number of trained Iraqi forces at 150,000.

This rosy assessment of the situation in Iraq is shocking, not only for its arrogance, but also for its ignorance. Is the President totally oblivious of Iraq's true security failures, or is he misleading the American people into thinking that peace has taken hold?

Either way, the President's assessment misleads the American people about the true situation in Iraq. Take, for example, his claim that 150,000 Iraqi soldiers have been trained. Iraqi military leaders actually reveal that the number of trained soldiers is closer to 75,000, about half of the President's estimate. But the actual number of trained security personnel committed to a secure and democratic Iraq is even less than that, because many soldiers use their posts to assassinate political opponents. Others simply have no desire to help secure Iraq.

The chief of police in Basra, General Hassan al-Sade, stated that at least half of his 14,000-member militia are openly opposed to a secure Iraq, and another quarter are politically neutral and do not follow his military orders. General al-Sade recently told the Guardian newspaper, "I trust 25 percent of my force, no more."

After giving his Fort Hood speech, the President never again mentioned that 150,000 Iraqi security personnel have been trained. Perhaps that is because he realized that his assessment was entirely inaccurate.

But the President never admitted to the American people that he was wrong in this assessment, and he still has not told the American people how he plans to help secure Iraq or how and when he plans to bring the troops home.

Mr. Speaker, the best way to help secure Iraq and protect our troops is to remove U.S. troops from the country. Nothing enrages and unites Iraq's insurgency more than the presence of nearly 140,000 American soldiers on Iraqi soil.

One option is to bring one American soldier home for every trustworthy

Iraqi soldier that has been trained. If 75,000 Iraqi soldiers have been trained, half the President's April 12 assessment, then why can we not remove the same number of our own soldiers?

This is just one plan to exit from Iraq. We have asked the President to come up with his own plan for securing Iraq. I am not against supporting the President's plan if it is a good one; but right now, he does not even have a plan. So we will develop a plan of our own.

Fortunately, there is a plan that would secure America for the future once we have cleaned up the mess we made in Iraq: SMART Security. SMART is a Sensible, Multilateral American Response to Terrorism for the 21st Century, and it will help us address the threats we face as a Nation.

SMART Security will prevent acts of terrorism in countries like Iraq by addressing the very conditions which allow terrorism to take root: poverty, despair, resource scarcity, lack of education, and economic opportunities. SMART Security encourages the United States to work with other nations to address the most pressing global issues. SMART Security addresses global crises diplomatically instead of by resorting to armed conflict. Efforts to help the Iraqi people must follow the SMART approach: humanitarian assistance coordinated with our international allies to rebuild Iraq's war-torn physical and economic infrastructure.

Mr. Speaker, it has been more than 2 years since the United States started the war in Iraq. Do the American people, especially the soldiers who are bravely serving our country halfway across the world, not deserve a plan for ending the war? It is time for the President to create a plan to end the war in Iraq to bring our troops home.

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WITHDRAWAL FROM IRAQ

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

Mr. OSBORNE. Mr. Speaker, I hadn't realized the juxtaposition that the speakers would have this evening. But my remarks, I think, dovetail somewhat with the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) in regard to addressing the issue of withdrawing from Iraq and exit strategy and so on. We hear a lot of debate about that.

And I am not here to debate the merits of the war in the Middle East. I am not here to talk about the intelligence leading up to the war, but I would like to address the current reality of the situation, we are there. We made sacrifices. We have lost roughly 1,700 soldiers. We have spent billions of dollars.

And yet as I traveled to the Middle East, I have been to Iraq three times, I have been to Afghanistan once, Kuwait

once, I have been amazed at our soldiers' morale. And they often tell me this, they say there are two wars that we are fighting over here, there is the war that we see on CNN, the bombings, the beheadings, and then there is the war that we are actually experiencing.

And I wondered if you please go home and tell the American people what we are seeing and what we feel about the situation. So as far as Afghanistan is concerned, I met with a Colonel this morning who just returned from Afghanistan. We realize we have disrupted the terrorist training camps, their funding for terrorists have been disrupted, the Taliban has been removed, they have a representative government, constitution, and a great leader in Karzai. So we have made considerable progress.

It is not perfect, but things have certainly gone well there. As far as Iraq is concerned, Saddam Hussein has been deposed. And I am the cochair of the Iraqi Womens Caucus. So I meet with Iraqi women in Iraq and also here. And the one thing that they continually tell me is this: They say, you know, Iraq is still a dangerous place. There is a lot of bad things. But for the first time in 30 years, we now have hope. We now see a future. And hope is a very powerful thing.

As far as education is concerned, the school attendance has increased by 80 percent, most of those are young women for the first time going to school. Health care, 97 percent of the young people have been vaccinated for the first time. We all know about the elections and how that empowered the Iraqi people. And one thing that we do not hear much about is economic activity, Iraqi income has doubled in the last year. So a great deal has been accomplished. So as far as the strategy is concerned, or is there an exit strategy, what are we talking about here?

It is very clear. If you talk to General Casey, you talk to General Petraeus, they say here is the objective. We are going to train 270,000 Iraqis. And they will give you charts that show you explicitly that they have trained more than 150,000, and they are armed and they are proficient at this point. So we are training about 10,000 a month. So the math indicates that about 1 year from now we will be at 270,000.

The other thing that has to happen, in addition to the 270,000 trained, is we have to make sure that Iraq can control its own destiny, we have to have a stable government, and we have seen some improvement in that direction as well.

We have seen the Iraqis now out in front in most military actions. There are portions of the country where Iraqis are solely in control militarily. So we see signs that are good. The big question, the wild card at this point is Sunni involvement in the government. And Al Jafari will tell you, General Casey will tell you, we do not know how that is going to go, so we cannot give a precise timetable.