

## SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PEARCE). 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.

SAFER VEHICLES FOR SOLDIERS:  
A TALE OF DELAYS AND  
GLITCHES

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

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, I am going to read a bit, which I do not usually do on the floor, from yesterday's New York Times front page, because I think it is so extraordinary and it goes so much to the incompetence and the indifference of Donald Rumsfeld and others in this administration regarding what is going on in Iraq and the lack of protection for our troops.

"When Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld visited Iraq last year to tour the Abu Ghraib Prison camp, military officials did not rely on a government-issued Humvee to transport him safely on the ground," not even an armored Humvee, that is my own little addition. "Instead, they turned to Halliburton, the oil services contractor, which lent the Pentagon a rolling fortress of steel called the Rhino Runner."

Now, no wonder Secretary Rumsfeld goes to Iraq and says everything is going great. He is rolling around in an armored fortress of steel provided by his former employer. Well, I am sorry, the former employer of Vice President CHENEY, Halliburton, riding around in something called a Rhino Runner, which is supposed to be able to withstand a thousand-pound bomb.

Now, our troops are out there, some of them in unarmored Humvees that cannot resist any bomb, bullets, or shrapnel; some of them are in armored Humvees which can resist between 4- and 8-pound bombs, but then there are other options out there.

Back to the New York Times: "State Department officials traveling in Iraq use armored vehicles that are built with V-shaped hulls to better deflect bullets and bombs. Members of Congress favor another model called the M1117, which can endure 12-pound explosives and 50-caliber, armor-piercing rounds.

"Unlike the Humvee, the Pentagon's vehicle of choice for American troops, the others were designed from scratch to withstand attacks in battlefields like Iraq with no safe zones. Last fall, for instance, a Rhino traveling the treacherous airport road in Baghdad endured a bomb that left a 6-foot-wide crater. The passengers walked away unscathed. 'I have no doubt should I have been in any other vehicle,' wrote an Army captain, 'the lone military passenger, 'the results would have been catastrophically different.'

"Yet more than 2 years into the war, efforts by United States military units to obtain large numbers of these stronger vehicles for soldiers have faltered, even as the Pentagon's program to armor Humvees continues to be plagued by delays, an examination by The New York Times has found."

And then, the end of last week, we had the revelation about the extraordinary shortages for the Marines.

Mr. Speaker, I guess I should not be surprised when we have a Secretary of Defense who predicted that our troops would be greeted with flowers and candies and sweets; and that the occupation would last, that we would be down to 30,000 troops within 2 months and would not be there longer than 5; that he has been two, four, six, or a hundred steps all the way along the way. But to still deny the reality, because he is riding around in an armored Rhino provided by Halliburton, of our troops, the bitter reality of them in unarmored Humvees, as many Marines still are, and we still hear from time to time of Army units that are out there in unarmored Humvees, although they claim they never go off base anymore; and then to hear that State Department people and Members of Congress get superior vehicles that are not available to the regular troops, this is extraordinary.

More than 2 years into this war, and now this insurgency, and the Pentagon is focused on Star Wars and other fantasies; and the troops still lack basics, things for which we need no technological development. The technology exists, the manufacturers exist, but the will to purchase those vehicles to protect our troops does not exist in Secretary Rumsfeld's higher echelons of the organization.

But, again, he is riding around, he cannot even hear or see the explosions in the Rhino Runner. They probably have the music turned up loud and the AC is blasting away, and he does not have the slightest idea where he is. But the troops sure know where they are; they sure do.

Mr. Speaker, it is time for this embarrassment to end. He should have gone long ago, he should go now, and it is time to start providing the troops the basics they need to come home safe.

THE HIGH COST 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, once again I rise to talk tonight about the unfairness of what Americans pay for prescription drugs compared to what consumers pay around the rest of the industrialized world.

I have with me again this chart. Let me just read some of the numbers, the difference between the prices for these drugs at the Metropolitan Pharmacy in

Frankfurt, Germany and at one of my pharmacies in Rochester, Minnesota: Nexium, for \$60.25 in Germany; \$145.33 in the United States.

□ 1930

Norvasc, \$19.31 in Germany, \$54.83 in the United States. Zyrtec, \$34.33 in Germany, \$73.02. Prevacid, \$35.22, \$146.47. Zocor, \$23.83 in Germany, \$85.39 here. The list goes on. These are 10 of the most commonly prescribed name-brand drugs. The total in Germany, \$455.57. The total here in the United States, more than double that, at \$1,040.40. Americans pay 128 percent more for exactly the same drugs made in the same plants under the same FDA approval.

But many Members ask me, well, how did you become so involved in this issue? What made you so passionate? I would like to share that story of how I got involved in this issue. A number of years ago I had a town hall meeting and there were some seniors who came to the meetings and they told me about going up to Canada to buy their prescription drugs. And to be honest, it was one of those events where I heard but I did not really listen. And then at a subsequent meeting one of the seniors asked me a very tough question. She said, why are we treated like common criminals for going to Canada to save some dollars on our prescription drugs? Well, I did not have a very good answer.

And then a few months later something happened that had nothing to do with prescription drugs. The price of live hogs in the United States collapsed. The price of pigs dropped from about \$37 per hundred weight down to about \$7. It was one of the worst catastrophes for American pork producers since the Great Depression. And they did what many constituents do. They called their Congressman and said, can you not do something about this? And I said, well, I do not know what I can do. And they said, well, can you not somehow at least stop all these Canadian pigs from coming into our market, making our supply-demand situation even worse? Is not there something you can do about that, Congressman?

So I called the Secretary of Agriculture, I called the Secretary of Commerce, and I got essentially the same answer. They both said, well, that is called NAFTA. That is called free trade. We have open markets. And finally, to the Secretary of Commerce I said, wait a second; you mean we have open borders when it comes to pork bellies but not when it comes to Prilosec? And he sort of laughed on the other end of the phone and said, well, I guess that is right. And I said, well, that does not sound right to me.

And so this little pilgrimage started there with the price of pigs. And there is something wrong with a system that protects the large pharmaceutical companies, but does nothing to protect our pork producers. And so I began to do research and realized how much more Americans pay.

Now, I do not want price controls. In fact, I do not want people buying their prescription drugs over the Internet. But I think it should be legal. What I really want is American pharmacists to have access to what pharmacists in Europe have. It is called parallel trade. Because that pharmacist in Frankfurt, Germany can go ahead and order his drugs from Sweden or Norway or France or Spain, wherever they can buy them cheapest.

You see, there was a President by the name of Ronald Reagan who said that markets are more powerful than armies. And it really is time that we use market pressures and market forces to help control the runaway prices of prescription drugs. I believe American consumers have a right to that. I believe American consumers have a right to world-class drugs at world-market prices. So I hope Members will join me in this great effort to make certain that we open markets, that we create a competitive market so that Americans can buy Zocor for \$30 rather than \$85. We are not asking for a free lunch. We are just asking for a fair price.

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#### NICS/GUN SHOW LOOPHOLE/NO FLY, NO BUY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KUHLE of New York). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MCCARTHY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. MCCARTHY. Mr. Speaker, many here in this Chamber, each and every one of us came to Congress to try and make a difference, and each one of us are trying to make that difference.

I came to Congress to try and reduce gun violence in this Nation. And many people have heard me talk about this for close to 8½ years now. What I want to talk about tonight are three pieces of legislation that I have and why I feel they are so important, especially in the climate that we have.

We are post-9/11 now, and I think what we need to do is start looking at our gun laws that are here today and how we can make this country safer, certainly being part of our homeland security.

One of the bills that I think is probably extremely important is the NICS Improvement Act. Unfortunately, I had a tragedy back in my district going back 3 years ago, where a person came into one of our local churches and ended up shooting the priest and a parishioner. On further investigation, we found out that New York State actually had a record where he should not have been able to buy a gun. But being that they did not give that information to the NICS system, and we all know that a computer is only as good as the system that has the information in it.

Now, with that we did legislation, it actually passed here in the House by a voice vote, and I think it is important that we get that going again and get that improved.

And another reason why, many of us are experiencing high volumes of gangs

in our community. And it was only a few months ago that some gangs that were caught by our local police, who did a great job, traced the guns that these young people had, and they were bought legally in Alabama. And I say that, legally. But, again, if they had tried to buy them in New York, they would have been in the system. They were in the system and basically they would not have been able to buy the gun if the NICS system had the correct information in it.

Right now, 25 States have entered less than 60 percent of the convictions of why some people should not be able to buy guns. Thirteen States do not list domestic violence convictions and restraining orders. And unfortunately, that was one of the things with Mr. Troy, who did the shooting in the parish church. His mother actually had a restraining order on him.

Thirty-three States do not share mental health records. Now, I know there is an argument there that we are picking on people with mental health problems. That is not it. We are saying that people that come under adjudication under the system are denied the right to buy a gun. The privacy issue is kept in place. Mainly, if you are denied on a gun, all it does is come up rejected; it does not say for what area that you were rejected. And I think it is important that we get this bill up on the system. This way we will be able to certainly prevent people that should not be able to buy guns, by law under the 1968 Gun Control Act, which is only enforcing the law that is already on the books. We had terrific bipartisan support in the 107th Congress, and I think it is something that we should be doing to move around.

The gun show loophole. I know we had our battles here on the gun show loophole, but even information again for post, 9/11, the FBI has found that over 40 "terrorists" on the terrorist watch list have gone into gun shows and been able to buy AK-47s and other guns.

Now, it is common sense that those that go buy a gun, and 13 States have already passed legislation, it has not stopped anyone from buying a gun. It has not closed down any gun shows, because I know that many of our friends in the Midwest, this is a family weekend. They go out and spend a day there and that is fine. I do not have a problem with that. But I think the majority of people agree with me, if you are going to buy a gun, you need to go through a background check. I think that is the basic law that we could do.

The other thing that really perturbs me, and by the way this actually goes into my third bill, no fly, no buy list. Right now we have a list, a terrorist list, and they are not allowed to get onto a plane. And yet they can go into any gun store, they can go to any gun show and are able to buy a gun. I do not think that makes too much common sense. We should be stopping these people from being able to buy their guns.

Think about what happened here in D.C. a few years ago. One person, two people with a gun, certainly kept D.C. and the surrounding area petrified, and millions of dollars was lost.

Imagine these terrorists. You know, people, I think, are starting to become, feel too safe. We know that terrorists will strike when no one is paying attention. And as long as we pay attention to detail, we can stop these terrorists from doing bodily harm. No fly, no buy.

I understand that when you look at foreign countries, sometimes people are prosecuted. That would not be the same here in this country. We know that there are political reasons why they might be thrown in jail. We have a way of being able to adjudicate that.

And also, the list that I chose for this bill is on a list where people can actually go to it and get off the list. And I think that is important because we certainly do not want to deny anyone.

The three bills that I have introduced are not going to stop anyone from being able to buy a gun. Their second amendment rights are protected.

I made a promise when I came to Congress that I would reduce gun violence in this country. But I also am not here to try and take away the right of anyone to own a gun. That is a personal decision for many of us.

Some of us do not like guns. I used to do skeet shooting. It was not my sport. That is certainly up to me. Yet, I know there are many people around this Nation that like to go hunting. And we have always said, going back since 1994, they will be able to go hunting. We are not trying to take away the right to own the gun. But we must enforce the laws that are on the books and make this a safer country.

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#### CLUB GITMO

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

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, this past weekend I spent part of the weekend down in the Tropics. I went to an island down in the Caribbean. And the place where I went had an ocean view, and the facility is relatively new. Some of the rooms are air-conditioned and some are not. Some of the rooms actually would meet ADA standards for the physically challenged.

The guests that were there, they were not working. They are standing around talking. There is a lot of talking and I noticed that there are soccer courts. There are volleyball courts. There is table tennis, and they are building a new basketball court.

I ate lunch, the same meals that the guests had. The lunch that I had was marinated chicken with orange sauce, rice pilaf, steamed vegetables, plenty of rolls and butter. Some of the guests that are there have even gained up to 5 to 10 pounds while being there.

New medical facilities are there, new dental facilities. The people that are