

since the drug prices under these plans are actually on average higher than the prices offered by Costco. What a great deal. The President likes to talk about how these insurance companies, or PBMs, how they have just bargained so hard and driven down the prices. They are only 50 percent higher than the prices that the VA gets through negotiations for our veterans. But the Republicans outlawed, they outlawed, Medicare bargaining lower drug prices on behalf of Medicare beneficiaries.

Now, who does that help? They said that was un-American to negotiate lower drug prices. It is not un-American to give huge windfall benefits to the pharmaceutical industry.

MARKING 185 YEARS OF GREEK INDEPENDENCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to address the House in honor of Greek Independence Day that was celebrated on March 25. Greek freedom fighters brought sovereignty back to their country, 185 years ago, allowing the Greek people to decide their fate for themselves again.

I speak here today to honor all persons and nations who have successfully fought for their right to live according to the rules of democracy and freedom, denying the rule of tyranny and autocracy. As the oldest democracy in the world, the Greek nation has passionately struggled to uphold democracy as its form of government.

The significance emanating from the year 1821 is outstanding, not only in the Greek context, but also as a strong symbol of the inspiration one brave nation can provide to the world.

When in 1821 the Greek people regained their independence, more than four centuries of occupation and oppression by the Ottoman Empire came to an end. The peoples of the Balkans were soon to follow the Greek example and sought freedom from the Ottoman rule.

The courage and vision of the Greek freedom fighters also transcended the borders of the former Ottoman Empire. The independence movement received broad support from intellectuals abroad, including English poet Lord Byron and U.S. Senator and Secretary of State Daniel Webster.

The Greek flag symbolizes the legacy of 1821. The cross in the upper left part of the flag stands for the Greek Orthodox Church, which significantly helped Greeks to preserve their ethnic, cultural, and linguistic heritage during the years of occupation. The cross is embedded by nine alternating blue and white stripes, each representing one letter of the Greek word for freedom. While the flag was developed in the early days of independence, it took more than 150 years before it became the official Greek flag.

After the end of the Ottoman occupation, Greeks had to struggle for another century before their land was truly freed. In the 1970s, Greeks once again fought for freedom and independence, stripping off a 7-year rule by a military junta. Shortly after democracy had been reestablished, the Greek nation finally adopted the cross-and-nine-stripe flag as its official flag.

The United States is a proud partner of the Greek nation, which has given the gift of democracy to the world, and which throughout history has fought to uphold this gift as its guiding principle. Greeks and Americans share a common vision to have everyone on this planet enjoy the gift of freedom and democracy. Greece is one of our strongest allies in the international war against terror.

The United States and Greece have consistently joined forces to fight the global threats of terrorism and state-sponsored terrorism, nuclear proliferation, illegal narcotics, and international crime. As a strong NATO ally, the Greek military has taken on a strong and abiding commitment in Afghanistan as well.

Greece has given the United States both military and financial support for Operation Enduring Freedom. It contributes to it is International Security Assistance Force and has pledged to fund educational programs.

Located on shores of the Mediterranean Sea, Greece is of the greatest geopolitical importance. Neighboring with the Balkans, it serves as a shining beacon of peace and stability in the region. Bordering with Turkey, it serves as the bridge to the Muslim world.

I commend Greece for its strong work in the Middle East Partnership Initiative, MEPI, and its strong participation in the Broader Middle East and North Africa Initiative.

However, many pressing issues in the region remain unresolved, Madam Speaker. The ongoing conflict over the final name of the former Yugoslav republic of Macedonia causes grave concern, just as it grieves me to see the continued division of Cyprus and the unbalanced approach that has been taken to overcome this division.

I hope that we will soon be able to witness the end of the occupation and a reunification of Cyprus on fair and equitable terms. The emergence of a strong, vibrant and justly unified Cyprus would provide stability, both politically and economically, to the Mediterranean region.

I urge Congress remain engaged in the search for a just and lasting reunification that will promote peace and stability. Recalling the Greek routes of democracy, I am proud to represent the interests of my Greek American constituency. With currently 1.5 million members, the Greek American community contributes significantly to the prosperity of our Nation.

Madam Speaker, I am proud of the friendship that binds the United States, the land of freedom, and

Greece, the country of freedom fighters.

Together, we can promote democracy, the rule of law, and respect for human rights worldwide.

ORDINARY WOMEN, EXTRAORDINARY LIVES

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

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Madam Speaker, in recognition of Women's History Month of 2006, we recognize and celebrate the contributions of great American heroines who have built a legacy for women leadership over the 230 years of our Nation's history.

In celebration of this year's Women's History Month theme, "Women: Builders of Communities and Dreams," I call upon each of us to dedicate ourselves to making the future for all of America's girls and women full of hope and opportunity.

Today I salute the work of two extraordinary women and two exceptional young girls from Florida's 20th Congressional district. But first I would like to commend Her Excellency Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, President of the Republic of Liberia, who addressed the Congress just last week. She represents the aspirations and expectations of women in Liberia, Africa and women all over the world.

Now I would like to recognize two young women from the 20th District of Florida, Taryn Daley of Davie and Katie Bonilla of Weston, who started 10 lemonade stands to raise money for pediatric cancer research.

Taryn, 12, and Katie, 11, were inspired by their mitzvah project, which is a part of their bat mitzvah requirements of public service and a national program known as Alex's Lemonade Stand, an idea started by a young girl named Alexandria "Alex" Scott who was diagnosed with an aggressive childhood cancer.

In less than 2 weeks, Madam Speaker, Taryn and Katie found more than 30 volunteers, enlisted a group of sponsors, and raised \$3,000 to fight childhood cancer. These two young ladies are proof that this generation of young women are dream builders. Their courage and compassion gives us all hope for a brighter future. They will inspire more young women to make the world a better place.

Next I would like to recognize the City of North Miami Beach police chief and president of the Miami-Dade Association of Chiefs of Police, Linda Loizzo. Linda is a true trailblazer. She has served the North Miami Beach Police Department for 32 years in a number of capacities: deputy chief, assistant chief of operations, major in charge of administrative services, commander in charge of the investigative division, and supervisor of several special support services units.

Linda was the first woman promoted to the rank of sergeant, the first woman promoted to the rank of lieutenant and major, and the first woman promoted to the rank of chief of police from the North Miami Beach Police Department. Her work doesn't stop there. Linda is also the regional director of the Florida Police Chiefs Association and she serves on numerous organizational boards.

Without question, Linda represents the best of our Nation's first responders. The National Association of Women in Law Enforcement estimates there are more than 16,000 police departments in this country, which is just slightly more than 200 female police chiefs.

Chief Loizzo didn't just break down walls in a male-dominated profession. She shattered and crumbled stereotypes in all professions and particularly those in law enforcement.

Finally, I want to recognize Cindy Arenberg-Seltzer, president and chief executive officer of the Children's Services Council of Broward County. Across the country there are millions of children that long for stability and hope in their lives. In Broward County, the needs of this vulnerable population are vast.

In 1999 there was a critical need for programs to make essential services available to children who face abuse, neglect, or abandonment. Cindy was a powerful voice in leading the charge for a Broward County ballot initiative to designate family program funding. The initiative passed overwhelmingly with 70 percent of Broward voters approving.

Since that time, Cindy has been instrumental in helping to ensure that each child will live in a safe and loving environment and has the resources needed to grow up healthy and strong. Today, Cindy serves as the board's chief executive officer and has led the effort to expand available funding to improve the lives of Broward's children.

Madam Speaker, in a world where the magnitude of problems that face our children can be daunting, Cindy identified and fixed a problem with the system and continues to deftly refine and steer the program. Her leadership and passion for children has made a difference in the lives of many south Florida families and provided thousands of children with a future filled with unlimited possibilities.

These women and young girls are doing what may seem like ordinary work, but they are leading extraordinary lives. Their work and service showcase what the theme of this year's Women's History Month was designed to celebrate and encourage.

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On behalf of the people of Florida's 20th Congressional District, I am proud to recognize their uncommon character and motivation in performing the work that successful communities and gen-

erations are built upon, and I am delighted to recognize them in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD with this honor.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. MILLER of Michigan). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MCHENRY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

MAKING THE WORLD SAFE FOR CHRISTIANITY

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

Mr. PAUL. Madam Speaker, the top neoconservative of the 20th century was Woodrow Wilson. His supposed idealism, symbolized in the slogan, "Make the world safe for democracy," resulted in untold death and destruction across the world for many decades.

His deceit and manipulation of the prewar intelligence from Europe dragged America into an unnecessary conflict that cost the world and us dearly. Without the disastrous Versailles Treaty, World War II could have been averted and the rise to power of Communists around the world might have been halted.

We seem to never learn from our mistakes. Today's neocons are as idealistically misled and aggressive in remaking the Middle East as the Wilsonian do-gooders. Even given the horrendous costs of the Iraq War and the unintended consequences that plague us today, the neocons are eager to expand their regime-change policy to Iran by force.

The obvious shortcomings of our regime change and occupation of Afghanistan are now readily apparent. The Taliban was ousted from power, but they have regrouped and threaten the delicate stability that now exists in that country. Opium drug production is once again a major operation with drug lords controlling a huge area of the country outside of Kabul. And now the real nature of the government we created has been revealed in the case of Abdul Rahman, the Muslim who faced a possible death sentence from the Karzai administration for converting to Christianity. Even now that Mr. Rahman is free due to Western pressure his life remains in danger.

Our bombs and guns have not changed the fact that the new puppet Afghan Government still follows Sharia law. The same loyalty to Sharia exists in Iraq where we are trying hard to stabilize things, and all this is done in the name of spreading democracy.

The sad fact is that even under the despicable rule of Saddam Hussein, Christians were safer in Iraq than they are today. Saddam Hussein's foreign minister was a practicing Christian. Today, thousands of Christians have

fled Iraq following our occupation to countries like Jordan and Syria. Those Christians who have remained in Iraq fear for their lives every day. That should tell us something about the shortcomings of a policy that presumes to make the world safe for democracy.

The Muslim world is not fooled by our talk of spreading democracy and values. The evidence is too overwhelming that we do not hesitate to support dictators and install puppet governments when it serves our interests. When democratic elections result in the elevation of a leader or a party not to our liking, we do not hesitate for a minute to undermine that government.

This hypocrisy is rarely recognized by the American people. It is much more comfortable to believe in slogans, to believe that we are defending our goodness and spreading true liberty. We accept this and believe strongly in the cause, strongly enough to sacrifice many of our sons and daughters and stupendous amounts of money to spread our ideals through force.

Pointing out the lack of success is taboo. It seems of little concern to many Members of Congress that we lack both the moral right and constitutional authority to impose our will on other nations.

The toughest task is analyzing what we do from their perspective. We should try harder to place ourselves in the shoes of those who live in the Arab countries where our efforts currently are concentrated. We are outraged by a Muslim country that would even consider the death penalty for a Christian convert, but many Muslims see all that we do as a reflection of Western Christianity which, to them, includes Europe and America. They see everything in terms of religion.

When our bombs and sanctions kill hundreds of thousands of their citizens, they see it as an attack on their religion by Christians. To them our actions represent a crusade to change their culture and their political systems. They do not see us as having noble intentions. Cynicism and realism tell them that we are involved in the Middle East to secure the oil that we need.

Our occupation and influence in the holy lands of the Middle East will always be suspect. This includes all the countries of the Arabian Peninsula, Iran, Iraq and Afghanistan. Naively believing otherwise will guarantee continuing hostility in Iraq.

Our meddling will remain an incitement for radicals to strike us here at home in future terrorist attacks. All the intelligence gathering in the world will serve little purpose if we do not come to understand exactly why they hate us despite the good intentions that many Americans hold dear.

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