

Group for addressing over four decades of injustice and extending temporary membership in that regional bloc to the state of Israel.

Whereas Israel has played an active role in the international community and within the United Nations;

Whereas in order to be a fully participating member of the United Nations countries must serve in a regional group;

Whereas members of regional groups select member states on a rotating basis to serve on important United Nations bodies such as the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council;

Whereas Israel has been denied an opportunity to serve in the Asian States Group at the United Nations, even though it geographically belongs in that block;

Whereas the Western European And Others Group (WEOG) at the United Nations consists of Western European nations, the United States, Canada, New Zealand, Turkey, and Australia and is the only group at the United Nations that is not geographically based;

Whereas Israel was offered membership in the WEOG regional bloc at the United Nations on Friday, May 26, 2000, by the chairman of WEOG at the time, Ambassador Peter van Walsum of the Netherlands;

Whereas that offer was officially accepted by Israeli officials on Sunday, May 28, 2000; and

Whereas Israel is a democracy and an ally and friend of the United States: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring),* That the Congress—

(1) commends the Western European and Others Group (WEOG) members for extending temporary membership to Israel;

(2) congratulates Israel on its new-found role in the United Nations;

(3) reaffirms Israel's right to be a full participating member and equal partner in the United Nations; and

(4) urges the members of WEOG to extend full and permanent membership to Israel, without conditions, until such time as Israel can serve as an effective member of the Asian States Group.

#### INTRODUCTION OF MEDICARE PRESCRIPTION DRUG ACT OF 2000

**HON. ANNA G. ESHOO**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, June 8, 2000*

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, when Medicare was created in 1965, seniors were more likely to undergo surgery than to use prescription drugs. Today, prescription drugs are often the preferred, and sometimes the only method of treatment for many diseases. In fact, 77 percent of all seniors take a prescription drug on a regular basis.

And yet, nearly 15 million Medicare beneficiaries don't have access to the lifesaving drugs you produce because Medicare doesn't cover them. Countless others are forced to spend an enormous portion of their modest monthly incomes on prescription drugs with 18 percent of seniors spending over \$100 a month on prescriptions.

Seniors want and need prescription drug coverage. Hence, the question before Con-

gress is not whether we should provide a Medicare drug benefit but how to do it?

There are some in Congress who think that the way to do this is to turn the problem over to the private insurance market, but the private insurance market is pulling out from under seniors in the Medigap and Medicare+Choice markets. Others believe that we should limit how much drug companies can charge. I disagree. I understand the investment required for R&D and I believe that price controls will ultimately limit access.

I've devised what I believe is a common-sense approach that incorporates a generous, defined benefit that's easy for seniors to understand with provisions that reduce administrative inefficiencies and increase competition. The result will be a more affordable drug benefit for both beneficiaries and the Federal Government.

The bill is simple. Available to all Medicare beneficiaries, the Federal government will pay half of an individual's drug costs up to \$5,000 a year (when fully phased in). There are no deductibles and a modest premium of approximately \$44 a year. For seniors who exceed \$5,000 in drug expenditures or \$2,500 in out-of-pocket costs—the Federal Government picks up the whole tab.

What about drug costs? By allowing multiple PBM's to participate, my bill will, for the first time, introduce open competition into Medicare and drive down prices. We know from the private marketplace that simply purchasing a large quantity of drugs does not drive down prices. Drug companies grant discounts when a PBM can show that it will increase its market share. By allowing multiple PBMs, my bill increases competition, lowers prices and provides greater consumer choice.

We also removed administration of the program from HCFA. The healthcare system has evolved rapidly, and regrettably HCFA has not kept pace. HCFA lacks the expertise to run a benefit that relies on private sector competition to control costs. Fortunately, there is another agency that has expertise interacting with private sector health plans, and has proven that it can administer benefits effectively and efficiently with a minimum of bureaucracy. It's the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) which runs the widely acclaimed Federal Employee Health Benefit (FEHB) program. Under OPM's leadership, I'm confident that an efficient and effective competitive benefit can be integrated successfully into the Medicare program.

Congress must enact a Medicare drug benefit this year. For our Nation's seniors, prescription drugs are not a luxury. During these times of historic prosperity and strength, there is absolutely no reason that we should force seniors to make between buying prescription drugs or groceries. In introduction today I urge all of my colleagues to give careful consideration to my bill. It provides a real answer for seniors without price controls and without threatening innovation.

TRIBUTE TO FATHER STEPHEN PATRICK (PAT) WISNESKE ON THE OCCASION OF THE GOLDEN JUBILEE OF HIS ORDINATION

**HON. BART STUPAK**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, June 8, 2000*

Mr. STUPAK. Mr. Speaker, today I honor a most remarkable individual—a dear friend, a counselor, a shepherd, a man of the people and a man of God. I pay personal and heartfelt tribute to Father Stephen Patrick Wisneske, the pastor of Holy Spirit Church of Menominee, MI, on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of his ordination, his golden jubilee.

Father Pat came to Menominee 28 years ago. He came to town at a particularly difficult time for the local Catholic faithful, who were being reorganized from the five traditional congregations—including the old settlement alignments of the French church, the Irish church, the Polish church, and the German Church—to three new congregations, based on neighborhood and proximity. The restructuring made sense in terms of reducing the infrastructure that church members needed to support, but it presented real challenges in forging new congregational bonds and establishing new ministries. Father Pat became pastor of the newly structured Holy Spirit Church.

He brought years of service in other northern Michigan communities to his new task. Born in 1922, Father Pat was raised in a Catholic home, attended Catholic school for 12 years, served as an altar boy, and was interested in Church affairs even before he was called to his religious vocation. Father Pat was ordained on June 3, 1950 by Bishop Francis J. Hass at St. Andrew's Cathedral in Grand Rapids, and within the month he was assigned as assistant at Holy Trinity in Ironwood. In 1951 he became an assistant at St. Thomas Catholic Church in Escanaba, and in 1953 became an assistant at St. Mary and St. Joseph in Iron Mountain, where he also served as chaplain to veterans in the hospital there.

Like his religious predecessor Bishop Baraga, Father Pat spent time in several small parishes in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan—Dollar Bay, Loretto, Quinnesec, White Pine, and Bergland, before his posting to Menominee.

Perhaps because of his own Catholic schooling, Father Pat has always shown that his commitment to his parish—to all local families—lies outside the walls of his beautiful and more than 100-year-old Gothic church. He regularly visits Menominee Catholic Central School, meeting and greeting parents, teachers and children in this more informal setting.

Father Pat has become well-known for his homily—his brief moment of addressing the congregation during each Mass. A quick sense of humor has always served him well in helping to drive home the important lesson he wished to teach each week.

I have always admired Father Pat for his positive outlook and his concern for his congregation. But it was when tragedy struck my own family that the depth of his wisdom, love, and advice, to me, to my wife Laurie and my son Ken was truly revealed. He counseled, sheltered, and guided us through our darkest hours, and his homily to my son BJ captured

the essence of this vital young man for friend and stranger alike. For these kind acts in our greatest time of need, I and my family will always be grateful to Father Pat.

Mr. Speaker, moments of crisis often bring brief flashes of insight so brilliant that we are forever changed in our view of the world. In a moment of darkness, I was given an opportunity to truly understand the mission of a parish priest as an agent of divine compassion and strength. I and my family were held in Mighty Hands and bathed in a river of sublime love. Father Pat, a man of the people and a man of God, has spent 50 years shaping himself to be a funnel of that great Power. There can be no greater calling.

DEBATE ON DEFENSE  
APPROPRIATIONS

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 8, 2000

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I voted against the Defense Appropriations bill last night because of its pricetag that is unprecedented in peacetime and unjustified by the threat, and the misplaced priorities within the bill.

Representative DEFAZIO'S amendment was a step in a more rational direction. It would have reduced the next two years' purchases of F-22 fighter aircraft, as recommended by the General Accounting Office, and redirected the savings to readiness and quality of life accounts.

It was a modest amendment, and it did not cut money from the defense budget. It just spent it on higher-priority issues at a time when the F-22 continues to experience technical problems and we already have the world's most advanced fighter, the F-15.

The \$930 million saved would have been spent instead on items that were not funded at the level requested by the Department of Defense, or were included on the Pentagon's unfunded "wish list." Those items include additional funding for troops on food stamps, nuclear threat reduction, bonus payments to sailors on sea duty, facilities maintenance, spare parts, and recruiting.

I want to also speak to the larger issues of the bill. We made some gains this year on the issue of military retirees' health care. Most important is this bill's provision of \$94 million for a pharmacy benefit for all Medicare-eligible military retirees and eligible family members. This set an important precedent for us to eventually provide prescription drug coverage to all Medicare recipients. Those who have served in our military are a well-deserving group with which to start.

This bill continues various health care demonstration projects—including Medicare subvention and the Federal Employees Health Benefits Plan. Another important aspect of military retiree health care included in this bill is the Uniformed Services Family Health Plan. These are locally-run, community-based HMOs that provide military retirees another choice. I look forward to the findings of the independent oversight panel funded in this bill which will present recommendations to Congress on a permanent military health care program for the Medicare-eligible.

Unfortunately, there continue to be unmet needs. The Department of Defense Comptroller has just done a study that shows that the military health care system for active-duty and retirees up to age 65 as currently structured is underfunded over the next 6 years by \$9 billion.

In addition to taking care of its people, our military has an important role to play in taking care of the environment. Congress needs to make clear that cleaning up after itself is a cost of doing business for our military just as it is for any other polluter.

DOD is responsible for environmental clean-up at thousands of what are known as Formerly-Used Defense Sites. At many of these properties, owned by private parties and state, local, and tribal governments, the public may come into contact with residual contamination. The cost of completing this cleanup is estimated at over \$7 billion by the Army Corps of Engineers, yet funding in this bill is less than \$200 million.

Another danger to communities is unexploded ordnance, old bombs and shells that could kill or injure people who encounter them. The cost of clearing these bombs is estimated at \$15 billion by the Defense Science Board. The consistent underfunding of this challenge could begin to be addressed if it had its own line item in the defense budget. I call upon the Administration to create this line item in the request it is preparing now for submission to Congress for FY02 funding.

More than a decade after the Soviet Union collapsed, our investment in national defense has returned to cold-war levels. During the cold war, the United States spent an average of \$325 billion in current year dollars on the military. This year's budget resolution gave the Pentagon \$310 billion—95 percent of cold-war levels and 52 percent of discretionary spending.

And now Monday's Washington Post has a front-page story stating that, starting now, the Joint Chiefs of Staff plan to submit budget requests that call for additional spending of more than \$30 billion a year through most of this decade.

There is no reason to continue our reliance on a cold-war economy. Our massive investments in weapons and bases could be replaced with massive investments in education and health care and the other things that make for livable communities. While we are first in military expenditures among industrialized countries, we are 17th in low-birth-weight rates, 21st in eighth-grade math scores and 22nd in infant mortality.

The defense budget is large, certainly large enough to fund the programs that are needed for the people who serve and have served us and for the environment. Instead, it spends too much on duplicative weapons systems and questionable technologies at a time when we lead the world many times over in military might. We need to get our priorities right.

DEBATE ON THE FUTURE OF THE  
F-22

HON. PETER A. DEFAZIO

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 8, 2000

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, during the debate on the fiscal year 2001 Department of

Defense appropriations bill, there was a rather rancorous debate about the future of the F-22. I submit for the record a devastating critique of the F-22 written by retired Colonel Everest Riccioni as well as a letter he wrote correcting misstatements made during the House floor debate.

Colonel Riccioni is not just any critic of the F-22. His credentials are impeccable. He was one of three legendary "Fighter Mafia" mavericks who forced the Pentagon to produce the F-16 to improve U.S. air superiority. He served in the Air Force for 30 years, flew 55 different types of military aircraft, and worked in the defense industry for 17 years managing aircraft programs, including the B-2 bomber.

We should heed his warning that the F-22 will not work as advertised.

JUNE 8, 2000.

Representative RANDY CUNNINGHAM,  
*House of Representatives,*  
*Washington, DC.*

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE CUNNINGHAM: Your comments during yesterday's floor debate require response. The comment about the F-15 not keeping up with the F-22 does not establish the existence of supercruise, and reflects your lack of insight into supersonic cruise. Cruise means the ability to cover distance and it is not a speed. Proof of supercruise is established by a number, specifically the number of miles that can be covered while at a supersonic Mach like 1.6. This number is never forthcoming because few know the definition of supercruise or are unwilling to reveal it.

The fact that the F-16 flown by General Ryan could not keep up with the F-22 is again an irrelevant speed statement on the relative speed of the two aircraft. The requirements for the F-16 specifically stated that there was no requirement that it fly faster than Mach 1.6, a fact probably unknown to the general. Had the general been flying a 40 year old F104A-19, he could have flown formation with the F-22.

Pragmatic supersonic cruise is the ability to sustain significant supersonic speeds (like 1.6-1.8) for combat relevant distances. For perspective, the original design mission for the Advanced Tactical Fighter, cum F-22 was a 100 mile subsonic cruise-out to the Russian border, 400 NM supersonic penetration at 1.6 Mach, consumption of the combat fuel, a 400 nautical mile supersonic return to the border at Mach 1.6, with a 100 NM return to land with normal reserves.

A true measure of the super cruise potential of the F-22 is—the penetration supersonic distance that can be flown at 1.6 Mach out and back, with the same 100 nautical mile legs and the same fuel reserved for combat and landing reserves. The supersonic penetration distance is the validation of supercruise. This number has not been established. The supercruise potential of the F-22 remains unknown.

If that number is 50 NM it is a fruitless achievement that the F-104 can easily fulfill using its afterburner. A 100 NM penetration can also be accomplished by the F-104A-19. A 200 NM penetration is not a great achievement; 300 NM means the F-22 is a pragmatic supercruiser, 400 NM will remain a dream. The distance number validates whether the F-22 has it, nothing else.

Retention of the wrong definition will forever retain confusion.

Sincerely,

COL. EVEREST RICCIONI,  
*Rancho Palos Verdes, CA.*

THE F-22 PROGRAM—FACT VERSUS FICTION  
(By Everest E. Riccioni, Col. USAF, Ret.)

THE DREAM

To provide the USAF Air Superiority for the period following 2005.