Norton is clearly operating, a number of us are asking to meet personally with the President to explain the situation in California. If he is following the counsel of Secretary Norton, he is getting bad advice that needs to be countered.

The President was right to take his action in Florida. It is our hope to convince him to help all of us out on the West Coast who want to protect our environment as well, and to control our economic destiny, just like they want to do in Florida.

FAREWELL TO ULYSSES S. GRANT SHARP, A GREAT AMERICAN

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

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Speaker, for the first time in 20 years, I find myself going back to San Diego with my friend and seatmate, the gentleman from California (Mr. CUNNINGHAM), who is very much interested in national security, as I am, and missing one of our most trusted advisors at the table. That has occurred because we have lost Ulysses S. Grant Sharp, one of our great admirals and one of our great military leaders.

Mr. Speaker, his story is largely the military's story of this last century. He graduated from the United States Naval Academy in 1927. He served before World War II on the battleship USS *New Mexico*, the transport the USS *Sumner*, the destroyers the USS *Buchanan* and the USS *Winslow*, the carrier the USS *Saratoga* and the cruiser the USS *Richmond*. After that, and during World War II, he was awarded two Silver Stars while commanding the USS *Boyd* for action at Wake Island in the Marianas, the Philippine Islands, Okinawa, Formosa and the Gilbert Islands. Admiral Sharp finished the war on the staff of Commander, Destroyer Force Pacific.

He was a great warrior, Mr. Speaker. After he left his battlefield command after World War II, he could see Korea on the horizon and in that war he commanded the Destroyer Squadron FIVE. He served with the staff of Commander, Seventh Fleet as Fleet Planning Officer for the Inchon invasion. In 1951 he was assigned as Chief of Staff of Commander, Second Fleet.

In 1953 he assumed command of the cruiser USS *Macon*, and following the command, he served as deputy for Commander in Chief Pacific Fleet.

But it was during Vietnam, Mr. Speaker, in 1964, in which he was appointed by the President to become Commander in Chief Pacific; that is CINCPAC, a unified command of nearly 1 million Army, Navy, Marine and Air Force personnel in an 85-million-square-mile area and, at that point, the entire Vietnam theater that he really became a very major leader of American military forces in a very critical conflict.

Uly Sharp was responsible at that point to the Secretary of Defense and the Joint Chiefs of Staff for the overall supervision of the United States combat operations in Vietnam and throughout the Pacific during the 4 years that followed. After that, Mr. Speaker, he came home and retired in San Diego and was a great member of our community.

He wrote a book called ''Strategy for Defeat'', which I would commend to those who follow military affairs and who need to be reminded that the way we achieve peace in this world and the way we have achieved peace in this world is through military strength. Uly Sharp was really a model citizen, a model soldier citizen in the sense that he thought that when a military person retires, their next duty is to become involved in civic and political affairs, and Uly did that. He was one of my first advisors.

Twenty years ago, when I was running for office and had no chance to win, and when my friend, the gentleman from California (Mr. CUNNINGHAM) came along in 1990 and similarly had a very difficult race, Uly Sharp showed up and worked hard and tried to drag us across the finish line, and did so successfully. He was a wonderful guy who always had time for the community, was a leader of our military community in San Diego, as a 4-star admiral, a guy who brought everybody together and imparted advice to all of those who were willing to listen about military affairs.

One of my best memories of Uly is going over on a Sunday afternoon with my dad to his house at Point Loma and listening to him as he laid out the wisdom of almost a full century of service in the United States military.

Uly Sharp was a model, I think, for all Americans, not just people that wear the uniform, but especially for people that wear the uniform, because he believed that every citizen had a double obligation, and that was an obligation to serve the country in uniform, and he carried that out very proudly and very well, but also the obligation to be involved in civic and political affairs. He also carried that burden and that mantle very well.

So, Mr. Speaker, it is a sad thing for me personally that I will never see Uly again, going back to San Diego and sitting down with folks who give me great advice on national security. I know the gentleman from California (Mr. CUNNINGHAM) would say the same thing. Uly Sharp was a great American and really served our country well. God bless him.

□ 1945

OPPRESSION OF FREEDOM OF THE PRESS IN CUBA

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DAN MILLER of Florida). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I rise this evening to draw attention to the struggle of journalists and their work toward freedom of information and freedom of the press in Cuba. Cuba was recently ranked by the Committee to Protect Journalists as one of the 10 worst places for journalists to work. For the past 7 years, the committee has also listed Fidel Castro as one of the top 10 enemies of the press.

Cuba is the only Latin American nation where the press is completely gagged. The Cuban constitution includes a ban on all non-governmental media outlets, giving Castro complete control over all media outlets. After 43 years of power, Castro shows no sign of lessening his stranglehold on the press.

Mr. Speaker, last week the New York Times published an article on the work and struggles of Omar Rodriguez Saludes, one of only 100 independent journalists working in Cuba. Independent journalists like Omar who would choose to work outside the government-controlled media outlets are denounced by Castro as counterrevolutionaries and are barred from covering official events. Independent reporters face repeated interrogation and detainment by Cuban authorities, monitoring and interruption of their telephone calls, restrictions on their travel; and they are often placed under house arrest to prevent coverage of certain events.

A new tactic of intimidation involves arresting journalists and releasing them hundreds of miles from their homes.

To report the news, Omar travels around Havana on a battered child-size bicycle, knowing that he can make his deadline as long as he does not have a flat tire, or if a corner policeman does not confiscate his notes, tape recorder, and camera. Omar writes his articles in longhand, or basically on a 20-year-old typewriter that he and a group of reporters share. He gathers every 2 weeks or so with other journalists in a cramped apartment in Havana's Chinatown, which is the makeshift headquarters of one news agency. He and others await their turn to place a phone call and dictate their stories to several Web sites on Cuban affairs in the United States. And even then, the state-owned telephone monopoly frequently refuses to connect their international calls.

Mr. Speaker, Cuba is the only country in the Western Hemisphere where a journalist is currently jailed for his work. In 1997, journalist Bernardo Arevalo Padron was jailed for ''disrespecting'' Castro and another Cuban state council member, Carlos Lage. The charges stem from a series of interviews that Arevalo gave to a Miami-based radio station in which he alleged that while farmers starved, helicopters were taking fresh meat from the countryside to the dinner tables of Castro and Lage.

Despite being eligible for parole and in declining health, Arevalo continues to be held in a labor camp.

Mr. Speaker, in the United States, we take I think all too often for granted the rights and freedoms of our journalists. We just assume that it is true throughout the world. But it is not true. There are many countries that simply do not allow journalists to practice.

I urge my colleagues to join with me to draw attention to and take a stand against oppression of freedom of speech and freedom of the press, in this case Cuba; but there are other countries that have similar problems.

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, I rise tonight to speak about an issue that unfortunately more and more Americans are becoming acutely aware of, that is, the high cost of prescription drugs here in the United States, especially relative to the prices that people are paying in other parts of the world, other industrialized countries, where we see enormous differentials for the same drugs made in the same plants under the same FDA approval.

I have a chart here, and it has a list. These are not my numbers; this is an independent group called the Life Extension Foundation. They have been doing research of this type for a number of years and have been very helpful in at least clarifying what is going on in terms of the way the drug companies set their prices.

The more we learn about this issue, the angrier we will become when we see what they are doing to American consumers. For example, here are roughly 15 of the most commonly prescribed drugs in the United States. Here is what we are paying on an average for a 30-day supply here in the United States, and on the other list we have what the average price in Europe is.

Now, some people say, well, some countries have price controls, and it is hard to compare apples to oranges, and all that. Well, let us talk about some countries that do not have price controls, not as we know they are: Germany, Switzerland. Those are two good examples. Let us look at what we are paying here in the United States and what they are paying in places like Germany and Switzerland.

Let us take a drug like Cipro. We all learned a lot about Cipro last November when we had the threats, and ultimately several postal workers lost their lives because of what happened last fall. We bought an awful lot of Cipro. To his credit, Secretary Tommy Thompson got a very good price on that Cipro that he bought.

But let us look at what the average consumer would have to pay for Cipro. Cipro is a drug made by a pharmaceutical company called Bayer, or we say it Bayer, here in the United States, the same people that make the aspirin. In the United States, the average price for a 30-day supply of Cipro is $87.99. That same drug in Berlin sells for $40.75.

As we look down this list, we see some even bigger disparities: Claritin, a drug that is going off-patent still sells in the United States on average, or at least when this chart was put together a few months ago, sold for an average of $89 for a 30-day supply. That exact same drug in Europe sells for $18.75. Again, the same drug, the same FDA approval, made in the same plants, selling for a fraction of what they sell for in Europe.

Coumadin, a drug that I am very familiar with, my 85-year-old father takes Coumadin. It is a blood thinner very commonly prescribed for seniors. In fact, most of them, once they start on Coumadin, they stay on it for the rest of their lives. The price here in the United States on an average for a 30-day supply is $64.88; the same drug in Europe sells for $15.80.

If we go down the list, it makes us angry when we see the differences. A relatively simple drug like Premarin, in the United States it sells for an average of $55.42; in Europe, the same drug, $8.95. The list goes on. If anybody would like the entire list, they can contact my office. We will send it to them. Again, I did not create this chart. I cannot defend this chart, and neither can anybody else.

Here is another chart that cannot be explained or defended. Last year, the last year we have numbers for, what happened to prescription drug prices? In the United States, the average price for prescription drugs went up 19 percent. I mentioned that Coumadin that is now $64 for a 30-day supply in the United States. Two years ago, that same drug sold for $38 in the United States. That is how much it has gone up in just 2 years.

At the same time, the Social Security cost-of-living adjustments that we gave to those seniors who have to buy those drugs only went up 3.5 percent. This is unsustainable. This is wrong, and Congress ought to do something about it:

Let us get to the big numbers. Let us get to the big numbers. This is where it starts to really cost. This number on top is one, then an eight, then a zero and a zero and a zero and a zero and a zero and a zero and a zero and a zero and a zero and a zero and a zero and a zero, $1.8 trillion. That is what the Congressional Budget Office tells us that seniors, these are people 65 years and older, will spend for prescription drugs in just the next 10 years, $1.8 trillion.

Now, Members, conservatively, if we just open up the market, if we just allow seniors to buy drugs from other countries, and I want them to go to their local pharmacist, I want them to be able to go down to the local pharmacist and the pharmacist can say to them, listen, I can fill that out of my supply that is American, and the price will be $64, or I can order it from Europe for you on the Web, and we can have it here in 3 days, and the price will be $18, or whatever the number is.

Markets work. Markets are more powerful than armies. If we simply do this, I believe we can save at least 35 percent; 35 percent of $1.8 trillion is $630 billion. That would go a long way to helping to pay for a benefit for those seniors who currently fall through the cracks.

Mr. Speaker, the time has come to open up the markets and allow Americans to have access to drugs at world market prices.

AMTRAK AND THE FUTURE OF OUR PASSENGER RAIL SYSTEM

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

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise to address the important issue of Amtrak, and especially do I rise to address the future of our passenger rail system in the United States.

I am pleased to join with all of those who support an increase in transportation funding for our Nation's rail line. I encourage my fellow colleagues to support the National Defense Rail Act proposed by the gentlewoman from Indiana (Ms. CARSON).

Mr. Speaker, our national passenger rail system is in a state of financial crisis. Last week, David Gunn, the president of Amtrak, requested $200 million in immediate funding. Without this necessary funding, Amtrak will be forced to shut down; perhaps not definitely, but even if indefinitely, any disruption of our Nation's rail system would be detrimental to the economy as a whole. Therefore, I am pleased to have this opportunity to support legislation that will create a high-speed national rail service that is on par with the best rail systems in the world.

Over the last 30 years, we have spent $750 billion on our national highways and airports, but we have only spent $25 billion on our national passenger rail system. Thus, it is not surprising to me that out of the 23 most industrialized nations in the world, the United States spends the least per capita on its national rail system.

We now stand at a time where we must decide whether we should keep massaging and bailing out Amtrak, lending it just enough money to survive, or whether we should create a high-speed train network that will encourage more ridership, more expedient service, and a viable alternative to aviation or automobile travel.

In the wake of September 11, we need a world-class high-speed national rail system. And in the weeks following the terrorist attack, people turned to Amtrak to get home from work or travel. Since travel by plane was not an option, the only way to get anywhere was by train. Across the country, Amtrak revenue and ridership increased significantly. In the northeast corridor alone,