scientists amazingly restored vision in a mouse using oral doses of a chemical compound derived from vitamin A. This miracle offers evidence that researchers will soon be able to develop similar cures for patients with retinitis pigmentosa, macular degeneration, and other retinal degenerative diseases which may lead to blindness.

Now more than ever, in an effort to make these treatments available, we need to support funding for the National Eye Institute so that our Nation's researchers will have the resources needed to make sight-debilitating diseases extinct.

Mr. Speaker, this Sunday, CBS's ''60 Minutes'' will highlight the Lidskys' uplifting story, and I urge my colleagues to tune in and learn what each of us can do in order to help realize a cure soon.

RUSSIAN-BUILT MISSILES POINTED AT U.S.

(Mr. TRAFICANT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TRAFICANT. Mr. Speaker, Russian President Putin told the United Nations that America does not need the Star Wars program.

Think about it. This Rusky wants it both ways. First, he builds missiles with billions of dollars of foreign aid from Uncle Sam; takes our money, builds the missiles; and if that is not enough to bust my colleagues' rubles, he then sells these missiles to our enemies who then point them at us.

I say here on the House floor that this guy, Putin, is not only drinking too much vodka, he is smoking dope. I say it is time to protect America from Russian politicians who should be addressing Alcoholics Anonymous not the United Nations.

I yield back the fact, Congress, that we have missiles pointed at us that were built with our cash and made by Russia.

THE BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA

(Mr. PITTS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, no organization has done more to train young men to believe in God and country than the Boy Scouts of America. No organization is more fundamentally decent and better for young men.

But the Clinton-Gore administration apparently thinks they are dangerous. After Democratic delegates booed a Boy Scout color guard at their convention, the Justice Department launched an investigation to see whether they should bar the Boy Scouts from Department of Interior programs because of their traditional American values.

They have since backed down. But just the fact that the Clinton-Gore administration even contemplated banning the Boy Scouts from national parks and programs because of their beliefs is an outrage.

The Boy Scouts is not a hate organization. It is the premier youth organization in America providing training for character and volunteerism. The Clinton-Gore administration should stop pandering to the loony left.

BUSH PROPOSAL ON PRESCRIPTION DRUG BENEFITS

(Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I would draw our colleagues' attention to The New York Times and the Washington Post this morning where, after reviewing the Bush proposal on Medicare drug benefits, prescription drug benefits for our elderly, they draw the conclusion that, in fact, it is no benefit at all for millions of modest-income senior citizens in this country.

In fact, it is a benefit that is illusory. It is a benefit that requires us to wait for the governor to put in place a new bureaucracy to provide for drug benefits. It is a benefit that can be charged any price for its premiums and, as they draw the conclusion, that millions and millions of Americans simply will not be able to afford it. Therefore, the benefit is of no value to them at all.

More and more independent reviews of the Bush proposal are drawing this same conclusion, that it is only the appearance of a prescription drug benefit. It is not in fact a prescription drug benefit and that it would rely on the same private insurance companies that today are gouging people for health care or withdrawing health care from the elderly or denying them the services.

The one thing the Bush proposal does do is it undermines the current Medicare system.

DEATH TAX OVERRIDE

(Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland. Mr. Speaker, last month the Clinton-Gore administration vetoed tax relief for the American people. They struck down a repeal of the death tax, a measure which taxes family businesses and farms on up to 55 percent of their value upon the death of their owner. Eighty-five percent of these businesses do not survive to the second generation because of the death tax penalty.

And to what end? Government enforcement of the death tax costs nearly as much as the tax actually generates. As a result, the death tax adds less than 1 percent of revenue to the Federal budget. In contrast, if we had ended the death tax last year, we could have created 45,243 more jobs this year and nearly 236,000 by 2010.

I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to do the right thing: override this senseless veto and do away with the death tax.

BACK TO SCHOOL

(Mr. PASCRELL asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, millions of students across this country will get onto school buses and bikes to go back to school this week. Unfortunately, many of our Nation's students will be returning to crowded classrooms, run-down school buildings and outdated textbooks.

As a former teacher, I am acutely aware of both the excitement and the challenges facing our educational system today. We need to improve education by establishing tougher standards for our teachers, creating a school construction and modernization program, and funding preschool for some 3 year-olds and all of 4-year-olds. To that end, Congress must make education its top priority.

I would like to take a moment to wish a classroom in the Eighth Congressional District in New Jersey well this school year. Robin Holcombe is a kindergarten teacher in the Passaic School Number Six. She teaches 23 active, curious, and wonderful 5- and 6-year-olds. I want to let Robin know that the Congress is working for her and her students and will not rest until we provide her more professional training, smaller class sizes and her new kindergarten students with a sound and promising educational future.

Mr. Speaker, before I close, let me just say that many of the schools in northern New Jersey were built before the First World War. Congress must respond.

DEATH TAX OVERRIDE

(Mr. KNOLLENBERG asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KNOLLENBERG. Mr. Speaker, if there is one thing that makes the United States a unique country, it is our idea that anyone with a strong work ethic can succeed in America.

For over 100 years, men and women have emigrated to this country to take advantage of the tangible ideal we call the American Dream. Not surprisingly, the Internal Revenue Service is taxing the American Dream into the grave with a mean-spirited provision called the death tax.

The death tax hurts average Americans who cannot afford to pay high-price lawyers to settle their affairs. As a result, 70 percent of small businesses do not survive into the second generation. That is totally unfair.

This Congress passed a bill to repeal the onerous death tax. Regrettably, the Clinton-Gore administration vetoed it.