

that I chair, and we will be examining the Vertical Takeoff and Vertical Landing concept, and perhaps some of the reasons why the old program failed and why there is hope that better technology is available in the future, technology that would protect our military people and offer great commercial possibilities for our country.

Mr. Speaker, I would submit for the RECORD the article in the Marine Corps Gazette entitled, "MV-22 Osprey or Edsel?"

[Ideas & Issues, MV-22 Osprey]

MV-22 OSPREY OR EDELSEL?

(By LtCol Bruce A. Milton, USMCR)

IS THE OSPREY 'TOO MUCH' AIRCRAFT?

Mishaps have been an aviation bane ever since Orville and Wilbur made those first epic flights amid the dunes of Kitty Hawk. The early days of powered flight took an incredible toll on those intrepid airmen who ventured forth to challenge gravity. Despite tremendous losses, the potential benefits to both the civil and military complexes enabled a fledgling enterprise to evolve into the technologically advanced industry that we have today. I doubt few events in modern history can compare with the meteoric accomplishments of the aviation field. To think that Neil Armstrong walked on the moon less than 65 years after the Wrights' first powered flight is simply phenomenal.

Throughout these ever-evolving phases of aviation, countless steps have been taken to reduce the inherent risks associated with flying. There isn't adequate space in this article to pay homage to all the positive changes incorporated by manufacturers, operators, government entities, and others to enhance flight safety. Suffice it to say that the mishap rate—a tangible statistic that measures how safe we really are—has improved markedly over the years as a result of these positive changes.

However, just as the automotive industry has had models that were not successful, the annals of aviation history also include numerous aircraft that were "scrapped" or pulled from production. Unlike the doomed Edsel, a car that the driving public simply did not find aesthetically pleasing, many prematurely canceled aircraft, certainly many military aircraft, had their operational lives shortened because they were deemed too dangerous.

With a new aircraft, as with any complicated machine, there is a learning curve. This wringing out period includes the time that skilled test pilots put the aircraft through its paces. They "push the envelope" to establish limitations, procedures, and guidelines for subsequent squadron pilot usage. During this wringing out, the aircraft also undergoes operational test and evaluation (OTE). During OTE, more guidelines and procedures are established as how to best employ the aircraft in a tactical environment. Once the new aircraft has successfully completed this rigorous testing, it is ready for introduction to the fleet.

When speaking of the MV-22, it is with this latter portion of the learning curve that I am most concerned. I am not now, nor have I ever been, a test pilot. I have, however, spent the majority of my aviation career in some type of instructional capacity. From my days on active duty as a weapons and tactics instructor to my current duties as a training captain for a large commercial emergency medical services operator, I have amassed literally thousands of hours of flight instruction in both fixed- and rotary-wing aircraft. This experience has provided me with some insights into pilot performance and behavior.

Collectively, pilots are merely a cross section of society. As such, among pilots there exists a widely varying degree of aeronautical prowess and ability. I have flown with pilots whose seemingly effortless skill I admired. I have flown with those who struggled very hard to make the required grade. I have also flown with pilots whose performance made me wonder how they had progressed as far as they had. Interestingly enough, I suppose most of the pilots I have flown with over the last 19 years can be defined as being average.

In most communities and subcultures of naval aviation, there is certainly nothing wrong with average. Average can be equated to someone who is safe, reliable, and aware of his or her capabilities and limitations. However, in the case of the Osprey, I am concerned that average may not be good enough. As recent tragic events illustrate, "above average" or even "outstanding" may not be sufficient skill levels to successfully master the MV-22. We have lost the two most experienced Osprey aircrews, senior test pilots even, in the first stages of fleet incorporation. What happens when we man this aircraft with less than stellar experienced aircrews? I'm not sure the jury is "in" on this subject.

In my capacity as an instructor, I have more than a layman's appreciation for helicopter aerodynamics. I understand such phenomena as "settling with power" and "vortex ring state." I have deliberately induced this condition at altitude to show pilots how dangerous it can be if encountered in close proximity to the ground. I opine that in most helicopters, under most conditions—even tactically—it is rare to enter the vortex ring state. Reports I have read about the Marana incident attribute the mishap to the pilot having entered a vortex ring state. The speed and rates of descent reported certainly did not seem to me to be excessive. I have seen conditions far worse with no hint of loss of control. Is the margin of error or more correctly, margin of safety, of the Osprey so narrow as to put the aircrews at a disadvantage?

If the Osprey is as demanding to fly as it might seem, what happens when we man it with the inevitable average crew, cloak them in the fog of war, and send them forth in harm's way? Send them into a hot landing zone on a dark night wearing night vision goggles? Send relatively inexperienced crews into tactical situations where it is prudent to expedite time spent in the vulnerable landing phase? I cannot help but ponder such questions.

I do not particularly care about the politics involved in the overwhelming process of aircraft acquisition and employment. Instead, I worry about the troops tasked to fly in those aircraft. It is time to take a long, unbiased, nonpartisan look at the MV-22's future in the Corps. If it can be proven that cockpit workload and aircrew skill requirements are reasonable, then let us welcome its capabilities into our arsenal. If the aircraft needs further redesign or modification to make it safer, then we should pursue those changes. If it turns out that there is no rational or cost-effective solution to the current woes, then perhaps we should consider tabling MV-22 acquisitions until such time that it is safe.

We owe this analysis to our Marines. After all, the Edsel may have been unsightly, but it wouldn't kill you.

MEDICARE PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

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

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak tonight to discuss a report that was just released yesterday from the National Institute for Health Care Management Foundation, which stated that spending on prescription drugs has increased almost 19 percent in the last year. I am deeply troubled by this report, as it underscores a critical need for this Congress to modernize Medicare to include a prescription drug benefit.

Spending on retail outpatient prescription drugs rose almost 19 percent in 2000, from \$111 billion to \$131.9 billion. Approximately half of that spending increase can be attributed to just 23 prescription drugs or pharmaceuticals. Among those drugs are the blockbuster ones we hear about, Vioxx, Lipitor, Celebrex and Glucophage, which I am not pronouncing correctly, but the very drugs that seniors rely on every day to treat chronic long-term illnesses such as diabetes, arthritis or high cholesterol. In fact, my mother-in-law, of those four drugs, actually takes three of them every day.

For the seniors that have no prescription drug coverage, they simply have no choice but to pay top dollar for these expensive medications or go without; and that is what they are doing every day, they are going without, because they cannot afford them. Fully one-third of our Medicare beneficiaries, and these are old numbers, because that was before so many of our Medicare HMOs withdrew from the market, at least one-third of them have no prescription drug coverage at all.

I hear from constituents literally every day who have to make these tough choices on whether to pay their electric bill or their prescription drugs. In fact, I have a letter I just received today from a constituent who tells me: "I am holding off on some of my medications until my Social Security checks are deposited in the bank on the 3rd, and I am out of some of them already." Seniors are struggling literally from Social Security check to Social Security check hoping they have enough medication until the end of the month.

Another constituent of mine was hospitalized for a severe infection. When she was dismissed from the hospital she was given three new prescriptions, one which cost more than \$700. Imagine an 85-year-old woman being asked to pay \$700 for one prescription. The other two cost her an additional \$150, bringing her grand total for these new prescriptions, only new ones for this current illness, to \$850 on one trip to the pharmacy. Talk about adding insult to injury.

Unfortunately, the high costs of prescription drugs are only getting worse. The recent government study predicts that the mapping of the human genome, the aging of the baby boom generation that I am a part of, and the increase in spending on biomedical research will lead to the introduction of

more and more prescription drugs. This is the good part of it, because we are living longer and healthier, but this is sometimes a mixed blessing from a policy perspective. The influx of these drugs can only mean new treatments and therapies for what are now incurable and serious diseases, but it also means that the demand for these drugs and also the cost of these drugs will rise.

Congress cannot sit idly by while our seniors, our parents and our grandparents, are forced to pay more and more of their hard-earned retirement on prescription drugs, and they cannot afford it. Unfortunately, we have seen little action during this Congress. We have actually had one or two hearings in the Subcommittee on Health of the Committee on Energy and Commerce, but we have not gone any further.

For the past 100 days, all we have heard about is a tax cut. What we need to do is start addressing prescription drugs for senior citizens, those 40 million hard-working Americans who now rely on Medicare.

The \$300 billion I understand that may be in the budget that will actually come out of the Medicare reform legislation for prescription drugs is just not adequate. The real problem for our seniors is every time I go to the grocery store at home or a town hall meeting or visit with my seniors, I am approached on what we can do about prescription drugs for seniors. They want to know why in Washington we are not doing something about it, because they see it as an imperative that if it is not a problem today, it has been a problem for over a year and we have not addressed it.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues on both sides, the majority and the minority, we need to pass a prescription drug benefit that is part of Medicare. Just like a doctor or hospital, our prescription drugs should be paid for for our seniors as part of Medicare. We may not be able to afford the 80 percent that we do now for doctors and hospitals, but we ought to be able to grow into that.

Mr. Speaker, \$300 billion is a start, but we have a long way to go. It is a crisis now for our senior citizens. It is a crisis for our parents and our grandparents, and we need to do something about it now.

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

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

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

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

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

LEGISLATION TO DESIGNATE THE "M. CALDWELL BUTLER POST OFFICE BUILDING" IN ROANOKE, VIRGINIA

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

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I introduced legislation today to name the main Roanoke United States Post Office at 419 Rutherford Avenue in Roanoke, Virginia, for my good friend, former Congressman M. Caldwell Butler.

Mr. Butler is a gentleman whom I admire greatly. He served as a United States naval officer during World War II. He received his undergraduate degree from the University of Richmond in 1948 where he was elected to Phi Beta Kappa and Omicron Delta Kappa. In 1950 he received an LL.B. degree from the University of Virginia School of Law where he was elected to the Order of the Coif. In 1978, he received an honorary degree of Doctor of Laws from Washington and Lee University.

Mr. Butler served in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1962 until 1972, where he was minority leader. He practiced law in Roanoke from 1950 until his election to Congress in 1972. He served five full terms in the House of Representatives, representing the sixth district of Virginia. It was my privilege to serve as Congressman Butler's district director from 1977 until 1979.

While in Congress, Mr. Butler was a member of the House Committee on the Judiciary and the Committee on Government Operations. Mr. Butler's start in Congress was memorable. As a member of the House Committee on the Judiciary, he served with distinction as part of the panel that conducted impeachment hearings involving President Richard Nixon.

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Mr. Speaker, following his service to our Nation, Mr. Butler returned home to Roanoke to practice law as a partner of the firm of Woods, Rogers & Hazelgrove, which he continued to do until his retirement in 1998. In addition, he contributed his expertise on a national level by serving as a member of the National Bankruptcy Review Commission from 1995 until 1997.

Mr. Butler is a pillar of the civic community as well, serving as a member of the board of directors of the John Marshall Foundation and the board of trustees of the Virginia Historical Society, a fellow of the American Bar Foundation, a fellow of the American College of Bankruptcy, and a fellow of the Virginia Law Foundation.

Mr. Butler has shown great leadership and personal integrity in his service as a member of the Virginia General Assembly and as a United States Congressman.

It is with great pleasure that I honor a true public servant by introducing legislation that will make Roanoke, Virginia home to the M. Caldwell Butler Post Office Building.

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

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

THE ENERGY CRISIS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. SMITH) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to talk about what is fast becoming one of the largest problems our country faces, and that is the energy crisis. It is not just a California problem. It has spread certainly to the Northwest, where I am from, but also throughout the country, as we see prices for all sorts of energy consumption, from gas at the pump to electricity in the home, go up considerably.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is very good that the President has focused a large number of resources on deciding what to do about this problem. He has put together a task force and the Vice President is taking the leadership role on that. I think this is a problem that we need to focus on.

I am not as excited about the initial reports from the Vice President and the President about the direction they need to go in, but I feel, and so does the new Democratic coalition, which I rise tonight in part to represent, that it is a good first step and we can get there on the policy.

But where should we go? The Vice President's approach and some of his initial remarks were, first of all, that we are going to need to build a power plant a week for the next 20 years, and that conservation, while a personal virtue, is not an energy policy.

The vision that is laid out from those initial statements is that we are going to be building a lot of power plants and power plants that are focused on existing fuel sources, fossil fuel, oil, natural gas, coal, and we are simply going to try to burn and drill our way out of the problem.

Is this a good solution to our energy crisis? I would argue, and my fellow new Democrats also argue, that this is not the best solution. There are a lot of damaging side effects to taking that approach, and what is more, there is a better option, a better approach. Building a power plant every week for the