There was no objection.

NO FOREIGN TRADE AGREEMENTS

(Mr. BROWN of Ohio asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I would like to begin tonight by again talking about the Central American Free Trade Agreement. The fact is, Mr. Speaker, that in spite of what supporters of CAFTA say, the buying power of countries in Central America simply will not have an impact on American exports.

Central America represents only $62 billion in generating economic power. That means that people in Central America will not be able to buy cars from Ohio, or steel from West Virginia, they will not be able to buy software from Seattle or textiles or apparel from North Carolina.

The fact is that CAFTA will only mean more outsourcing of American jobs, more loss of American jobs, more loss of American manufacturing and does nothing to raise the living standards of Central Americans.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

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

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. JONES of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take my Special Order now.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from North Carolina?

There was no objection.

IN SUPPORT OF LIEUTENANT PANTANO

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

Mr. JONES of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I am here tonight to once again ask for my colleagues to support Second Lieutenant Ilario Pantano, a Marine who has served our Nation bravely in both Gulf Wars and who now stands accused of murder for defending himself and his country.

During his service in Iraq last year, Lieutenant Pantano was faced with a very difficult situation that caused him to make a split-second decision to defend his life. He felt threatened by the actions of two insurgents under his watch; and in an act of self-defense, he had to resort to force.

Two and a half months later, a sergeant under his command who never even saw the shooting accused him of murder. Mr. Speaker, next month, April 25, there will be an Article 32 hearing to determine whether or not Lieutenant Pantano will face a court martial for murder. If convicted by a court martial, Lieutenant Pantano can be subject to the death penalty for an action that he took in self-defense on the battlefield.

Mr. Speaker, what is happening to this young man is an injustice. Over the past couple of weeks I have stood here in this very spot quoting those who support him and his fight for justice.

In his fitness report months after the alleged crime took place, his superiors praised his leadership and talents and even suggested that he was worthy of promotion.

Respected journalists, from Mona Charen to the Washington Times editorial board, have defended him as an upstanding citizen and Marine. Veterans and fellow Marines from across this Nation have heard his story and have been outraged by the charge against him. They believe, as I do, that to put doubt in the minds of our soldiers is to condemn them to death.

Mr. Speaker, I have put in a resolution, House Resolution 167, to support Lieutenant Pantano as he faces these allegations. I hope that my colleagues in the House will take the time to read my resolution and look into this situation for themselves.

Lieutenant Pantano's mother has a Web site that I also encouraged people to visit. The address is defendthedefenders.org. I hope and pray that when Lieutenant Pantano faces his Article 32 hearing next Monday, he will be exonerated of all charges.

Our Marines, soldiers, airmen and sailors risk their lives to protect our freedoms. Having them second-guess their actions in war is dangerous for their safety and for our national security.

Lieutenant Pantano stood by his corps and his country through two wars. He left a loving family and a 6-figure salary to reenlist after September the 11th. I ask that we now stand by him as he faces this battle for his life.

Mr. Speaker, with that I will close by saying, may God please bless our men and women in uniform and their families. And please, God, be with Lieutenant Pantano and his family. And I ask God to please bless America.

DO NOT SUPPORT CAFTA

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. FOXX). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Madam Speaker, earlier today, nearly two dozen House and Senate Members, a large number of Members of both parties, held a news conference with about 175 to 200 people representing a whole host of organizations in opposition to the Central American Free Trade Agreement.

Those groups were as diverse as textile manufacturers, as sugar farmers, as environmentalists, labor organizations, religious groups, all kinds of groups, all kinds of organizations, all kinds of individuals in opposition to the Central American Free Trade Agreement.

Madam Speaker, sometime in the next 6 weeks, this legislation, the Central American Free Trade Agreement, will come to the House floor for a vote, according to Republican majority leader, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY), and the chairman of the Ways and Means Committee, the gentleman from California (Mr. THOMAS.)

The supporters of the Central American Free Trade Agreement have told Members of Congress, have told the public, have told newspapers that the Central American Free Trade Agreement will create jobs for Americans, it will create more opportunities to manufacture goods and export them to Central America, it will help farmers and small businesses and manufacturers and consumers and all kinds of groups and people in our country.

The problem is that is the exact same thing that supporters of the North American Free Trade Agreement told us a dozen years ago. It is the exact same promise that sponsors of entry into the World Trade Organization told us about 10 years ago; it is the same promise that they told us when we considered the China PNTR, Permanent Normal Trade Relations, most favored nation status for China; this is the same promise they made on a half dozen other trade agreements.

Yet, in every case, after every trade agreement, we lost more manufacturing jobs, we saw our environmental and food safety standards weakened, we saw less prosperity within those countries with whom we traded, whether it was Mexico, whether it was China, whether it was country after country after country.

Wages continued to stagnate in those countries, and wages continue to stagnant in our country. People actually earn less in real dollars today than they did a year ago before the last trade agreement. On issue after issue they continue to make these promises, and they generally failed to live up to these promises.

Madam Speaker, I would call your attention to this chart. The year I ran for Congress in 1992, the United States had a trade deficit of $38 billion, $38 billion in 1992, 13 years ago. You can see how this trade deficit got bigger and bigger and bigger.

Today our trade deficit, through the year 2004, our trade deficit was $618 billion. It went from $38 billion just about a dozen years later $618 approximately.