

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, during rollcall votes No. 167, 168, and 169 I was unavoidably detained. Had I been here I would have voted "yea" on rollcall vote No. 167, "yea" on rollcall No. 168, and "yea" on rollcall vote No. 169.

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBER TO BOARD OF REGENTS OF SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, and pursuant to the provisions of section 5580 and 5581 of the Revised Statutes (20 U.S.C. 42-43), the Chair announces the Speaker's appointment of the following Member of the House to the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution:

Mr. MATSUI, California.
There was no objection.

IN SUPPORT OF H.R. 435 REGARDING 1999 WOMEN'S WORLD CUP

(Ms. PELOSI asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, just briefly I want to commend the House for an action taken earlier on the passing of a suspension, which was the Miscellaneous Trade and Technical Corrections Act.

This would temporarily suspend customs duties on participants in upcoming athletic events being held in the United States, including the 1999 Women's World Cup. I commend the gentleman from Florida (Mrs. THURMAN) who sits on the Committee on Ways and Means for her leadership on this, as well as the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) who managed the bill here and the leadership on the Republican side, as well as the officials at the Women's World Cup organizing committee, especially their Chair Donna de Varona for their work to pass this provision.

All of the players, trainers, coaches and family members participating in the Women's World Cup have been on a long and challenging road to reach the finals. Representing six continents, these individuals are some of the best athletes in the world. I welcome, and I know this entire Congress joins in welcoming them to this country and wish them all the best of luck.

Our colleagues, in voting in favor of H.R. 435, welcome them indeed and help to ensure that the Women's World Cup is one of the most successful sporting events ever held. I thank my colleagues for their overwhelming vote.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of an amended H.R. 435, the Miscellaneous Trade and Technical Corrections Act, the original version of which already passed the House by vote of 414 to 1.

I am pleased that H.R. 435 contains a provision to temporarily suspend customs duties on

participants in upcoming athletic events being held in the United States, including the 1999 Women's World Cup.

I commend the dedicated efforts of my colleague from Florida, Representative THURMAN, who sits on the Ways and Means Committee, a well as of officials at the Women's World Cup Organizing Committee, namely their chair, Donna De Varona, for their work to pass this provision.

When the 1999 Women's World Cup officially kicks off in 12 days, it will be the largest women's sporting event in history. With 16 countries participating and over 400,000 tickets already sold, the United States will be host to an international contingent of some of the world's best athletes, as well as numerous foreign dignities. Preparations are currently being finalized to ensure that this event is an international success and that the United States remains the premier staging ground for international sporting events.

As a courtesy to participants in international athletic events, Congress has historically voted to temporarily suspend customs duties on the personal effects of participants in such athletic events and participants in the Women's World Cup deserve the same treatment. Suspending these duties will allow for a smoother entry process by ensuring that participants and their families do not have to pay entry duties on the equipment and other items they bring with them.

All of the players, trainers, coaches and family members participating in the Women's World Cup have been on a long and challenging road to reach the finals. Representing six continents, these individuals are some of the best athletes in the world. I welcome them to our country and wish them all the best of luck.

I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of H.R. 435 and thus help ensure that the Women's World Cup is one of the most successful sporting events ever held.

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 111

Mr. FARR of California. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to have my name removed as a cosponsor of H.R. 111.

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

There was no objection.

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SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. EWING). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

THE SITUATION IN KASHMIR

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. Mr. Speaker, in the past few weeks tensions have increased in the area that is known as the "roof of the world," and that is India's state of Jammu and Kashmir, located in the western Himalayan Mountains. For years they have been victimized by foreign militants, mercenaries affiliated with Islamic extremist groups, and supported by Pakistan, who have imposed a reign of terror on the inhabitants of the state, and this spring the Pakistan-backed infiltrators took over Indian defensive positions located on India's side of the line of control near the town of Kargil. India has responded to this incursion on its territory by exercising its legitimate right of self-defense.

Mr. Speaker, recently Pakistan's Ambassador to the U.S. has complained of what he called a "bias in favor of the Indian position" by our State Department. Ambassador Kokhar was apparently upset about a statement made by State Department spokesman James Rubin at his regular press briefing in which Mr. Rubin described the Kashmiri Mujahideen as infiltrators from Pakistan on India's side of the line of control. Mr. Rubin also stated that insertion of any additional fighters from across the line of control will only increase tensions and prolong the fighting.

Mr. Speaker, I find it a little ironic that the Pakistani Ambassador complained about a pro-India tilt at the State Department, since for years the State Department has demonstrated what I consider to be a pronounced pro-Pakistan tilt. In fact, in the first few days of the current conflict, the State Department seemed to be going out of its way to suggest that both countries were equally guilty. At last week's briefing, the State Department spokesman was just stating the facts, describing the situation in Kashmir as it truly is. I hope that the State Department and other administration officials will not bow to Pakistani pressure in characterizing the current conflict in Kashmir. It is clear that Pakistan has had a major role in precipitating this current conflict. Pakistan has for years tried to internationalize its bilateral dispute with India over Kashmir, and it is a strategy we cannot allow to succeed.

Officially, Pakistan claims that it only provides political and moral support for militants in Kashmir, although I think it is highly inappropriate to use the term "moral" for a campaign of terror that has claimed thousands of victims, both Hindu and Muslim, and has made refugees of hundreds of thousands of Kashmiri pundits. Mr. Rubin's statement indicates a recognition of the obvious fact that the militants have crossed over from Pakistan. Indeed, Mr. Speaker, there are reports indicating that these well-trained mercenaries are not only supported by