

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Ms. KILPATRICK of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, personal business in my district prevents me from being present for legislative business scheduled for today, Monday, March 14, 2005. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on H.R. 135, authorizing the establishment of a House Democracy Assistance Commission (rollcall No. 66); "yea" on H. Res. 101, a resolution urging the European Union to add Hezbollah to the List of Terrorist Organizations (rollcall No. 67); and "yea" on S. 384, to extend the Nazi and Japanese War Crimes Working Group (rollcall No. 68).

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. Speaker, I was regrettably absent from the Chamber today during rollcall votes 66, 67, and 68. Had I been present, I would have voted "nay" on rollcall 66, "yea" on rollcall 67, and "yea" on rollcall 68.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to offer a personal explanation. Earlier today, I was unavoidably detained on rollcall votes 66, 67, and 68 due to prior obligation. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall vote 66 (H. Res. 135), "yea" on rollcall vote 67 (H. Res. 101), and "yea" on rollcall vote 68 (S. 384).

REAFFIRMATION OF AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE RESOLUTION

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

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to ask my colleagues to join me in co-sponsoring House Resolution 97, the Reaffirmation of American Independence Resolution.

We have a serious problem with our country's judicial systemic. Oftentimes judges will cite foreign laws when interpreting the United States Constitution and our other laws. This happened earlier this month when the Supreme Court cited international rulings and opinions in its decision to abolish the death penalty for juveniles.

Foreign laws and the beliefs of foreign governments should have no bearing whatsoever when it comes to interpreting American laws. Judges who take these outside opinions into account are legislating from the bench and abandoning their duty to interpret the U.S. Constitution.

It is time we hold our judges accountable for their actions. The Reaffirmation of American Independence Resolution states that judicial decisions should not be based on any for-

eign laws, court decisions or pronouncements of foreign governments. I strongly urge my colleagues to support this very important resolution.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BOOZMAN). 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 UGLY FACE OF CAFTA

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

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, this is the face of the Central American Free Trade Agreement.

This photo was taken by Reuters news service last week in Guatemala as police forces used tear gas and water cannons to beat back demonstrators who had united to speak out against the Central American Free Trade Agreement. Sadly, despite days of protests in organized worker strikes against CAFTA, the Guatemalan Congress ratified that trade agreement late last week.

It appears that politicians encouraged by multinational corporations fail to understand what their workers realize all too clearly: CAFTA is an empty promise that will keep workers in poverty while reaping huge profits for the corporate executives.

Throughout the developing world, Mr. Speaker, workers simply, unlike in this country in most cases, workers simply do not share in the wealth they create. Nike workers in Vietnam cannot afford the shoes they make. Disney workers in Costa Rica cannot afford the toys for their children. Motorola workers in Malaysia are unable to purchase the cell phone.

The North American Free Trade Agreement promised to create a thriving middle class in Mexico, promising higher wages, promising to lift people out of poverty. Eleven years later there is no newly created middle class realizing its dreams. Instead there is a fallen minimum wage and the ongoing nightmare of abject poverty, despite backbreaking work, despite deplorable working conditions.

Now President Bush wants to expand this failed trade policy with CAFTA, dysfunction cousin of NAFTA, involving five Central American countries: Costa Rica, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Honduras, and Guatemala.

CAFTA nations are not only among the world's poorest countries; they are among the smallest economies. With a \$62 billion combined economic output, about that of Columbus, Ohio, these nations can hardly serve as a growth engine for the \$10 trillion U.S. economy.

CAFTA is more about access to cheap labor and exporting American jobs than it is exporting U.S. goods and produce.

Trade pacts like NAFTA and CAFTA enable countries to exploit cheap labor in other countries and then import their products back into the United States under favorable terms. As a result, America, especially my State of Ohio, bleeds manufacturing jobs and runs unprecedented trade deficits.

The first year I ran for Congress, our trade deficit was \$38 billion. Today it is \$617 billion for calendar year 2004. Gregory Mankiw, then President Bush's chief economist, portrayed the exporting of jobs as inevitable and desirable saying, "When a good or service is produced more cheaply abroad, it makes more sense to import it than it does to provide it domestically."

What really makes sense is a trade policy that lifts workers up in rich and poor countries alike, while respecting human rights and democratic principles. Proof that CAFTA is a legacy of failing trade policies is evidence in this Congress's own inaction. For the last 5 years, Congress has typically voted within about 2 months, within 60 days of President Bush signing a trade agreement.

Nearly 300 days have elapsed since President Bush signed the Central America Free Trade Agreement, still this Congress has not acted because the majority of this Congress understands our trade policies have failed.

Proof that CAFTA is a failure can be seen in this photo, Mr. Speaker. In Guatemala today, thousands of workers united in a nationwide strike voicing opposition to a trade policy they know will fail them, one that American workers also know will fail us.

This is the result of these demonstrations, where police turn on this country's workers, workers who are simply opposing in a democratic, open demonstration opposing its government trade policies. Yet the U.S. continues to push for more of the same, more trade agreements that ship jobs overseas, more trade agreements that neglect essential environmental rules, more trade agreements that keep foreign workers in poverty.

Madness is repeating the same action over and over and over and expecting a different result. The United States with our unrivaled purchasing power and our enormous economic clout is in a unique position to help empower poor workers in developing countries while promoting prosperity here at home.

When the world's poorest people can buy American products rather than just make them, we know then that our trade policies have finally succeeded.