

that many Members hold for the direction Bolivia and Ecuador are heading. It is my hope that ten months from now, when we again address the issue of preferences for the Andean countries, we will be witnessing a renewed commitment in these two countries for the reform and liberalization that are essential to eliminating poverty and improving the standard of living for every Bolivian and Ecuadorian.

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of the H.R. 5264, the Andean Trade Preference Act (ATPA), a program meant to assist the Andean countries in their economic development. The ATPA provides duty free treatment for 94 percent of imports from the four Andean nations—Colombia, Peru, Bolivia, and Ecuador.

The original Andean Trade Preferences Act was passed in 1991 and extended and expanded in 2002 with the Andean Trade Promotion and Drug Eradication Act (ATPDEA), and again extended last June 2007. This program is fundamental in our mission to foster trade-based economic relations between the United States and the Andean region and stimulate legitimate economic alternatives to narcotics production and trafficking in the Andean region.

If Congress does not pass the Andean Trade Preference Act, the previous extension of the program will expire on February 29, 2008. Renewing ATPA will continue to build on the program's success and help us achieve our larger policy goals for the Andean region. At a time of increasing economic uncertainty, it will help sustain critical U.S. jobs that are dependent on stable trade with and investments in the Andean region.

From 2003 to 2006, U.S. textile exports to the Andean region increased by more than \$50 million signifying a 40 percent increase. However, with the uncertainty the constant renewal brings, last year it was extended for 8 months 2 hours before it was set to expire, it has discouraged companies from continuing their investment in the Andean region.

Our current regional partnership is grounded on the joint struggle to eradicate the narcotics menace that terrorizes both the Andean region and the United States and to provide economic stability through trade. As the Andean region currently enjoys duty-free treatment, an expansion of these trade policies, like the U.S.-Peru Free Trade Agreement, would allow us to enter into a full partnership with the remaining Andean countries instead of just a one way trading benefit.

While free trade agreements are not on the immediate agenda of Congress, I urge a vote in favor of H.R. 5264, to extend trade preferences for Colombia, Peru, Ecuador and Bolivia and continue to show our support for our Andean neighbors and allow U.S. companies to continue investing in that region.

Mr. LEVIN. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5264, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

The title of the bill was amended so as to read: "A bill to extend the Andean

Trade Preference Act, and for other purposes."

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

COMMENDING ELDER HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS FOR SUPPORTING ELDER HIGH SCHOOL ALUMNI SERVING OUR NATION OVERSEAS

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

Mr. CHABOT. Madam Speaker, a few years ago, I had the honor of coming to the floor of this House to congratulate Cincinnati's Elder High School for winning the Ohio State Division 1 football championship 2 years in a row, quite an accomplishment.

Today, I want to recognize and commend Elder High school seniors Matt Brannon and Ben Combs and a group of about a dozen fellow Elder students for doing something every bit as worthy of recognition. These young men, on their own initiative, raised the necessary funds to ship care packages to Elder alumni who are serving our Nation in uniform overseas. In the words of Matt Brannon, "I want to help people who are risking their lives for us."

Such patriotism should be an inspiration to us all, and Elder High School can be proud that they are educating and instilling in their students the highest values.

Thank you, Elder Panthers. Well done.

□ 1715

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, 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 gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

WHO SEEKS INDEPENDENCE?

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

Mr. POE. Madam Speaker, it is written that governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, and that when any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it and to institute new government.

Madam Speaker, this eternal statement from the Declaration of Independence clearly states the United

States' right to self-determination. We used this natural right to break away from Great Britain.

Last week Kosovo unilaterally declared itself an independent and sovereign state, and the announcement has ushered violence in the region and opposition from the country it broke from, Serbia. Following Kosovo's declaration of independence, the United States was one of the first world powers to grant official recognition to the self-declared independent Kosovo. Since then, several other countries have followed. Of course, not everyone agrees that Kosovo may unilaterally declare its independence from Serbia. Certainly Serbia objects.

At the same time, Russia, China and Spain have shared their strong opposition to the declaration. Each of these countries is struggling with its own separatist communities. They are afraid that Kosovo's unilateral declaration will encourage secessionist groups in their own country to rebel and declare themselves independent and sovereign states.

When we start meddling in the internal affairs of international nations like Serbia, consequences are sure to follow. Let me be clear, I am not talking about a people rising up and overthrowing a civil government, but a people separating themselves from a civil government and forming a new nation.

The question is, do all peoples have this right of separation, and does the United States support that? What position will the United States take as other peoples may decide self-determination, separation and independence? By recognizing Kosovo, the United States is setting a precedent, and it needs to take that position very seriously, because there are consequences.

Is the United States willing to offer recognition to the Basque and Catalan people of Spain if they declare independence or to Chechnya if they break away from Russia? Or how about Tibet if they decide to leave China? Separatist communities across the world are interpreting the actions of the United States in Kosovo to suggest that America supports movements of self-determination.

A columnist for an African newspaper recently wrote a newspaper article titled "Kosovo—the precedent that will enflame Africa." This journalist predicts that the Kosovo recognition will ignite a revival of secessionist groups across the African continent. Will the United States be prepared to deal with that if it happens? And what will we do? Will we send troops? Will we send aid to these movements?

We've even got folks from the State of Montana here in the United States saying they are going to secede from the Union if the Supreme Court rules a certain way on gun ownership. Is self-determination allowed in Montana?

Looking at our country's history, it is pretty clear that the right of self-determination of a people is expensive,

and it has costs. If it weren't for the courage and self-determination of our country's founders, we would still be a colony of Great Britain.

But the United States has been inconsistent on the right of self-determination. For example, in the 1860s, the United States rejected this self-determination here at home. More than 650,000 Americans were killed during the War Between the States when the South claimed the right of self-determination and the North went to war to prevent it and to prevent southern independence.

Independence is a serious and volatile matter. Thomas Jefferson said, "What country can preserve its liberties, if its rulers are not warned from time to time that the people preserve the spirit of resistance? Let them take up arms." These are strong words from the author of the Declaration of Independence.

Is this statement U.S. policy? It may very well be the case that the United States' position in Kosovo will encourage more turmoil throughout the world. What will the United States do then? Is the United States going to choose to either fully support or fully oppose the right to self-determination for other peoples? Or is the United States going to continue down its path of inconsistent foreign policy on self-determination?

People with aspirations of independence all over the world are watching the United States and trying to interpret what our foreign policy is. They need to know what our position is on independence, and the American public needs to know where we stand on independence for other peoples.

And that's just the way it is.

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

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

KOSOVA

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

Mr. ENGEL. Madam Speaker, I rise because I listened intently to the remarks just made by my friend from Texas, and I want to say that as someone who has supported the independence of Kosova for the past 20 years, I couldn't disagree more.

I am proud of the United States for supporting and encouraging the independence of Kosova. I am proud of the Bush administration for doing the right thing in Kosova. I am proud of the United States standing on the side of freedom and self-determination and independence, and I am proud that the United States understands that the people of Kosova are entitled to the same kinds of freedoms that we had for

ourselves in our own revolution more than 200 years ago.

No, I don't think that every independence or separatist movement in the world is entitled to declare independence, but I think that we need to look at everything in terms of its context.

The former Yugoslavia broke up. There were several components of the former Yugoslavia. We now have several independent countries of Macedonia and Croatia and Slovenia and many others, Montenegro, and Kosova, also, as part of the former Yugoslavia is entitled to that same kind of independence and self-determination.

We remember where the former leader of Serbia, Slobodan Milosevic, had set out to ethnically cleanse his country of Albanians, to commit genocide against the Albanians in Kosova to drive them out, to indeed burn practically every Albanian home in Kosova when they were driven out. It was only because of the courage at that time of President Clinton and the United States where we helped and bombed and prevented genocide that that was prevented.

So I think the situation in the former Yugoslavia, in Kosova, is unique. I think that Serbia relinquished any kind of claim to Kosova by the way their former leader Milosevic persecuted and committed genocide against the Albanian population.

Self-determination for the people of Kosova is the right thing to do. The United States and the European Union have stood strong in supporting Kosova independence. Kosova, indeed, will be a strong ally of the West, of the United States, of the European Union.

The people of Kosova love the United States. They trust us. They care about us. They know we are there for them. I want to tell you, as someone who has been so involved with this issue for the past 20 years, there are no better friends that we have across the world, the United States has, than the people of Kosova.

So I am very, very proud that that is a new nation. I am very proud that the United States has recognized them. I, indeed, would urge all freedom-loving countries of the world to recognize the people of Kosova.

We in this wonderful democracy are so blessed and so fortunate to live in the United States, and we have principles for which we stand, and those are the same principles that the people of Kosova are standing for and looking at us to follow exactly what we have done in terms of democracy. I hope to go to Kosova in the very, very near future to celebrate with the people there.

I want to say one other thing. Kosova will be a multiethnic state, and that means that minority rights have to be protected in Kosova. There are some who are concerned about Serbian Orthodox churches and that minority rights, including Serbs, need to be protected. I agree. Those churches need to be protected. Minority rights need to

be protected. I am confident that the leaders of Kosova will protect those churches, will protect those rights, will protect the rights of all Kosovars, whether they be Albanian, Serb or others, and the people understand that. I know the people of Kosova, and I know they understand that.

I just want to very, very strongly state that I am proud to be a friend of the people of Kosova. This Congress has been a friend of the people of Kosova. Our government has been a friend of the people of Kosova, and I think we as Americans can hold our heads up high and say that the ideals for which our revolution was fought more than 200 years ago are the same ideals of the revolution for the new independence and new nation of Kosova.

SUNSET MEMORIAL

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

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. Madam Speaker, I stand once again before this body with yet another Sunset Memorial. It is February 27, 2008, in the land of the free and the home of the brave, and before the sun sets today in America, almost 4,000 more defenseless unborn children will have been killed by abortion on demand, just today. That is more than the number of innocent American lives lost on September 11, only it happens every day.

It has now been exactly 12,819 days since the travesty called *Roe v. Wade* was handed down. Since then, the very foundation of this Nation has been stained by the blood of almost 50 million of its own children.

Some of them cried and screamed as they died, but because it was amniotic fluid passing over their vocal cords instead of air, we couldn't hear them. All of them had at least four things in common: They were each just little babies who had done nothing wrong to anyone. Each one of them died a nameless and lonely death. And each of their mothers, whether she realizes it immediately or not, will never be the same. And all the gifts these children might have brought to humanity are now lost forever.

Yet even in the full glare of such tragedy, this generation clings to a blind, invincible ignorance while history repeats itself and our own silent genocide mercilessly annihilates the most helpless of all victims to date, those yet unborn.

Madam Speaker, perhaps it's important for those of us in this Chamber to remind ourselves again of why we are really all here. Thomas Jefferson said, "The care of human life and its happiness and not its destruction is the chief and only object of good government."

The 14th amendment capsulizes our entire Constitution. It says, "No state shall deprive any person of life, liberty or property without due process of