(Mrs. MCCARTHY addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

GREEK INDEPENDENCE DAY ANNIVERSARY

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. Madam Speaker, I am proud to join with several of my colleagues this evening in celebrating the 185th anniversary of Greek independence from the Ottoman Empire.

In the years since Greek independence, Americans and Greeks have grown ever closer, bound by ties of strategic and military alliance, common values of democracy, individual freedom, human rights, and close personal friendship.

Madam Speaker, while we celebrate Greek independence this evening, it is also important that we recognize that Greece continues to battle oppression from present-day Turkey in Cyprus. It is crucial our Nation work with the United Nations and the Government of Cyprus to once again unify the island. However, I am deeply concerned that our government's recent actions will actually make it more difficult to reunify Cyprus. The U.S. State Department and Secretary Rice seem much more interested in rewarding those who illegally occupied the northern third of the nation back in 1974 than actually reunifying the islands. Over the past year, our State Department decided to allow Americans to fly into the occupied north, something that has not been permitted since the illegal occupation took place back in 1974.

Last year, I joined many of my colleagues from the Congressional Hellenic Caucus in sending a letter expressing our deep concern regarding the legality of U.S. citizens flying directly from Turkey to the airport in northern Cyprus. In response to that letter, the State Department responded that it was encouraging the elimination of unnecessary restrictions and barriers that isolate and impede the economic development of the Turkish Cypriot community.

Madam Speaker, this new policy must also be responsible for a decision earlier this year by the State Department to resume trade with the occupied north through ports that were declared closed after the invasion in 1974. In order to allow trade, the State Department is forced to ignore both Cyprus' domestic law, as well as international law that prohibits entering Cyprus through an illegal port in the north.

Madam Speaker, I am deeply concerned that the State Department's new policy towards the government and the people of the occupied north will only delay reunification of the entire island. If U.S. allows direct trade through routes in the north, what incentives do the illegal occupiers of northern lands have to make any concessions to the rightful inhabitants? It is as if the State Department has completely forgotten who is responsible for the division of Cyprus in the first place.

I have repeatedly encouraged Secretary Rice to take an historic look at the Cyprus problem over the past 30 years. It is important to look at this problem not only through the lens of the nonvote in 2004, but also from the perspective of three decades of illegal actions on the Turkish side.

Madam Speaker, I pledge tonight to continue to speak out against a State Department that seems more comfortable punishing the victims of the Cyprus problem while rewarding the occupiers. I am hopeful that one day soon, like Greece, the island of Cyprus will be unified and free. And tonight I also applaud the determination that the Greeks showed 185 years ago to overcome the Ottoman Empire and restore democracy in the place of its birth.

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

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

FAIRNESS IN TRADE TARIFFS

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. Madam Speaker, recently Congressman DALE KILDEE and myself have introduced H.R. 4808.

We both are very concerned about the jobs that continue to go overseas, ''outsourcing'' some people call it. And with this bill what we are speaking to is the tariff situation that will exist between China and America.

In 2008, the Chinese will be selling in America Chinese cars that are made in China. These cars obviously will be made by people who make in many cases less than $1 an hour, $1.25 an hour, no benefits, but yet they will be selling these cars in this country.

What Mr. KILDEE and I have done, along with other Members in both parties, is to say, we want to see fairness in this arrangement. If we try to sell an American car in China today, tonight, tomorrow we would pay 28 percent tariff. When the Chinese sell their cars in this country in the year 2008, they will pay 2.5 percent.

What this bill does is simple. It says fairness, fair trade. What is good for the Chinese economy should be good for the American economy. What is good for the American economy, let it be good for the Chinese economy. But for this country, we have lost so many manufacturing jobs in my own State of North Carolina. Since NAFTA was enacted, we have lost over 200,000 manufacturing jobs. Just the past 4 years, between 2001 and 2005, we have lost 2.9 million manufacturing jobs in this country.

This Nation cannot and will not remain strong if we do not have a manufacturing base. So this bill that Mr. KILDEE and I have put in is very simple. I will repeat it again and then I will close very shortly.

That is, if we are going to accept Chinese cars to be sold in this country in 2008, and right now they will pay a 2.8 percent tariff while we are selling American cars in China and American cars have a tariff of 28 percent.

Madam Speaker, I will tell you this, I think the American people are tired and really kind of fed up, if you will, with the fact that we have not done a better job in this Congress, both sides, of trying to protect the American worker. This really is a bill that we are trying to send a message. With the WTO and the relationship we have, it would be very difficult for this bill to be signed by the President, but Mr. KILDEE and I believe that the Congress, on the floor of this House, should debate H.R. 4808 and let the American people, or as good as the American people, let the negotiators know that the Congress does care about fairness in these trade agreements.

With that, Madam Speaker, I will close by saying that I appreciate the honor of serving in the House. I hope that we will always do our best to protect American jobs and the American worker.

I also want to close by asking God to please bless our men and women in uniform. And, God, please bless the families of our men and women in uniform. And, God, please bless America.

SMART SECURITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Madam Speaker, with today marking the 17th anniversary of the accident at Three Mile Island, this seems like an appropriate opportunity to discuss the dangers posed by nuclear energy and nuclear weapons.

As I have said from this floor many, many times before, I believe there is no greater national imperative than to bring our troops home from Iraq. But the end of the war must also be the beginning of some fresh and creative thinking about national security.

We are in a desperate need, a need for new strategies for keeping America safe. Last summer, Madam Speaker, I introduced the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Commitments Act. The concept behind the bill is very simple, and it is a really good starting point. America must keep its word and live up to the agreements it has made to reduce our nuclear arsenal. But we need to go even further.

So along with the Physicians for Social Responsibility, Friends for Peace, and WAND, I have developed a plan called SMART Security. SMART stands for sensible, multilateral, American response to terrorism, which seeks peaceful and diplomatic solutions to international conflict. SMART addresses a range of issues including energy independence, democracy building, and global poverty. But at its core is a renewed commitment to nuclear nonproliferation and disarmament.

SMART calls on the United States to stop the spread of weapons of mass destruction and to do it with strong diplomacy, with enhanced weapons regimes and regional security arrangements. Under SMART, we would set an example for the rest of the world by renouncing nuclear testing and development of new nuclear weapons. SMART would redouble our commitment to the Cooperative Threat Reduction Program which has been successful in reducing nuclear stockpiles and securing nuclear materials in the former Soviet Union.

□ 1945

SMART would stop the sale and transfer of weapons to regimes involved in human rights abuses, and it would ensure that highly enriched uranium is stored only in secure locations.

Mr. Speaker, at just the moment that we need to be vigilant about nuclear proliferation, the Bush administration is asking Congress to give its approval to his dangerous and misguided nuclear energy deal with India. Here he is agreeing to share sensitive nuclear technologies with a nation that was testing nuclear weapons as recently as 1998. He would essentially reward India for its refusal to sign the nonproliferation treaty, feeding the nuclear appetite of a nation that has failed to show the responsibility expected of a nuclear state.

What message does the India pact send to Iran and North Korea? What leverage do we have with these countries to give up their nuclear ambitions, especially since, despite the threats they represent, they have done actually nothing to violate their treaty obligations?

If this India agreement were ratified, how would we deal with India's neighbor and rival Pakistan, which is likely to demand the same nuclear concessions from the United States and which has a dishonorable history of sharing nuclear technology with rogue actors?

Mr. Speaker, there is a cruel irony to the U.S. nuclear policy. While we happily share nuclear technology with countries that have not always handled it responsibly, and while we continue to pursue a large and expensive nuclear arsenal of our own, we are fighting a bloody and expensive war over a nuclear weapon that never even existed. Remember, we are only in Iraq because our so-called leaders looked us in the eye and said there would be a mushroom cloud over American cities unless we sent our troops off to die.

It is time for a 180-day degree turn in our thinking about these issues. It is time we stopped equating security with aggression. It is time we rejected the doctrine of preemption, instead of reaffirming it as the Bush administration did recently. It is time we got SMART about national security.

It is time we protected America, not by invading other nations, but by relying on the very best of American values: our desire for peace, our capacity for global leadership, and our compassion for the people of the world.

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

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

CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE ON-PREMISE SIGN INDUSTRY

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

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the contributions of the on-premise sign industry to our economy and our country. From April 5 to April 8, the International Sign Association, which represents thousands of manufacturers, users and suppliers of on-premise signs and sign products, will be having its 60th Annual International Expo in Orlando, Florida.

At that expo, there will be 550 companies displaying nearly 1,700 booths of the most advanced and innovative sign products the industry has to offer. Nearly 25,000 people are expected to attend this event. This includes businesses from across the country and around the world. The expo will feature custom, architectural, digital and national sign companies and their products, giving sign enthusiasts and small businesses a prime opportunity to learn more about this ever-changing industry.

I sit on two committees that deal extensively with sign-related issues, so I am familiar with the issues that concern the industry. For example, on the Committee on Small Business, we are all aware of how important small businesses are to our economy. We know that 90 percent of American businesses are small business, and we know that they create the lion's share of new jobs. And we know that these small businesses thrive in an environment with as little government regulation as possible.

But what many people may not know is that the Small Business Administration, over which our committee has jurisdiction, officially recognizes that effective on-premise signage is a critical component of a business' success and can contribute to the success of all businesses. In fact, as SBA Bulletin No. 101 on signage for businesses states: ''Signs are the most effective, yet least expensive form of advertising for the small business.'' Obviously, the $12 billion on-premise sign industry plays a critical role in the success of small businesses and our economic growth.

Unfortunately, the on-premise sign industry still, like most small businesses, faces a flood of government regulations and needs our support. We need to enact extensive and permanent tax cuts, so that small business owners can keep more of their own money and use it to grow their businesses. We need to give small businesses the freedom to choose to participate in association health care plans, so that employers can give their businesses solid health care coverage. We need to pass serious tort reform, so that small businesses are not bogged down in legal costs and red tape. In other words, Mr. Speaker, the Federal Government needs to get out of the way.

As a member of the Judiciary Committee, I understand that the Federal Government has a role to play in protecting the constitutional rights of on-premise signage, specifically, that the commercial speech represented in on-premise signage has certain guaranteed protections under the first amendment. It is vitally important that small businesses be allowed to communicate their business messages to American consumers, and one of the best ways to do this is with on-premise signage.

Similarly, the sign industry also has trademark concerns and needs protection from arbitrary government regulation that fails to acknowledge the protected status of their registered trade or service mark, slogan, motto, or other key text in their on-premise signage. And of course, small businesses can be adversely affected by the State's power of eminent domain, represented in the Kelo case most recently, especially those businesses whose on-premise signs have been taken by the government for whatever reason or excuse.

So, Mr. Speaker, I appreciate this opportunity to educate my colleagues about the value of on-premise signage and to describe the challenges they face. I congratulate ISA on 60 years of annual expos. I wish them the best of luck with their convention. I thank the thousands of on-premise signage businesses across the country, as well as the men and women who run them, for their invaluable contribution to our economy and our society.

COLLEGE ACCESS AND OPPORTUNITY ACT

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

Mr. BISHOP of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise to state my opposition to H.R. 609, a higher education reauthorization bill that is much more than a day late and a dollar short.