

chairman of the House International Relations Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific, for introducing this legislation. I further would like to commend the gentleman from New York [Mr. GILMAN], the full committee chairman; the gentleman from California [Mr. BERMAN], the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific; and the gentleman from New York [Mr. ACKERMAN], and the gentleman from California [Mr. ROYCE] for their support of this measure as original cosponsors.

Mr. Speaker, this resolution supports the efforts of the Governments of India, Bangladesh, and Nepal over the past year to cooperate in sharing the waters of the Ganges River, as well as the joint development of the resources of the Mahakali River. Their efforts in negotiating treaties will help in the future to control water resources in the region, reducing flooding during rains, and providing water during droughts. Through this admirable cooperation by these Governments, it is projected that deaths and property destruction will be substantially reduced for the region's 400 million residents.

Mr. Speaker, the resolution further urges international financial institutions and the world community to assist the Governments of India, Bangladesh, and Nepal in this worthy endeavor.

I strongly endorse this measure that supports progress to improve the lives of close to half a billion people in South Asia, and certainly would like to commend the gentleman from Indiana [Mr. HAMILTON], the senior ranking member of our Committee on International Relations, for his full support of this legislation.

Mr. HILLIARD. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GOODLATTE). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York [Mr. GILMAN] that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, House Concurrent Resolution 16, as amended.

The question was taken.

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 5 of rule I and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

VACATING ORDERING OF YEAS AND NAYS ON HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 32, GRANTING CONSENT TO CERTAIN AMENDMENTS ENACTED BY HAWAIIAN LEGISLATURE TO HAWAIIAN HOMES COMMISSION ACT OF 1920

Ms. SANCHEZ. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the House vacate the ordering of the yeas and nays on House Joint Resolution 32.

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

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the Chair will put the question de novo when proceedings resume at 5 p.m.

There was no objection.

SENSE OF HOUSE CONCERNING TREATY OF MUTUAL COOPERATION AND SECURITY BETWEEN UNITED STATES AND JAPAN

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 68) stating the sense of the House of Representatives that the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security Between the United States of America and Japan is essential for furthering the security interests of the United States, Japan, and the nations of the Asia-Pacific region, and that the people of Okinawa deserve recognition for their contributions toward ensuring the treaty's implementation, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 68

Whereas the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security Between the United States of America and Japan is critical to the security interests of the United States, Japan, and the countries of the Asia-Pacific region;

Whereas the security relationship between the United States and Japan is the foundation for the security strategy of the United States in the Asia-Pacific region;

Whereas strong bilateral security ties between the two countries provide a key stabilizing influence in an uncertain post-cold war world;

Whereas this bilateral security relationship makes it possible for the United States and Japan to preserve their interests in the Asia-Pacific region;

Whereas forward-deployed forces of the United States are welcomed by allies of the United States in the region because such forces are critical for maintaining stability in East Asia;

Whereas regional stability has undergirded East Asia's economic growth and prosperity;

Whereas the recognition by allies of the United States of the importance of United States armed forces for security in the Asia-Pacific region confers on the United States irreplaceable good will and diplomatic influence in that region;

Whereas Japan's host nation support is a key element in the ability of the United States to maintain forward-deployed forces in that country;

Whereas the Governments of the United States and Japan, in the Special Action Committee on Okinawa Final Report issued by the United States-Japan Security Consultative Committee established by the two countries, made commitments to reducing the burdens of United States armed forces on the people of Japan, especially the people of Okinawa;

Whereas such commitments must maintain the operational capability and readiness of United States forces; and

Whereas gaining the understanding and support of the people of Japan, especially the people of Okinawa, in fulfilling these commitments is crucial to the effective implementation of the Treaty: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That it is the sense of the House of Representatives that—

(1) the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security Between the United States of America and Japan remains vital to the security interests of the United States and Japan, as well as the countries of the Asia-Pacific region; and

(2) the people of Japan, especially the people of Okinawa, deserve special recognition and gratitude for their contributions toward ensuring the Treaty's implementation and regional peace and stability.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Nebraska [Mr. BEREUTER] and the gentleman from Alabama [Mr. HILLIARD] each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Nebraska [Mr. BEREUTER].

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Mr. BEREUTER asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, this Member rises in strong support of House Resolution 68. This Member commends the distinguished gentleman from Indiana [Mr. HAMILTON] for raising this issue and bringing us this legislation. This Member would note that our good friend from Indiana has consistently been a voice in support of United States security interests, and the gentleman's resolution regarding the United States-Japan security agreement and the people of Okinawa is no exception. He is to be congratulated for his initiative. This Member is pleased, together with the distinguished gentleman from California [Mr. BERMAN], to be an original cosponsor of H. Res. 68.

Mr. Speaker, the United States-Japan alliance is the cornerstone of United States security strategy for the Asia-Pacific region and serves as the anchor for the United States military presence in the region. Not only do United States forward based forces in Japan contribute to Japanese security, but these assets are absolutely essential for any contingency on the Korean Peninsula. Our bases on the Japanese mainland and on Okinawa enable us to protect and advance our interests throughout the Pacific. In addition, elements of these forward-based forces were among the first to arrive in the Persian Gulf during Operation Desert Shield.

There is no question that American forces in Japan contribute to a sense of regional stability. This Member has often commented that all the nations of Asia, with the possible exception of North Korea, welcome the presence of United States forces and want us to remain in the region. Indeed, the commitment of the Clinton administration to keep 100,000 troops in Asia has become an important issue psychologically with the countries of the region, who look constantly for reassurance that the United States military will remain in the region.

This Member would also note that the Government of Japan pays the

overwhelming majority of expenses of forward basing of American troops in Japan. In what is a model basing agreement, the Japanese pay approximately 75 percent of our basing costs. Frankly, even considering all direct and indirect costs, it is cheaper to keep our troops in Japan than it is to base them in the United States. As House Resolution 68 notes, we would not be able to maintain such a vigorous presence in the Pacific were it not for the host nation's support provided by the Japanese.

Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 68 offers special recognition of the importance of the United States-Japan Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security. The resolution also takes note of the contribution of the people of Okinawa, who have been expected to bear a disproportionate share of the burden of hosting our troops. This is a good and useful resolution, Mr. Speaker, and this Member urges approval of House Resolution 68.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HILLIARD. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume, and I rise in support of this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to thank the gentleman from California [Mr. BERMAN] and the gentleman from Nebraska [Mr. BEREUTER], the ranking member and chairman, respectively, of the Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific, as well as the gentleman from New York [Mr. GILMAN], the chairman of the committee, for the help and leadership they have all extended in moving this resolution to the floor.

Former Ambassador Mike Mansfield, who called the relationship between the United States and Japan the most important bilateral relationship in the world, bar none, would love to see this moved. Our bilateral alliance has endured and remains strong because the United States and Japan are united not by a common enemy but by a common interest.

In December 1996 the United States and Japan agreed to measures to renew and strengthen our security relationship. In particular, our two Governments agreed to lessen the burden borne by the people of Okinawa whose small island prefecture hosts over half of the forward-deployed United States forces in Japan.

This is the right moment to restate the fundamental importance of the United States-Japan Mutual Security Treaty to the peace and prosperity of the entire Asia-Pacific region. It is also the right time to recognize the contribution of the people of Okinawa toward ensuring regional peace and security.

My Republican colleague, Senator WILLIAM ROTH, has introduced an identical measure in the other body. This is a bipartisan effort. Our relationship with Japan is crucially important. For this reason and the others I have mentioned, I urge the adoption of this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from American Samoa [Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA].

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. I thank my good friend for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to be a cosponsor of this resolution which reaffirms that the security treaty between the United States and Japan remains the anchor of American engagement and the foundation for regional stability in the Asia-Pacific region.

I would commend the gentleman from Indiana [Mr. HAMILTON], the ranking member of the Committee on International Relations, for introducing this excellent piece of legislation. I would further commend the gentleman from New York [Mr. GILMAN], the full committee chairman; the gentleman from Nebraska [Mr. BEREUTER], chairman of the Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific; and the gentleman from California [Mr. BERMAN], the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific, for their strong support and work on this measure.

Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 68 sends the message that although the cold war era has ended, the security alliance between the United States and Japan remains more critical than ever—and is in the best interests of both countries as well as the nations of the Asia-Pacific region.

Mr. Speaker, this measure underscores the important role that United States Armed Forces deployed in Japan and the Pacific have played in ensuring peace, that our allies have welcomed our presence, and that the regional stability provided by our forces have materially contributed to Asia's tremendous growth and economic prosperity.

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The resolution further recognizes, Mr. Speaker, the vital contributions of Japan as the host nation. I find it very appropriate that the people of Okinawa, who have borne the heaviest burden in supporting the American bases, are honored by this measure through special recognition and thanks for their sacrifices and invaluable contributions.

Mr. Speaker, I would urge my colleagues to adopt this excellent resolution which supports the United States-Japan security alliance, thereby furthering peace and stability for all throughout the Asian Pacific region.

Mr. HILLIARD. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Guam [Mr. UNDERWOOD].

(Mr. UNDERWOOD asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. UNDERWOOD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of House Resolution 68.

The Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security between the United States and Japan is the framework that supports our commitment to the Asia-Pacific region. The Japanese-American relationship provides the stable conditions which promote trade

and commerce in the region and provides further advancements in the peaceful relations of all peoples of the Asia and the Pacific region.

The security of the Asia-Pacific region is of vital interest to the United States, and no community of the United States is more acutely aware of this than Guam, my home island. In the post-cold war environment U.S. forward deployed forces have been welcomed by our allies in the theater. This forward deployment is made possible by the special friendship shared between the United States and Japan that is signified by the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation. In the coming years, as our friendship with Japan continues, let us not just focus on the numerical commitment of 100,000 troops to the region, but ensure that the United States maintains its capabilities in the changing Asian Pacific region.

The United States commitment to the Asia-Pacific region has required sacrifices from many people, sacrifices by our soldiers, our sailors, our airmen and marines who defend our Nation's interests in the region; also the contributions by the people of Japan and, most importantly, the people of Okinawa. Okinawa has continued to play a pivotal role in ensuring the security environment of the region. This community has contributed much, and this resolution extends to them our sincere appreciation.

During my recent visit to Okinawa, I saw firsthand some of the concerns they face supporting a large contingent of U.S. forces. Even after the Special Action Committee on Okinawa recognized the need to reduce the presence of United States Armed Forces on Japan, our commitment to the people of Okinawa's concerns cannot and should not be lessened. The people of Guam have a distinct understanding of their concerns, and to them as well as the people of Japan we express our sincere appreciation.

Mr. HILLIARD. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. FRANK].

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, I am not going to push this to the point of a vote, but I want to express my disagreement with the resolution. I am sorry to spoil the good cheer, and I admire the people of Okinawa, but I think we should make it very clear that there is considerable unhappiness in the United States and here in the Congress with the one-sidedness of this relationship, particularly financially.

Mr. Speaker, I insert into the RECORD an article, from which I want to read briefly.

The article referred to is as follows:
[From the New York Times, Feb. 15, 1997]
JAPAN HESITANT ABOUT U.S. ANTIMISSILE PROJECT

(By Clifford Krauss)

WASHINGTON, Feb. 14—After three years of exploratory talks, Administration officials say Japan has all but decided against taking part in an antimissile defense project with

the United States for fear of offending China and overspending scarce military resources.

Tokyo's hesitation stems from reluctance to spend billions of dollars when its own economy is weak, and concerns that developing a missile system would anger Japan's deeply pacifist electorate and frighten Asian neighbors wary of any signs of a Japanese military buildup.

A decision not to join the project would be a setback to American military contractors that hope to supply Japan with hardware. And it could swell United States military budgets for Asia because the United States would have to bear the cost of such a system alone.

Senior Administration officials said that no Japanese decision would be announced for months and that the United States would press ahead with its own plans to develop antimissile systems to protect American forces in Japan from any North Korean or Chinese attack.

The feasibility of an effective antimissile shield is still a matter of debate, but Pentagon officials say the Patriot missiles, which displayed a mixed record during the Persian Gulf war, have been updated and improved in recent years.

Administration officials also say a decision by Tokyo not to take part would not hurt its relations with Washington.

Discussions on how to pool technology, engineering talent and money to set up a "theater missile defense" began shortly after North Korea test-fired a Rodong 1 missile 300 miles into the Sea of Japan in 1993. A middle-level working group of Japanese and American defense planners has met nine times to discuss regional threats, deployment timetables and various types of land- and sea-based antiballistic weaponry.

Japan has been wary of the project ever since the Clinton Administration first broached the idea in October 1993. But American hopes were raised after Japan allocated \$2.7 million in its 1996 budget to study building an antimissile system, 20 times what Tokyo spent the year before on the project. American officials were also encouraged when President Clinton and Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto met in Tokyo last April and promised to broaden their military alliance.

A Japanese Foreign Ministry official said the group would continue meeting until the summer, after which time Tokyo would decide what role to play. "At this moment, we have not made any decision and we cannot predict or prejudice any result or conclusion," he said.

But after a meeting in Tokyo last weekend, senior American officials have concluded that Japan is simply not ready to pursue a project that could cost them as much as \$10 billion a year—more than one-fourth of Japan's current \$35 billion military budget—for four or five years. They said the project has a few powerful supporters in Japan's military establishment, but is opposed by many in the Foreign Ministry and by most of the nation's top economic officials.

"Japan is financially constrained, and they don't have the strategic consensus," said a senior Pentagon official involved in making Japan policy. "Japan is most nervous about China, even through they talk about North Korea. A decision to build this would be perceived by the Chinese to be a blatant act. So I'm sure Japan will not go down this line."

Another Administration official, who noted that China has repeatedly warned Japan that it would view deployment of an antimissile system as a hostile act, added, "This is not something that will happen anytime soon."

The Chinese have argued that a Japanese antimissile program would undermine regional arms-control efforts.

Given the pacifist strain that runs through the Japanese electorate, American officials said, Prime Minister Hashimoto and other members of the political elite cannot be expected to commit themselves to any such program without a thorough debate in Parliament. And there is no sign, they said, that Parliament will take up the issue any time soon.

The Pentagon has proposed at least four antimissile options for deployment by 2004, including enhanced Patriot surface-to-air missiles designed to intercept low-altitude missiles and Thaad antiballistic systems for high-altitude interceptions. American officials have also discussed the possibility of sharing with Japan early-warning data from satellites that are now being developed to detect infrared radiation at the time of a launching.

"Our interest is that we would like to see American troops in Japan protected from ballistic missile attacks," said Joseph Nye, a former Assistant Secretary of Defense, who is dean of the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. "But Japan is very sensitive to the political repercussions in China and North Korea."

Many American military experts still say Japan will eventually join the project, but perhaps not for another five years or more.

"These things take time," said John M. Deutch, the Director of Central Intelligence, who pushed for a joint project when he served as a senior Defense Department official in the early 1990's. "Inevitably, the Japanese Government will see that it needs to be concerned with antimissile defense."

Despite the setback, Administration officials say they are committed to building or upgrading regional antimissile systems to protect American troops in all potentially hazardous regions, including Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and South Korea. The Administration's proposed \$265 billion military budget for 1998 calls for a 3 percent cut in spending from the 1997 budget, but it adds \$320 million for antimissile systems.

"The goal is to develop, procure and deploy systems that can protect forward-deployed U.S. forces, as well as allied and friendly nations, from theater-range ballistic missiles," Secretary of Defense William S. Cohen said this week while testifying on the budget before Congress. "These programs are structured to proceed at the fastest pace that technology will allow."

New York Times, February 14:

Japan has all but decided against taking part in an antimissile defense project with the United States for fear of offending China and overspending scarce military resources.

Needless to say, the scarce military resources they are afraid of overspending are theirs. They are quite willing to spend ours.

As the article points out this "could swell United States military budgets for Asia because the United States would have to bear the cost of such a system alone."

And where is this system going to go if the Japanese do not want to pay for it? Then we are going to have to pay for it in Japan. This is a system that we are going to install in Japan to protect American soldiers that are in Japan, in part to protect Japan from North Korea or China, but the Japanese do not want to offend North Korea or China; they want us to be over there to offend North Korea and China presumably, and they do not want to spend their money because they have budget problems.

The worst of it is the article then concludes in relevant part: "Administration officials say a decision by Tokyo not to take part would not hurt its relations with Washington."

Well, I have to say that maybe it does not hurt relations with the administration, but the administration is wrong to say so. The notion that the American taxpayer, and we are going to balance the budget, and we are going to be making cuts in education and environment and housing and health care and very important domestic programs so that we can spend billions of dollars to build an antimissile system in Japan to protect American troops that are in Japan to help Japan, and the Japanese tell us they cannot afford to do it because they do not have enough money; they have got budget problems.

We have got to put an end to the oneness and subsidy of the Japanese nation.

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

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

In light of what the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. FRANK] has just said, I would remind my colleagues that American military might, 100,000 personnel, a little bit less than that at the moment, are in the Asia-Pacific region because of our national interests. If we maintain a security balance in the region, it is far less likely that American troops will ever have to be wounded and die in that part of the world in the future.

Make no mistake about it. Our forces are located in Okinawa and elsewhere because it is in our national interests to have them there.

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of the resolution sponsored by my colleague, Mr. HAMILTON. I commend him for his efforts to draw attention to the significance of the Asia-Pacific region.

This resolution highlights the unique and important relationship between the United States and Japan. It also addresses the important role that the people of Okinawa have played in ensuring peace and stability in the region.

The significance of the Asia-Pacific region will continue to grow in the 21st century. As we continue to review the defense treaty between the United States and Japan, it is important that the people of Japan know that we are committed to the long-term stability of the region. The United States-Japan relationship remains the cornerstone of our engagement in the region.

As a nation, we must continue to strengthen our ties with Japan. In Hawaii, the stability of our economy is tied to the stability of the region and largely to Japan. The people of Hawaii have developed broadbased ties with Japan, to include a strong relationship with the Prefecture of Okinawa.

As a result of these ties, the people of Hawaii continue to be concerned about the land issues being addressed in Okinawa with regard to basing of United States military forces. Unfortunately, it took the rape of a 12-year-old school girl in 1995 to turn the attention of the world toward the issues raised in Okinawa with respect to their land use concerns.

Today, we are making steady progress on these very sensitive issues which need to be resolved between the Okinawa Prefecture and the Government of Japan.

It is no exaggeration to say that Okinawa's people view their homeland as occupied territory. They see the overwhelming presence of United States military forces there as confirmation and they remain the poorest prefecture in Japan.

Some 50 years after the end of World War II in the Pacific, Okinawa is the only unresolved residual issue of any significance between Japan and the United States. The people of Okinawa are the least culpable of all those thrust into World War II. For centuries past, they have been known in the region for promoting peace. They are friendly to the interests and people of the United States. Yet they bear the most burden generations later.

They have given up a great deal in terms of economic prosperity and deserve to be recognized for their contributions toward ensuring the treaty's implementation and regional peace and security.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Nebraska [Mr. BEREUTER] that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H.Res. 68), as amended.

The question was taken.

Ms. SANCHEZ. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 5 of rule I and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on the resolution just considered and also on House Concurrent Resolution 16.

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

There was no objection.

HONG KONG REVERSION ACT

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 750) to support the autonomous governance of Hong Kong after its reversion to the People's Republic of China, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 750

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Hong Kong Reversion Act".

SEC. 2. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE.

The purpose of this Act is to support the autonomous governance of Hong Kong and the future well-being of the Hong Kong people by ensuring the continuity of United States laws with respect to Hong Kong after

its reversion to the People's Republic of China on July 1, 1997, and to outline circumstances under which the President of the United States could modify the application of United States laws with respect to Hong Kong if the People's Republic of China fails to honor its commitment to give the Special Administrative Region of Hong Kong a high degree of autonomy.

SEC. 3. FINDINGS.

The Congress makes the following findings:

(1) The Joint Declaration of the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Government of the People's Republic of China on the Question of Hong Kong, done at Beijing on December 19, 1984, is a binding international agreement which sets forth the commitments made by both governments on the reversion of Hong Kong to the People's Republic of China on July 1, 1997.

(2) The People's Republic of China in the Joint Declaration pledges, among other things, that "the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region will enjoy a high degree of autonomy, except in foreign and defence affairs. . . ." that basic human rights and freedoms "will be ensured by law. . . ." and that "[t]he legislature of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region shall be constituted by elections."

(3) Senior government officials of the People's Republic of China have repeatedly assured a smooth transfer of Hong Kong to Chinese sovereignty, a successful implementation of the "one country, two systems" policy, long-term prosperity for Hong Kong, and continued respect for the basic rights of the Hong Kong people.

(4) Despite general assertions guaranteeing the autonomous governance of Hong Kong, several official acts and statements by senior officials of the Government of the People's Republic of China reflect an attempt to infringe upon the current and future levels of autonomy in Hong Kong. These acts or statements include, but are not limited to—

(A) initial proposals, which were later withdrawn, by officials of the Government of the People's Republic of China to obtain confidential files on civil servants of the Hong Kong Government or require such civil servants to take "loyalty oaths";

(B) the decision of the Government of the People's Republic of China to dissolve the democratically elected Legislative Council on July 1, 1997, and the appointment of a provisional legislature in December of 1996;

(C) the delineation by officials concerning the types of speech and association which will be permitted by the Government of the People's Republic of China after the reversion;

(D) initial warnings, which were later withdrawn, to religious institutions not to hold certain gatherings after the reversion; and

(E) the decision on February 23, 1997, of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress of the People's Republic of China to repeal or amend certain Hong Kong ordinances, including the Bill of Rights Ordinance, the Societies Ordinance of 1992 (relating to freedom of association), and the Public Order Ordinance of 1995 (relating to freedom of assembly).

(5) The reversion of Hong Kong to the People's Republic of China has important implications for both United States national interests and the interests of the Hong Kong people. The United States Government has a responsibility to ensure that United States interests are protected during and after this transition, and it has a profound interest in ensuring that basic and fundamental human rights of the Hong Kong people are also protected.

(6) The United States-Hong Kong Policy Act of 1992 sets forth United States policy concerning Hong Kong's reversion to the People's Republic of China on July 1, 1997, and Hong Kong's special status as a Special Administrative Region of that country. It ensures the continuity of United States laws regarding Hong Kong while establishing a mechanism in section 202 of that Act whereby the President can modify the application of United States laws with respect to Hong Kong if the President "determines that Hong Kong is not sufficiently autonomous to justify treatment under a particular law of the United States, or any provision thereof, different from that accorded the People's Republic of China".

(7) One of the principal purposes of the Congress in enacting the United States Hong Kong Policy Act of 1992 was to maintain Hong Kong's autonomy by ensuring that the United States will continue to treat Hong Kong as a distinct legal entity, separate and apart from the People's Republic of China, for all purposes, in those areas in which the People's Republic of China has agreed that Hong Kong will continue to enjoy a high degree of autonomy, unless the President makes a determination under section 202 of that Act.

(8) Although the United States Government can have an impact on ensuring the future autonomy of the Hong Kong Government and in protecting the well-being of the Hong Kong people, ultimately the future of Hong Kong will be determined by the willingness of the Government of the People's Republic of China to maintain the freedoms now enjoyed by the people of Hong Kong and to rely on the people of Hong Kong to govern themselves.

SEC. 4. CONGRESSIONAL DECLARATIONS.

The Congress makes the following declarations:

(1) Recognizing that the United States Government and the Hong Kong Government have long enjoyed a close and beneficial working relationship, for example between the United States Customs Service, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Immigration and Naturalization Service, the Secret Service, and their corresponding agencies of the Hong Kong Government, the United States urges the two governments to continue their effective cooperation.

(2) Recognizing that the preservation of Hong Kong's autonomous customs territory has important security and commercial implications for the United States and the people of Hong Kong, the United States calls upon the People's Republic of China to fully respect the autonomy of the Hong Kong customs territory.

(3) Recognizing that Hong Kong has historically been an important port of call for United States naval vessels, the United States urges the Government of the People's Republic of China to consider in a timely and routine manner United States requests for port calls at Hong Kong.

(4) Recognizing that Hong Kong enjoys a robust and professional free press with important guarantees on the freedom of information, the United States declares that a free press and access to information are fundamentally important to the economic and commercial success of Hong Kong and calls upon the Government of the People's Republic of China to fully respect these essential rights of the Hong Kong people.

(5) Recognizing that the first fully democratic elections of a legislature in Hong Kong took place in 1995, following nearly 150 years of colonial rule, the United States recognizes that the Joint Declaration of 1984 requires that the Special Administrative Region legislature "shall be constituted by