

The national nursing shortage reached crisis level in 1999 and experts are predicting that by 2008, the nation will be short 450,000 nurses. This shortage of nurses has dramatic detrimental repercussions for American citizens. When there are too few nurses at bedsides, patients are significantly more likely to suffer serious complications, according to one study published recently in the *New England Journal of Medicine*.

So far, my home state of Michigan has fared better than many other states against the national nursing shortage because so many Canadian nurses have crossed the Ambassador Bridge and Detroit-Windsor Tunnel for U.S. nursing jobs. Metro Detroit hospitals import 15 to 20 percent of their nursing staff from Canada. A study by the University of Detroit-Mercy, however, reports that by 2008, Michigan will need 1.4 million registered nurses, but only 656,000 will be available.

The bill before us today seeks to rectify these problems and reverse their implications. The Nurse Reinvestment Act establishes nurse scholarships to provide educational scholarships in exchange for commitment to serve in a public or private non-profit health facility determined to have a critical shortage of nurses. H.R. 3487 further establishes nurse retention and patient safety enhancement grants to assist health care facilities to retain nurses and improve patient care delivery through more collaboration between nurses and other health care professionals.

H.R. 3487 establishes comprehensive geriatric training grants for nurses, it establishes faculty loan cancellation programs to allow nurses full-time study and rapid completion of advanced degree studies, and it establishes a career ladder grant program to assist individuals in the nursing workforce to obtain more education. Finally, the Nurse Reinvestment Act will help us recruit more nurses through public service announcements and other educational programs. These will inform the public about nursing as a profession and career and will tell potential nurses about the resources available to them if they choose to enter this wonderful profession.

I salute the efforts of Representative CAPPS and my other colleagues that have brought us this far and I urge my colleagues to join me in support of this bill.

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GRUCCI). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BILIRAKIS) that the House suspend the rules and concur in the Senate amendment to the bill, H.R. 3487.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the Senate amendment was concurred in.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

EXPRESSING SENSE OF CONGRESS THAT CHINA SHOULD CEASE PERSECUTION OF FALUN GONG PRACTITIONERS

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to

the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 188) expressing the sense of Congress that the Government of the People's Republic of China should cease its persecution of Falun Gong practitioners, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 188

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That it is the sense of Congress that—

(1) the Government of the People's Republic of China should cease its persecution of Falun Gong practitioners, and its representatives in the United States should cease their harassment of citizens and residents of the United States who practice Falun Gong and cease their attempts to put pressure on officials of State and local governments in the United States to refuse or withdraw support for the Falun Gong and its practitioners;

(2) the United States Government should use every appropriate public and private forum to urge the Government of the People's Republic of China—

(A) to release from detention all Falun Gong practitioners and put an end to the practices of torture and other cruel, inhumane, and degrading treatment against them and other prisoners of conscience; and

(B) to abide by the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by allowing Falun Gong practitioners to pursue their personal beliefs; and

(3) the United States Government should investigate allegations of illegal activities in the United States of the Government of the People's Republic of China and its representatives and agents, including allegations of unlawful harassment of United States citizens and residents who practice Falun Gong and of officials of State and local governments in the United States who support Falun Gong, and should take appropriate action, including but not limited to enforcement of the immigration laws, against any such representatives or agents who engage in such illegal activities.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) and the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATSON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN).

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the resolution under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Florida?

There was no objection.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

In the past 3 years there has been a systematic escalation of horrific attacks launched by Chinese authorities against Falun Gong practitioners. The deplorable action by the Chinese authorities has included the brutal torture of followers, particularly women, who have been arrested, gang-raped and brutally beaten.

In one instance, a 19-year-old woman who was arrested in Tiananmen Square

died 13 days later while still in police custody. Her face and lips were severely swollen, both ears were plugged with blood-soaked cotton, and her nose had collapsed as a result of repeated beatings.

Another woman and her 8-month-old son were tortured to death while in police custody. Her neck and knuckle bones were broken, and her skull was sunken in. Her infant son's ankles had deep bruises from being hung upside down by handcuffs. There were bruises on the baby's head and blood in his nose.

Since the crackdown officially began on July 21, 1999, many Falun Gong followers have been suspended or expelled from school. They have been demoted or dismissed from their employment. They have been held in prison. They have been sent to labor camps and psychiatric hospitals, all because they chose to live by the strength of their convictions and refused to renounce their religious beliefs.

Thus, as a human being and a refugee of another Communist regime who oppresses its people and also has a policy of intolerance, I was compelled to act. I filed House Concurrent Resolution 188, which is supported by over 100 of our colleagues in this House. This resolution calls on the Chinese leadership to stop its persecution of Falun Gong practitioners. It further directs the agencies of our United States Government to use every appropriate public and private forum to press the Chinese authorities to release all Falun Gong religious prisoners and to immediately stop the use of torture against the Falun Gong and other prisoners of conscience.

Since the resolution was passed by our Committee on International Relations last July, this situation for the Falun Gong has worsened, and the determination of the PRC to suppress the Falun Gong at all costs has become increasingly evident. Secret documents issued by the PRC and unveiled by human rights organizations in May of this year underscored that Falun Gong practitioners and instigators should be cracked down to a greater degree, and this is their exact quote, "As soon as they are discovered, they should first be arrested and then the formalities be dealt with."

The PRC's persecution of the Falun Gong in China constitutes the most deplorable and inhumane behavior. Disturbingly, these practices are now being employed in the United States against the Falun Gong. Falun Gong practitioners here in the United States are the victims of death threats, of car bombs, of vandalism against their homes, of cyber attacks and harassment.

Given the increased evidence linking Chinese officials to this wave of persecution, Mr. Speaker, it is imperative that we in the United States act swiftly and decisively to address this serious matter. We must send a clear message to the PRC that such behavior

will not be tolerated in this country and that violators will be held accountable for their actions, and that is what the manager's amendment seeks to accomplish.

In addition to technical changes, the manager's amendment includes two substantive changes to the bill introduced. The new whereas clause underscores the victimization of U.S. citizens and permanent residents who are subjected to arbitrary detention, imprisonment and torture by the PRC, and the new resolve clause calls on the United States Government to investigate reports of persecution of American citizens and residents by PRC officials and agents in the U.S.

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It calls on the U.S. Government to investigate harassment of U.S. State and local officials in an attempt to intimidate the State and local officials into withdrawing support for the Falun Gong; and it further calls on the United States Government to take appropriate action to address this illegal and unacceptable behavior.

Mr. Speaker, it has been said that the only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men and women to do nothing. Therefore, I call on my colleagues to render their support to the Falun Gong and other victims of oppression in China, and to vote for the manager's amendment to House Concurrent Resolution 188.

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

Ms. WATSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume, and I rise in strong support of this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN), the distinguished Chair of the House Subcommittee on International Operations and Human Rights, for bringing this important resolution to the floor.

Mr. Speaker, since the Chinese Government launched its brutal campaign against Falun Gong practitioners over 3 years ago, the U.S. Congress has been joined by human rights' groups and the State Department in condemning this campaign of terror and intimidation. I have been visited at my district office by the distinguished Chinese ambassador who feels that the Falun Gong is a threat to the orderly process of government in China. I had questions at the time that they came; but I listened diplomatically, I responded in a very diplomatic way, but I disagreed.

Unfortunately, these calls for fair and decent treatment of the Falun Gong has fallen on deaf ears in Beijing. Since 1999, over 250 Falun Gong practitioners have been killed by the Chinese Government. Many of those killed refused to break their links to the Falun Gong and have paid the ultimate price as a result. Thousands more Falun Gong adherents arrested in cities and villages throughout China have been subjected to brutal mistreatment, rape,

and torture by their jailers. As we speak today, thousands of Chinese citizens remain behind bars or locked away in mental hospitals because they refuse to break from the Falun Gong.

Mr. Speaker, it is hard to fathom the reasons for the Chinese Government's decision to declare Falun Gong an evil cult and to launch a brutal crackdown on its adherents. And maybe there is good reason. However, as I can see it, Falun Gong's only apparent crime is its ability to organize and attract followers in a country in which the government wishes to have a monopoly on organization and ideology.

Prior to the Chinese Government's edict of July 21, 1999, to smash the Falun Gong, its adherents organized the largest peaceful public demonstration in China since the democracy movement in 1989. These peaceful protests have continued to today, despite the repression. We often see a few lone Falun Gong practitioners on the nightly news, bravely unfurling banners in Tiananmen Square, only to be hauled off into police vans a few seconds later.

To counteract these brave acts, the Chinese Government has embarked on an intense media campaign both in China and abroad to defame Falun Gong as a cult, thereby designating Falun Gong for particularly harsh treatment under the PRC's anticult agenda. Falun Gong supporters, largely silent and intimidated in China, have sought legal refuge abroad and in any place they can from these human rights' violations. There have been numerous civil complaints filed in U.S. Federal courts for the violations of the Torture Victim Protection Act, the Alien Tort Claims Act, and other crimes against humanity. Lawsuits have also been filed claiming that PRC embassies and consulates have been responsible for harassment here in the United States.

The Congressional Human Rights Caucus recently heard testimony from local government officials, including some from my own home State of California, that they have been subject to pressure from Chinese diplomats to renounce proclamations of support for Falun Gong by local city councils. I, myself, as I said, have been pressured. Mr. Speaker, it is important that the United States Congress strongly condemn such outrageous behavior and stand with local officials in the United States who wish to speak out for human rights in China.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all my colleagues to support this resolution.

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRABACHER).

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Mr. Speaker, it is a great honor to join with my colleagues tonight on a matter of principle. And my colleague who just spoke certainly has spoken for all of us in the points that she has made, and I hope

that the words that I am going to utter now also maintain what one would say is bipartisan. But it is not actually a bipartisan spirit; it is an American spirit. It has nothing to do with politics and nothing to do with anything but a belief in human beings and a belief that we care and a demonstration that we care about people.

Mr. Speaker, the Falun Gong, if anyone has ever met anybody in the Falun Gong, they know how easy it is to really care about these people, because they have such wonderful hearts. Here we have people who practice meditation and yoga, and they have committed themselves to treating other people with kindness and trying to be honest. For that, they have made themselves a target of one of the most brutal regimes on this planet.

How could anyone do anything other than sympathize with people like the Falun Gong? They are so demonstrative, and they are so exemplary of the oppressed people of the world. Not all oppressed people in the world have such good hearts and are kind and practice yoga and meditation, but they are all oppressed. And the fact that we have a regime that can be so brutal with these pacifists indicates just how immoral and horrifying the Communist regime in Beijing actually is.

As we have heard, tens of thousands of these pacifistic people, these spiritual people, have been arrested. Thousands of them have been tortured. Hundreds have died in captivity. Let us think about it: hundreds of these people, people with good souls, kind-hearted people who are dedicated pacifists have died in captivity, thousands have been tortured; and tens of thousands have been thrown into jail.

This is not, however, unique for Communist China. Let us remember what has been going on in Tibet for these last few decades. In fact, one of the Dalai Lama's religious followers was just let out, I think after 19 years in prison. Again, tens of thousands of people in Tibet have been thrown into prison and tortured, if not hundreds of thousands. These are horrendous crimes against civilization that have been committed against the people of Tibet, like the Falun Gong.

And how about Christian churches in China? The People's Republic of China says if you do not register, if you are a religious organization, you must register and let us know exactly the names of everyone involved in your organization. Sounds like what the Nazis did to the Jews prior to World War II. And guess what? If you refuse to register, then those people, in what they call underground churches, are rounded up and they too are put into the laogai prison system along with the Tibetans, along with the Falun Gong representatives.

And what happens in the laogai prison system? What happens in the laogai prison system is that people are used as slave labor, and we end up having products sent to the United States

that, oh yes, we can be guaranteed that none of them come from that prison camp; but what we cannot be guaranteed of is that the parts that are made in the laogai prison system do not end up in the factories that make the products that give us such a great deal at the supermarket and at the Wal-Mart stores throughout our country.

No. What has happened, unfortunately, while all this repression and bloodshed and brutality, and I might add a massive build up in their military has been going on, America has been conducting business as usual with the Communist regime in Beijing. Business as usual. And that is the United States Congress has passed time and time again bills providing Most Favored Nation Status, or as they call it, normal trade relations, for the same Communist China that is committing these violent crimes, these ugly crimes against humanity.

I do not think we should have business as usual with any thug regime, whether it be Fidel Castro, which our colleague, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN), knows the brutality of that regime firsthand, or whether it be Communist China or whether it be Kazakhstan, which I read in the paper today that we have developed a close relationship with the gangster thug that runs that country. Let us not have business as usual with countries that are run by gangsters.

Yes, let us have free trade, but let us have free trade between free people. What happens instead, what controls the agenda here in our relationships with these regimes around the world? Instead, it is our big business community, with their dreams of huge profits in dealing with someone who has a monopoly control of a country, like these gangster regimes have; cutting one deal, and thus they can have all the profit they want because they have no labor problems and they have no competition.

No, that dream is not the dream of the American people. The American people's dreams come on July 4, when we talk about individual rights being granted by God to all of God's children throughout the world. We, as free people, should be siding with the oppressed people of the world and not those gangster regimes that stand for everything that America is supposed to be against. But, of course, our big businessmen are over there making a huge profit.

They are making a big profit by setting up companies over there, I might add, manufacturing units. What is ironic about all of this is that I talked to a big business company the other day, a pharmaceutical industry; and I said, by the way, I remember when you built your plant over in China 10 years ago. How are you doing over there? And he said, well, we are not doing too good; but we are not losing as much money as the rest of those people who invested over there.

The irony of this is that we have big business, with their dreams of huge

profits, directing our policy, while they themselves are getting taken to the cleaners for investing in a regime that has no respect for the rule of law. And they also know that without the IMF loan guarantees and subsidies that we provide them by granting Most Favored Nation Status, without that they would not have invested over there in the first place. Now we see a Frankenstein monster that has been created by the actions of our own government, by kowtowing to business interests that are being totally unrealistic about the threat of Communist China and a business community that has no respect for our traditions of liberty and justice.

Unfortunately, this administration, as I read today, to top it all off, as we are talking about the Falun Gong, this administration is considering closer military ties to the People's Republic of China. What a disgrace that is. When we talk about bipartisanship here in Congress, let us note that I attacked the last administration for trying to do that. Not trying to, but implementing a policy of closer military ties, and I cannot stand silently while this administration goes down that same path.

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Mr. Speaker, America should side with those in China who long for freedom. We should side with the good-hearted people of China who want to have yoga and meditation and treat people kindly. Those are our allies, not those who carry guns and building the weapons systems, and putting their boots in the face of their fellow Chinese.

We need to let the people of the world know that the United States is not the friend of totalitarian regimes, of gangsters who beat people up and slaughter them and refuse to allow the people of their country to control their destiny through the ballot box. Many people of the world think that is what they think the United States is all about, because that is what they see in their own country. Our only hope is that the young people of China, Burma, Kazakhstan or Cuba, that they understand that we are on their side and that the United States of America is a country that believes in treating people decently, and those people who are treating them in such a harsh manner and destroying their families and torturing them, that has nothing to do with the United States of America. When they see our flag, they should think this is not for repression. Those people who see our flag should think, they are on our side.

Mr. Speaker, let us pass this resolution siding with the Falun Gong, and help those who are suffering so much in China and throughout the world. We should let them know that our world stands for freedom and liberty and justice, and that we have made mistakes. We have not gone so far and it is not past time for us to reclaim our proper role in this world, which is the role of the champion of the oppressed and the hope for all mankind.

We can make it real when we talk about the Falun Gong and the oppression in Tibet, the repression in Cuba and Kazakhstan and elsewhere, by making sure that the business community does not dictate to us the short term profit goals as being the goals of the United States of America. Our goals are much, much higher than that. Our goals are a united humanity, united behind the principles that were laid down in 1776.

We fell short of those goals for a long time, but now we must stand together on both sides of the aisle to see that we stand for those higher values.

Ms. WATSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY).

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H. Con. Res. 188, the resolution sponsored by the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN), and I thank the gentlewoman from California (Ms. Watson) for yielding me time to express my concerns regarding the persecution of Falun Gong practitioners by the Chinese government. Three years ago, the Chinese government began its brutal crackdown against Falun Gong practitioners in China. People have been killed, imprisoned, and beaten for expressing their peaceful beliefs, and we know this is absolutely unacceptable.

Across America, many local United States officials have responded by sponsoring resolutions affirming the right of Falun Gong practitioners to enjoy freedom of speech. They have done this in their particular community across America. And much to our outrage, these local officials have been pressured by Chinese officials demanding that they recant their support for Falun Gong practitioners. In a Democratic Nation, the value of free speech and freedom of religion means that this is absolutely unacceptable to us. The gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) touches briefly in this issue in H. Con. Res. 188, and later this week, I will be introducing a resolution which focuses solely on Chinese efforts to interfere with local American officials.

Mr. Speaker, I ask Members to ask themselves how do they feel about the Chinese governments telling the mayors and city councils in their districts who to support, who to allow to demonstrate and speak and, what to do in general? I urge all Members to support H. Con. Res. 188, and to cosponsor my resolution that directly addresses China's attempts to stifle democracy right here in America.

Ms. WATSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE).

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATSON) for yielding me this time, and for her leadership

on this issue, and thank the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) for this legislation, H. Con. Res. 188, and ask my colleagues to support it.

I begin my remarks by asking the question, How long? How long, and when will this persecution end? That is the underlying underpinnings of this resolution. How long can the world stand by when those who are part of the Falun Gong are persecuted and beaten every day in China? It is interesting when we begin to debate issues of human rights as relates to China. There is always a dilemma. China our friend, China our business and trading partner. But I believe it is imperative that the United States looks internally on its own history and assesses times when it needs to be corrected and its treatment of individuals remedied, such as passing the hates crime legislation and civil rights legislation, and to ask our friends as well to address the terrible and violent acts that are going on against those who simply want to be peaceful practitioners, who want to be in peace.

In Houston as I pass the Chinese council office, I have worked with them. I have been able to support issues that they are concerned about. But every time I pass, there are those who are there protesting quietly and silently, but in pain over the treatment of those who practice Falun Gong. They are there every day. They are there so Americans can see that they are in pain and they need help.

This resolution will be both instructive, and it helps to craft America's foreign policy, that we cannot leave our human rights at home. It is imperative that we stand for what we believe in this country's right and as we look at our friends overseas, that we do not step away from our values. It is important to allow those to practice their faith, and to acknowledge that we have the right to free expression.

I realize that China is not governed by our Bill of Rights or our Constitution. I also realize that China has represented over and over again that they are fearful of the Falun Gong because they may be distracting people away from the government policies that China operates under the particular structure of government, the communist system of government, but China wants us to applaud and encourage its participation in the World Trade Organization and to be an equal partner in trade.

China welcomes our university professors and exchange programs. There is one in my own community with the University of Houston, and I applaud those cultural exchanges. But it warrants that we speak loudly about the abuse, and this community of people who simply ask to be left alone to practice their particular beliefs, have not been left alone in peace. Their human rights are violated, have been violated, are being violated, and will continue to be violated.

H. Con. Res. 188 puts on record this body's opposition to this violent treatment. It stands for what we believe in. It crafts and states that we are believers in human rights and that we will seek to promote human rights all over the world, even in place of having a trading partner that does not look askance at us for speaking our values and from our heart.

I applaud the strong people who are part of the Falun Gong and ask them to remain strong so we will be able to answer the question how long. Now is the time to change the ways and the attitudes. We must preserve their dignity and their life. I ask my colleagues to enthusiastically support this resolution; but as I do so, I ask the administration to enthusiastically embrace this legislation and to ask the leaders of the Chinese government to cease and desist, or else suffer penalties that we in America will stand by because we stand by human rights.

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Falun Gong is based on the principles of truthfulness, of compassion and forbearance. It is about spirituality and peace. Yet for this, as we have heard tonight, practitioners are subjected to the most cruel, inhumane and degrading treatment imaginable at the hands of the Chinese authorities. Young or old, male or female, adult or child, the Chinese authorities show no regard for human life, no mercy, and no remorse. And now the PRC is seeking to extend its rein of terror over the Falun Gong to the United States. The persecution of the Falun Gong must end, and it must end now. I ask my colleagues to vote yes on the manager's amendment to H. Con. Res. 188.

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker. I rise in support of this resolution that calls on the People's Republic of China to cease its persecution of Falun Gong practitioners, and I want to thank Rep. Ros-Lehtinen for introducing this legislation.

Falun Gong practitioners in China continue to suffer at the hands of China's officials. The State Department's most recent annual human rights report cited that thousands of organizers and adherents of the banned Falun Gong movement continue to be held in reeducation-through-labor camps or in prison.

The report says that over 200 Falun Gong practitioners died in detention as a result of torture or mistreatment. It is incredible to think that the Chinese Government tortured and killed over 200 Falun Gong practitioners—200 men and women—for practicing their religious belief.

As evidenced by the \$83 billion trade deficit the U.S. has with China, the Chinese government has not been afraid to manufacture more products for sale overseas. The Chinese authorities are not afraid of making money or of selling products, but they seem to fear any organized religion in their country.

According to the Cardinal Kung Foundation, there are at least 12 Roman Catholic bishops

in Chinese prisons under house arrest or in hiding.

Numerous Protestant House Church leaders and worshippers in China have been imprisoned and detained.

Large numbers of Muslims from the Uighur people group in China are in prison because of their faith. Young Muslim Uighur boys and girls are not even allowed to enter a mosque until they are 18-years-old.

The Chinese government has imprisoned hundreds of Tibetan Buddhist monks and nuns because of their faith.

It is time for the state-sponsored and state-led persecution of believers in China to stop. It is time for the innocent to stop suffering and for believers in China to be allowed to worship freely, without fear of imprisonment.

I support this legislation that calls on the people's Republic of China to stop its persecution and urges the U.S. government to use every appropriate forum, public and private, to speak out against these human rights abuses.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to call attention to the persecution of Falun Gong practitioners in China. Falun Gong is based on three principles: Truth, Compassion, and Tolerance. Falun Gong practitioners participate in five simple yet powerful exercises that they believe refines their inner strength by reaching for excellent health and higher spirituality. That is why I am baffled as to why the Chinese Government, which supported the spread of Falun Gong in the early 1990s, is so against such a peaceful and humble religion. I was shocked when I read reports of Falun Gong practitioners being beaten, imprisoned, and even tortured. This abuse is not isolated within the borders of China. There have been recent reports of Falun Gong practitioners in the United States being attacked. These incidents have even affected constituents in my district and these abuses must come to an end across the globe.

It pains me to see innocent people being attacked for their beliefs. As we enter this new century, we have so much opportunity to make this world a better place to live for all and it is our responsibility to work toward that goal. I ask my colleagues to support House Concurrent Resolution 188, which strongly urges the Government of the People's Republic of China to cease its persecution of Falun Gong practitioners because supporting this resolution is supporting the true essence of freedom.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I would like to commend the gentlelady from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) for bringing this important resolution before us today.

China's continued persecution of Falun Gong practitioners for merely practicing their religion is deeply appalling. After 3 years of intense repression marked by propaganda campaigns, beatings, and imprisonment, thousands of Falun Gong practitioners remain in "reeducation-through-labor camps" or in prison without the benefit of formal judicial process. Furthermore, since October 2000, when China's President Jiang Zemin declared that Falun Gong was bent on "overthrowing the Chinese government, and undermining socialism" and vowed to crush the spiritual practice, over 400 Falun Gong practitioners died in detention as a result of torture or mistreatment.

China's suppression of Falun Gong is systematic and thorough. They are seeking to destroy the religion and the practitioners. Just as

the British felt threatened by the peaceful non-violent protests of Mahatma Ghandi, the Chinese regime fears the popular appeal of this movement and views it as a threat to its domination over Chinese society at large.

Accordingly, I urge my colleagues to support H. Con. Res. 188 expressing the sense of Congress that the Government of the People's Republic of China should cease its persecution of Falun Gong practitioners.

If the regime in Beijing wants to take its place among civilized nations, it must end its repression and persecution of the Falun Gong and other religions, and end it now.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. Con. Res. 188, expressing the sense of Congress that the Government of the People's Republic of China should cease its persecution of Falun Gong practitioners. Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, I commend you for introducing this legislation and for the leadership you have shown as Chair of the Subcommittee on International Operations and Human Rights in speaking out against human rights abuses throughout the world.

Members of Congress need to be aware of the brutal suppression of human rights and religious freedoms being carried out by the People's Republic of China. From forced abortion and labor camps, to the imprisonment and sometimes even execution of brave Chinese who dare to stand up for their faith or political beliefs, Jiang Zemin's regime is one of the worst violators of human rights in the world.

While Christians, Tibetan Buddhists, and Muslim Uighurs are all being persecuted for their faith, the suffering of peaceful Falun Gong practitioners has been especially intense. In 1999, China's dictators launched a brutal campaign to completely eradicate Falun Gong from their country through whatever means necessary, claiming that Falun Gong was a threat to "social order" in China. The reason behind this campaign of brutality is clear: by the mid to late 1990s, the number of Falun Gong practitioners began to exceed the number of members of the Communist Party. Like all dictators and totalitarian terror systems, the PRC fears and hates what it cannot control. So it sought to destroy and intimidate those who practice Falun Gong.

Falun Gong is not a religion, per se, but rather more like a philosophy. Based on the principles of Truthfulness, Compassion, and Tolerance, Falun Gong uses a series of five physical and mental exercises to assist its members purify themselves spiritually and peacefully resolve conflicts. Whatever one may say about the merits of their beliefs, the evidence is very clear that Falun Gong practitioners are peaceful individuals who want to be left alone to practice their beliefs as they see fit.

To carry out the task of smashing those who practice Falun Gong, the Beijing dictatorship created "610" offices throughout China to oversee and direct the persecution of Falun Gong through brainwashing, torture, and murder.

The State Department Human Rights Report for 2001 has several pages detailing and documenting the plight of the Falun Gong. We know at least 250 Falun Gong have died as a result of torture thus far. Other estimates place the true body count much higher. Bodies of the tortured victims are often cremated immediately to conceal evidence of torture. The report indicated that Falun Gong adherents sent

to mental health institutions have been administered psychiatric drugs and electric shock treatments by Chinese authorities.

Tens of thousands of Falun Gong practitioners are held in labor camps, prisons, and mental hospitals, where they are forced to endure torture brainwashing sessions. Chinese-American permanent residents are not spared in the PRC's disgusting torture and brainwashing campaign.

One American permanent resident, Ms. Teng Chunyan, was arrested in May 2000 and sent to prison for three years solely on account of her beliefs. She was sent to Beijing "re-education center" in June 2000. The PRC—in a move that most American POWs from Korea and Vietnam would immediately see through and recognize—put Ms. Teng on public display on November 20, 2001 after its "re-education" center had thoroughly broken and brainwashed this poor woman.

In the macabre display gleefully published by the Chinese embassy—which I will include for the public record—Ms. Teng disavowed her affiliation to the Falun Gong and stated that "I have never been abused since my detention and have not seen any sign of beating or admonishment here. Police in the center are very polite and kind. . . . The re-education center is more comfortable than my home and I am gaining weight here." American POWs who endured horrible torture at the hands of Communists would recognize these kinds of forced statements immediately as a pathetic farce. We might never know what kinds of terrible things were done to Ms. Teng and her family to get her to make these kinds of statements under duress. This is just one example of how China uses its state controlled media to inundate the public with anti-Falun Gong propaganda.

As my colleagues know, a sizable number of Falun Gong practitioners reside here in the United States. They attempt to raise awareness about the horrors their fellow believers are subject to through meeting with government officials and through holding peaceful protests. Just this past weekend Falun Gong members gathered on the Mall to pass out literature and inform Americans of the great suffering those in their faith are enduring. When Jiang Zemin and other state leaders responsible for this purge are visiting foreign countries, Falun Gong members travel overseas to protest and raise awareness of the brutal persecution.

In response, China's persecution against the Falun Gong has moved outside of China's own borders. A few weeks ago, Falun Gong practitioners—U.S. citizens—were denied visas to travel to Iceland during Jiang Zemin's visit to that country. An Icelandic newspaper known as "The Morgunblad" wrote that it "has reliable sources that Chinese authorities have demanded from the Icelanders that Falun Gong members not be in the country during the visit." They even reportedly demanded that no Falun Gong protesters be seen from the Saga Hotel where Jiang Zemin was staying.

Persecution of Falun Gong in China is horrific enough itself. The fact that China is now exporting its repression to weaker foreign nations under the guise of "safety" and "public order" is even worse. We must not forget that Iceland has been a strong democratic ally of the United States and a founding member of NATO. The fact that peaceful American citi-

zens attempting to travel to a fellow NATO nation were detained and harassed, had their names placed on an Icelandic government "blacklist" and their tickets revoked, presumably at the behest of thugs in Beijing, is an outrage and must not be tolerated. The cancer of China's repression is spreading all over the world. The PRC is not content to beat and torture and silence those inside its own borders. Now it is seeking to bully other nations into doing its bidding. When will this country wake up and stand up to this kind of nonsense?

I call upon all members of this body to support H. Con. Res. 188. I call on the administration to step up its efforts to speak up for the Falun Gong and out against the actions of the Chinese government immediately.

TENG CHUNYAN: I AM PLEASED TO SHAKE OFF THE SPIRITUAL SHACKLE OF THE FALUN GONG CULT (11/20/01)

"I hope that my experience help transform those obsessed Falun Gong followers," said Teng Chunyan on November 20 surrounded by media at a Beijing-based re-education center. With her short hair neatly combed and eyebrows noticeably trimmed, the confident 38-year-old woman looked at least ten years younger than her age.

"The reeducation center is more comfortable than my home and I am gaining weight here," said Teng smiling shyly. The beaming Teng, who has received systematic training in Chinese herbal medicine, cannot be compared with the Falun Gong devotee she once was.

Teng came to China from the U.S. many times between February and May of last year to collect information on the Chinese Government's handling of Falun Gong issues for Beijing branches of foreign news agencies and introduced Falun Gong followers to foreign reporters. Teng was born in Harbin, capital of northeast China's Heilongjiang Province and went to the United States in 1990. She was detained by police when she tried to enter China via the Luohu Port in Shenzhen in May 2000 and was sentenced to a 3-year term of imprisonment according to Chinese law.

Her belief in the Falun Gong cult began to waver after she was sent to a Beijing-based re-education center in June 2000. Recalling her former devotion to Falun Gong, Teng said that persuasion from family members and friends could not lessen her blind enthusiasm for the cult. "I completely rejected contacts with the outside world and only believed in the Falun Gong cult and its propaganda which is flooded on the cult web site," Teng said.

Teng started to doubt the credibility and motives of the cult web site when she found that her re-education center roommate Yao Jie, who was reported dead by the web site because of her conversion, was actually living a normal life. "What helped to change your belief in Falun Gong?" asked a reporter. "Truth can never be concealed for long. I saw with my own eyes police patiently helping educate Falun Gong followers and trying their best to save lives of believers who tried to commit suicide," said Teng.

Teng has also talked with many former Falun Gong followers and was deeply impressed with their experiences. "My personal experiences made me reconsider the so-called facts published by the cult and I completely changed my mind," said Teng. When asked about her conversion process, Teng said: "true belief conversion can never be forced." "I am pleased to shake off the spiritual shackle of the Falun Gong cult and return to a normal life."

Teng Chunyan is now an active member of the re-education center dancing troupe and

is busy preparing for an upcoming art performance organized by the center. "I have never been abused since my detention and have not seen any sign of beating or admonishment here. Police in the center are very polite and kind," said Teng.

Jin Hua, vice director of the re-education center, said that police in the center are required to treat every Falun Gong follower in the center equally, and discrimination is absolutely forbidden. Jin said: "We encourage Falun Gong followers to communicate with their family members. 'They can write to or call their family members as well as meet with relatives once a month.'"

The 75-year-old father of Teng Chunyan came from Heilongjiang Province last week to visit her and was relieved to see his daughter regaining energy and vigor. "I am happy now," Teng said. "Justice will finally defeat evil."

STATEMENT OF TRACY ZHAO FALUN GONG PRACTITIONER AND FORMER DETAINEE IN CHINA MARCH 2, 2000

HEARING ON "HUMAN RIGHTS IN CHINA AND TIBET"

Good afternoon everyone. I would like to thank the members of this committee for the opportunity to speak at this hearing today. I hope that my testimony will help shed some light on what is happening right now in China regarding the suppression of Falun Gong and the persecution of innocent Chinese citizens.

Before I begin, I would like to briefly introduce myself. My name is Tracy Zhao. I was born and raised in Beijing, China. Currently, I am an American citizen residing in Queens, New York. I am 30 years old and work as a flight attendant. I am also a Falun Gong practitioner.

Falun Gong, also known as Falun Dafa, is a spiritual practice based on ancient Chinese principles. It has five sets of traditional exercises and teaches practitioners to follow the universal virtues of "Truth, Compassion, and Tolerance." It has attracted millions of people all over the world, because of the positive effects it has on people's overall health and well-being.

In early February of this year, I traveled to Beijing with a number of other practitioners. I was interested to see what it was like for Falun Gong practitioners in China. I had heard stories through news reports and friends, but I wanted to get a first-hand look at what was really going on. I had no intention of participating in any protests, nor was I there to cause trouble. I simply wished to observe the situation first-hand.

Shortly before midnight on February 4th, which was the night before the Chinese New Year, I arrived at Tiananmen Square. I saw many policemen beating and kicking Falun Dafa practitioners, and dragging them into police vans. Many policemen were without coats and were sweating profusely from beating people. The practitioners were trying to peacefully practice their meditative exercises as a way to appeal to the government to allow them their constitutional right to freedom of belief, assembly, and speech.

I quickly took out a camera to take a picture. The flash caught the attention of the police and three of them immediately pushed me into the police van without asking me any questions. We were all taken to the nearby police station. There were hundreds of practitioners being held there. Some were bleeding in the face; others had bruises or black eyes. There were children in detention, too.

These Falun Gong practitioners had not committed any criminal acts but had only been exercising their constitutional rights. The Chinese government claims it is a coun-

try ruled by law, but it often violates its own laws. In the early hours of February 5th, around 1,200 practitioners, including myself, were taken to the Dong Cheng detention center on the outskirts of Beijing. For 24 hours there was no water or heat. Each of us received only two pieces of Chinese bread for food. And we were not allowed to use the bathroom.

After 24 hours, the police questioned me and I told them I was an American citizen. They did not believe me and sent me to a prison cell. There were 15 other people there. Six of them were practitioners and they told me they had been secretly tried and had been sentenced for up to a year. All they had done was go to the government office of appeals to offer their personal testimony to the government on how Falun Gong had improved their health and made them better people. They were arrested the moment they got there.

The Premier of China has recently urged the Government Offices of Appeals to improve their operating procedures, so that the offices would become better places for citizens to voice their concerns without fear of retribution. But for Falun Gong practitioners, walking into these offices is more like walking directly into prison.

Every practitioner in my cell had been abused at some point by the prison guards and policemen. In prison, we were given two meals a day, and it was always two pieces of Chinese bread with cabbage soup. At night all of us slept on one big wooden platform, with one blanket for two people and no pillows. It was very crowded. In the entire time I was there, we weren't allowed to take any showers. None of the practitioners were allowed any contact with the outside, nor were family or relatives allowed to visit. And the families usually also faced huge fines.

In one instance a female practitioner was trying to do the meditative exercises. But each time she started, a prison guard kicked her to the ground. This scene repeated itself many times until she had been kicked into a corner. The guard finally left her alone, and she finished her exercises.

While I was in prison, the police interrogated me and threatened that if I didn't answer all their questions I would be kept in prison forever. Finally, with the assistance of the U.S. Embassy and reports made by the international media, I was released and deported on February 12th, the eighth day of my detainment. I was not allowed to make any contact with anyone the entire time.

Since the ban on Falun Gong was announced on July 20th, 1999, the brutality with which this "ban" has been enforced has continued to escalate. It is reported that more than 5,000 practitioners, including the elderly, pregnant women, and young children have been sent to labor camps without proper legal procedures—without trial, legal representation, or due process.

In addition, more than 300 practitioners have been tried in secret and jailed with sentences of up to 18 years. In November, an internal government report stated that in Beijing alone, more than 35,000 practitioners have been detained, with many being under extremely inhumane conditions. So far, 11 people are known to have died while in police custody, while countless others remain unaccounted for.

Unfortunately, as I mentioned before, the scope and severity of this persecution continues to escalate. For example, in January of this year the Hong Kong-based Information Center of Human Rights and Democratic Movement in China discovered that some Falun Gong practitioners were now being held in mental hospitals where they were being injected with various drugs and were subject to other tortures. This situation has been reported in the world news by

CNN, AP, and Agency France Press, to name a few. All this is ironic in light of the fact that The People's Daily, the state-owned paper, published a report just last May stating that Falun Gong is a 'beneficial practice' with no political motives that can help people improve their health. This was prior to the current crackdown.

Other television programs drew similar conclusions back then as well. Despite the overwhelming brutality currently happening in China, I would like to make it clear that Falun Gong practitioners are not against the Chinese government, nor do they seek any particular political change or reform. What they ask is that they regain the basic human rights to freedom of assembly and freedom of belief, which are protected under China's own constitution as well as under the UN Declaration of Human Rights that China has signed.

In short, we seek your help to open a dialogue with the Chinese government so as to peacefully resolve this crisis. On behalf of tens of millions of Falun Gong practitioners around the world, we want to thank Congressman Chris Smith for introducing House Resolution 218 that condemns China's brutal persecution of Falun Gong practitioners in China. This House Resolution 218 was unanimously passed on November 18, 1999. I would like to personally thank the United States government for the many steps it has taken thus far to encourage the Chinese government to end this persecution, and I hope you will continue to support a peaceful resolution. Thank you.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PLATTS). The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 188, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of those present have voted in the affirmative.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

PERIODIC REPORT ON THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY WITH RESPECT TO SIERRA LEONE AND LIBERIA—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 107-249)

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following message from the President of the United States; which was read and, together with the accompanying papers, without objection, referred to the Committee on International Relations and ordered to be printed:

To the Congress of the United States:

As required by section 401(c) of the National Emergencies Act, 50 U.S.C. 1641(c), and section 204(c) of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, 50 U.S.C. 1703(c), I am providing