

Ilan Ramon. The first Israeli in space. A dedicated and brave pilot. The son of Holocaust survivor. He is an inspiration to a small, determined nation.

Commander Husband, on the evening before they launched, shared with his crew and their families, his favorite passage from the book of Joshua. This is instructive for all of us as we reflect on this tragedy: "Be strong and courageous, because you will lead these people to inherit the land I swore to their forefathers to give them. Be strong and very courageous. Be careful to obey all the law my servant Moses gave you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, that you may be successful wherever you go. Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful. Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go."

That is where we are as a nation right now. We live in a dangerous world with many challenges facing us. The measure of a truly great nation is one that can face down its challenges on earth and excel and lead the world to a higher level.

That is why we have NASA and why we must recommit ourselves, now more than ever, to the dream and adventure of human space flight that was such a part of the lives of these brave men and women.

How we decided to respond to this tragedy will be judged very closely by many generations that come after us. I am proud to say that the President has risen to the occasion and has charted a bold new exploration initiative. We cannot let future generations down and walk away from our destiny in space. The *Columbia 7* will be memorialized by a great, strong, robust return to space by America.

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join my colleagues and our Nation in remembering the *Columbia* space shuttle tragedy of one year ago. The people of Guam join their fellow Americans today in remembrance, prayer, and tribute for the crew of STS-107 and all that they stood for and represented in their careers and lives.

Michael Anderson, David Brown, Kalpana Chawla, Laurel Clark, Rick Husband, Willie McCool, and Ilan Ramon were many different things to many different people. They were mothers and fathers, wives and husbands, daughters and sons, teachers and friends. There is one thing, however, that unites them all. They are all heroes in the truest sense of the word. Today, we reflect upon their lives and the qualities that they embodied. We draw our strength and resolve from the example they set and we remain committed to our nation's space program in their honor and because of what they have taught us.

Guam remembers today Commander Willie McCool, who piloted the *Columbia* on that fateful day one year ago. Commander McCool lived in Guam while his father served as a Navy pilot and attended Dededo Middle School and John F. Kennedy High School. He later married Lani Vallejos of Dededo, Guam. While America lost a hero, Guam lost a son in the aftermath of the *Columbia* tragedy. Today I extend my prayers and thoughts to his wife Lani, their children, Sean, Christopher, and Cameron, and their extended family in Guam.

I also extend my prayers and thoughts to his parents, Barry and Audrey McCool, and to his father and mother-in-law, Albert and Atilana Vallejos, of Dededo, Guam.

My first bill in Congress was H.R. 672, which renamed the Guam South Elementary/Middle School of the Department of Defense Domestic Dependents Elementary and Secondary Schools System in honor of Commander McCool. President Bush signed this bill into law on April 22, 2003 and on August 29, 2003 the school was dedicated in his honor during an emotional ceremony attended by family, military officials, government dignitaries and fellow astronauts Piers Sellers and Stephanie Wilson. At this ceremony, Guam Governor Felix Camacho posthumously bestowed upon Commander McCool the Ancient Order of the Chamorro, the highest award given on behalf of the people of Guam in recognition of substantial contributions to the betterment of society. Commander McCool's beacon of light will continue to shine and inspire young and old alike to look towards the stars and dream big dreams.

Commander McCool blessed our island and indeed our country with his passion, intellect, and purpose. The people of Guam are proud to call him one of our own and will always remember him as a role model for our children. The inspiration Commander McCool has been to our people is something that will not fade and that can never be taken away. This past weekend the people of Guam gathered in the Dulce Nombre de Maria Cathedral Basilica in our capital city of Hagåtña to pay tribute to Commander McCool and the *Columbia* crew, to recall their accomplishments, and to pray for their families.

In remembering Commander McCool I am always touched by a poem he wrote while attending Dededo Middle School in Guam. Reading the poem today, it has an eerie quality that shows not only his love of Guam, but a glimpse into his future career as an astronaut:

I came to an island in the middle of the sea,
It was so nice that I jumped for glee.
There are palm trees, coconuts, and bananas too,
Plus birds and fish so unbelievable but true.
It is so nice that no one can complain.
But he who does must be insane.
This is such a nice and beautiful place,
You'd think it was heaven—or outer space.

He signed this poem, "William 'Willie' McCool, Dededo beep! beep! Roadrunner," referring to his school's mascot.

Let us always remember Willie's devotion to his family, to the people of Guam, to our country, and to the betterment of the world. I thank my colleague, Mr. BURGESS, for offering this resolution today. God Bless the *Columbia* crew and their families.

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

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SIMMONS). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BURGESS) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 507.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of

those present have voted in the affirmative.

Mr. BURGESS. 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.

CORRECTING TECHNICAL ERRORS IN ENROLLMENT OF S. 610, NASA FLEXIBILITY ACT OF 2003.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I offer a concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 354) to correct technical errors in the enrollment of the bill S. 610, and ask unanimous consent for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

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

There was no objection.

The Clerk read the concurrent resolution, as follows:

H. CON. RES. 354

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring). That, in the enrollment of the bill (S. 610) to amend the provision of title 5, United States Code, to provide for workforce flexibilities and certain Federal personnel provisions relating to the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, and for other purposes, the Secretary of the Senate shall make the following corrections:

(1) Amend the title so as to read: "An Act to amend the provisions of title 5, United States Code, to provide for workforce flexibilities and certain Federal personnel provisions relating to the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, and for other purposes."

(2) In section 1, strike "2003" and insert "2004".

(3) In section 3(b), strike "by adding at the end" and insert "by inserting after the item relating to chapter 97".

The concurrent resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

EXPRESSING SENSE OF HOUSE REGARDING PRISONERS OF CONSCIENCE BY CHINESE GOVERNMENT FOR THEIR INVOLVEMENT IN EFFORTS TO END CHINESE OCCUPATION OF TIBET

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 157) expressing the sense of the House of Representatives regarding several individuals who are being held as prisoners of conscience by the Chinese Government for their involvement in efforts to end the Chinese occupation of Tibet.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 157

Whereas for more than 1,000 years Tibet has maintained a sovereign national identity that is distinct from the national identity of China;

Whereas armed forces of the People's Republic of China invaded Tibet in 1949 and 1950 and have occupied it since then;

Whereas according to the United States Department of State and international human rights organizations, the Government of the People's Republic of China continues to commit widespread and well-documented human rights abuses in China and Tibet;

Whereas the People's Republic of China has yet to demonstrate its willingness to abide by internationally accepted norms of freedom of belief, expression, and association by repealing or amending laws and decrees that restrict those freedoms;

Whereas the Chinese Government has detained hundreds of Tibetan nuns, monks and lay persons as prisoners of conscience for their efforts in speaking out against the Chinese occupation of Tibet;

Whereas on October 14, 1989, Phuntsog Nyidron, a Tibetan Buddhist nun, and 5 other nuns from the Michungri Nunnery were arrested in Lhasa after chanting songs and slogans and marching in a procession as part of a peaceful demonstration that they organized to protest the Chinese occupation of Tibet;

Whereas Phuntsog Nyidron and the other nuns were kicked, beaten and given electric shocks on their hands, shoulders, breasts, tongue, and face while in Chinese custody;

Whereas in 1993, Phuntsog Nyidron and 13 other nuns secretly recorded songs about Tibetan independence and smuggled the recordings out of Drapchi prison;

Whereas the Chinese Government charged Phuntsog Nyidron with "spreading counter-revolutionary propaganda" for her role in recording and smuggling out the taped songs and, on October 9, 1993, extended her prison sentence to 17 years, one of the longest reported sentences of any female Tibetan political prisoner;

Whereas Phuntsog Nyidron was awarded the Reebok Human Rights Award in 1995;

Whereas Phuntsog Nyidron is just one of many individuals whom the Chinese Government has held as a prisoner of conscience;

Whereas the Chinese Government continues to imprison individuals as prisoners of conscience for their involvement in peaceful protests against the brutal Chinese occupation of Tibet; and

Whereas the Chinese Government continues to exert control over religious and cultural institutions in Tibet, abusing human rights through torture, arbitrary arrest, and detention without public trial of Tibetans who peacefully expressed their political or religious views: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That it is the sense of the House of Representatives that the Government of the People's Republic of China should, as a gesture of goodwill and in order to promote human rights, immediately release all prisoners of conscience, including Phuntsog Nyidron.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) and the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ROYCE. 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 under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

I would like to begin by commending my colleague, the gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL), for sponsoring this resolution; and this resolution expresses the sense of the House of Representatives regarding individuals being held as prisoners of conscience by the Chinese Government for their involvement in efforts to end the Chinese occupation of Tibet. It calls for the Chinese Government to release all its prisoners of conscience.

Mr. Speaker, this resolution notes that the United States Department of State and international human rights organizations have documented continuing and widespread human rights violations committed by the Chinese Government throughout China and throughout Tibet. This resolution specifically highlights the plight of imprisoned Tibetan nun Phuntsog Nyidron who was arrested along with five other nuns back in 1989 for peacefully demonstrating against China's occupation of Tibet. She was beaten and she was tortured for her peaceful protest, and further, her prison sentence was extended when she and 13 other nuns secretly recorded and smuggled out of Drapchi prison songs of Tibetan independence.

Her continued defiance of the Chinese Government earned her one of the longest reported prison sentences of any female Tibetan political prisoner, and, Mr. Speaker, she continues to languish in prison. What is more, she is hardly alone.

This resolution notes that the Chinese Government has detained hundreds of Tibetan nuns and hundreds of monks and laypersons as prisoners of conscience for one crime, and that is speaking out against the Chinese government's occupation.

Mr. Speaker, the United States House of Representatives has a long tradition of being a voice for the voiceless. The United States House of Representatives has a long tradition of being a champion for the oppressed, and, Mr. Speaker, this body has a long tradition of leading the charge for human rights, and I encourage my colleagues to support this H. Res. 157.

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

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

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

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I want to commend my good friend, the gentleman from California, for being the manager of this legislation on the majority side.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution, and I would first like to commend my good friend and colleague, the gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL), for his leadership on this Tibet issue and for his introduction of this important resolution.

I would also like to thank the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE), the

chairman of the House Committee on International Relations, for allowing this resolution to move to the floor and also the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS), our senior Democratic ranking member, for his support of this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, this is a bipartisan piece of legislation. The resolution before the House is not the first expression of Congress' great concern regarding the treatment of Tibetans by the Chinese Government. Two years ago, Congress overwhelmingly approved the Tibet Policy Act, and we have also considered several resolutions regarding the lack of political and religious freedom in Tibet, but as Congress debated these larger policy matters, it was easy to lose sight of the impact of Chinese repression on individual Tibetans. To understand the brutality of Chinese rule in Tibet, we need to put a human face on it.

The Udall resolution accomplishes this important task by calling attention to the case of Phuntsog Nyidron, a Tibetan nun who is the longest surviving female political prisoner in Tibet.

What was Phuntsog Nyidron's crime? Three days after learning that His Holiness the Dalai Lama was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, she led five other nuns in a protest in downtown Lhasa against the Chinese occupation of Tibet. Instead of ignoring these peaceful protests, Chinese authorities arrested the nuns and subjected them to horrific torture.

Phuntsog Nyidron and her fellow nuns were kicked, beaten, and given electric shocks all over their bodies. They were strung up by their hands and beaten with an iron rod, all this because they were unhappy with the Chinese occupation of Tibet and dared to speak their minds.

Mr. Speaker, even torture would not silence Phuntsog Nyidron. In 1993 Phuntsog Nyidron and 13 other imprisoned nuns secretly recorded songs about Tibetan independence and smuggled their recordings out of prison. In one song, the nun thanked, "all of you outside who have done all that you can for us in prison. We will never forget you."

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In another song, the nuns sang of being "beaten and treated brutally, but this will never change the Tibetan people's perseverance."

Mr. Speaker, when the Chinese Government found out about these songs, they extended the sentence of Phuntsog Nyidron to 17 years because she was "spreading counterrevolutionary propaganda." Mr. Speaker, sentencing a Tibetan nun to 17 years in prison for peacefully protesting the treatment of Tibetans and making a musical tape to expose prison conditions is absolutely outrageous, in my humble opinion, and a violation of every international human rights treaty to which China is a party.

Today, Mr. Speaker, we in the House are sending a signal to Phuntsog Nyidron that we have not forgotten her, her fellow nuns, and China's other fellow prisoners of conscience. We are signaling to the Chinese Government that it is time to release Phuntsog Nyidron and other prisoners of conscience as a humanitarian gesture, particularly as China celebrates the Lunar New Year.

Today, we are celebrating the perseverance of the Tibetan people who have suffered enormous repression and deprivation over the last 50 years. The Tibetan people will one day regain their freedom, and those who languish in Chinese prisons for opposing Chinese rule in Tibet will be celebrated as heroes.

Mr. Speaker, years ago it was my privilege to accompany our former chairman of the House Committee on International Relations, my good friend and the gentleman from New York, Mr. Ben Gilman, also an outstanding leader of our Nation who was a great advocate of human rights throughout the world. We traveled to the town of Dharmasala in India, where the Dalai Lama and his Tibetan followers live since they were driven out of Tibet by Chinese authorities. To this day, I will never forget the privilege of meeting with the Dalai Lama and the good people of Tibet who are currently living in this town of Dharmasala in India.

The situation between the people of Tibet and China is not an easy matter to resolve, but we certainly should express our grave concerns with the way the people of Tibet are treated by the Chinese Government. At this time I will not get into the debate as to whether the Tibetans are of Chinese ancestry and if at one time or another Tibet was part of the Chinese empire centuries ago. Of paramount importance is our concern for the inhumane treatment of our fellow human beings anywhere on this planet, the very reason why this resolution is important to note the will of this body before our Nation and to the world.

Mr. Speaker, the great people of Tibet truly appreciate and know the meaning of freedom because they are not free, and so I urge my colleagues to support House Resolution 157.

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

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL), the author of this resolution.

(Mr. UDALL of New Mexico asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased today to rise in support of my bill, House Resolution 157, which calls on China to release its Tibetan prisoners of conscience. I would like to thank the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE) and the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS), the chairman and ranking member of

the Committee on International Relations, for moving this bill to the House floor today.

Around 100 political prisoners remain behind bars in the Drapchi prison in Lhasa, the most notorious Chinese prison in Tibet. I was lucky enough last fall to meet one of Drapchi's most recently released political prisoners. Ngawang Sangdrol was her name. This humble remarkable young woman survived 11 years of torture and deprivation in prison before she reached her 21st birthday. She was released from prison in 2002 and was allowed to travel to the United States for medical treatment in March of 2003.

Despite the horrific treatment she suffered in prison, her spirit was never broken and her dedication to the cause of Tibetan freedom never flagged. The horrific treatment that Ngawang Sangdrol experienced in prison is unimaginable to most of us. She recalls being made to stare at the sun while holding newspapers under her arms and between her knees. If the newspapers fell, she would be beaten. She was electrocuted with a baton and was made to run with her arms behind her while stones were thrown at her.

When I asked this young woman, who had been through so much, what the worst day of her imprisonment was, she responded she had no answer; "they were all the worst day of my life," she said.

Many of the Tibetan nuns and monks who suffered along with Ngawang Sangdrol remain in Drapchi prison today. Mentioned explicitly in this resolution is a nun by the name of Phuntsog Nyidron. This 34-year-old Tibetan nun is the longest serving female political prisoner in Tibet. She was only 20 years old when she was arrested in 1989 for taking part in a peaceful protest. Her sentence was extended in 1993 when she and 13 other nuns recorded and smuggled out of prison songs about their love for their country, their people, and His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

The Tibetans are a peace loving and resilient people, and even under the Chinese occupation they have been able to retain their culture outside Tibet's borders. In my district in New Mexico I enjoy having a significant group of Tibetan refugees as constituents. It is these Tibetans and the people who care about them who led to this resolution's introduction and its eventual passage.

This resolution also comes at a crucial time in the treatment of Tibetan refugees elsewhere. After the Nepalese government handed over 18 Tibetan refugees to the Chinese Government last summer, the U.S. Congress put significant pressure on them to issue an official policy stating that it would not happen again. We now know definitively that at least two of the Tibetans who were given to the Chinese authorities were thrown in prison, whereupon they were tortured. However, even after the Nepalese government issued its new policy, reports continue to sur-

face that they are handing over Tibetan refugees to the Chinese. This is unacceptable. I take this opportunity not only to call on the Chinese Government to release its political prisoners but also to tell the Nepalese government that the United States takes very seriously the welfare of Tibetan refugees everywhere.

With the passage of this resolution today, we send a message to the Chinese Government that we have not turned a blind eye to Tibet. Quite the contrary. We closely monitor what occurs in Tibet and will continue to do so. And with that we call on the Chinese to release its political prisoners out of good will and responsibility.

There is a poem by His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama that ends: "Work for peace in your heart and in the world work for peace. And I say again never give up. No matter what is going on, never give up."

It is with this sentiment that I urge my colleagues to support this important resolution. There is credible evidence that international action on behalf of prisoners in China improves their situation. Since 2002, nine political prisoners have been released from prison as a result of international pressure.

On behalf of Phuntsog Nyidron and her fellow prisoners who are being so unjustly treated, please join me in voting in favor of House Resolution 157. I thank the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) for his assistance in this matter and all the other Members the bipartisan group of Members that are a part of this resolution.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, in closing, I yield myself such time as I may consume, and I would make the observation that Tibet has been under Beijing rule since 1949, when it was invaded and at that time incorporated into China. In 1959, the Dalai Lama fled in exile to India, and he fled with tens of thousands of his followers.

The Dalai Lama has shed daylight over the years on many human rights violations. More than 1 million Tibetans have died under the Chinese occupation as a result of torture and as a result of starvation and as a result of execution.

No nation is exempt from the demands of human dignity. I should note that this House has a notable record when it comes to Tibet. The cochairmen of the Human Rights Caucus, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WOLF) and the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS), have been instrumental in this effort. Last year, the Dalai Lama gave the keynote address to the Human Rights Caucus to recognize the 20th anniversary of our Human Rights Caucus here.

The People's Republic of China has yet to demonstrate its willingness to abide by internationally accepted norms of freedom in terms of freedom of belief, or freedom of expression, or freedom of association. China is still holding hundreds of political prisoners

of conscience for peaceful protests against the Chinese occupation.

Seventeen years of additional sentence for singing a Tibetan song in prison is truly draconian, but it is not atypical of the treatment of those who try to keep their culture alive or those who try to keep their religion alive; nor are the tortures catalogued here today by the gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. UDALL), nor are those tortures atypical of what we have heard in committee about the condition that goes on in those prisons. That is why this resolution is so important.

The human rights violations, the arbitrary arrests, the detention without public trial of Tibetans who peacefully express their political or religious views must come to an end, and I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I know the distinguished minority leader would have loved to be here this morning to express her views on this very important issue, but she is necessarily otherwise obligated and will submit a statement for the record on this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, again I commend my good friend from California (Mr. ROYCE) for his comments. Over the years, both of us, as members of the Committee on International Relations, know that the issue of Tibet has always been one of those issues that we want to address forthrightly, but then there is always this idea or the response from the Chinese Government saying, well, this is really an internal affair kind of thing and, therefore, it is not any other country's business. I wonder if my good friend from California agrees with this statement being the response of our Chinese friends.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. I yield to the gentleman from California.

Mr. ROYCE. In point of fact, Mr. Speaker, I would be happy to respond that China invaded Tibet in 1949 and subjugated its people. So for the government of Beijing to now say this is an internal matter, first there are two points here: First of all, they are claiming it is an internal matter because they subjugated an indigenous people in Tibet and then systematically killed over a million Tibetans and then moved people from mainland China into the Tibetan communities in order to try to erase a culture.

Secondarily, even if this was action taking place in Beijing itself, we would be speaking out. Why? Because there are certain fundamental standards of human rights when it comes to freedom of religion and freedom of speech. And when we have things as egregious as a young woman who is a nun, who is tortured and sent to prison for an additional 17 years for singing a cultural

song about Tibetan heritage, that is so outrageous that the international community would speak out regardless of what country that crime against humanity occurred in. And this is truly criminal activity.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, I thank my good friend for his edification and certainly providing a better understanding for our colleagues on this important issue.

I also want to thank my good friend, the gentleman from New Mexico, not only for his initiative but for his leadership in bringing this resolution for the Members to discuss. And I certainly would like to emphasize again that we need to support and to pass this legislation to send a clear message to the Chinese Government that this is not acceptable and we should do this at all costs.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H. Res. 157 which sheds light on the prisoners of conscience being held by the Chinese Government. These peaceful prisoners' only crimes were to speak out against the Chinese occupation of their homeland in Tibet. I would like to thank my distinguished colleague Mr. UDALL for bringing this ongoing matter to the floor of this body. We can not ignore the plight of the Tibetan people while giving tacit support to the Chinese Government.

One of the great marks of our Nation has been as a protector of human rights throughout the world. I recognize we may not be able to stop all international violations of human rights, but we certainly can not look the other way as the world's most populous nation blatantly occupies a peaceful country. For more than 50 years the Chinese Government has imposed its will on the people of Tibet. The Tibetan people have been unable to enjoy even the most basic rights under this Chinese occupation. Tibet had existed as a sovereign nation distinct from Chinese identity for over a thousand years. It was a nation that gave birth to the Buddhist faith and acted as the spiritual center for many people throughout the world. Now the people of Tibet can not even practice their own faith without fear of persecution. If we say we value human rights even a little bit how can we allow this deliberate oppression to continue?

The prisoners of conscience being discussed in this resolution are a prime example of the kind of injustice that is inflicted on the peaceful Tibetan people. On October 14, 1989, Phuntsog Nyidron, a Tibetan Buddhist nun, and 5 other nuns from the Michungri Nunnery were arrested in Lhasa after chanting some slogans and marching in a procession as part of a peaceful demonstration that they organized to protest the Chinese occupation of Tibet. Their only real crime being that they believed they had the right to expression. Their only expression being their belief that Tibet deserved not to be occupied. Again I ask, how can we allow ourselves as a body to look the other way while this oppression continues to take place? Even in our darkest days as a nation we allowed the freedom of protest as long as it was peaceful. In the face of brutal oppression the Tibetan people have been nothing if not peaceful. So many Tibetans including the Dalai Lama have been forced in to exile, and still their message is one of peace.

These brave people of Tibet pose no physical threat to China; instead it is their stoic resoluteness to obtain their rights that frightens the Chinese Government.

Phuntsog Nyidron is the latest in the line of Tibetan leaders who have been imprisoned simply because they dared to voice their opposition to the Chinese occupation of their homeland. Let's not forget that Ms. Nyidron and those who were arrested with her were nuns. Since when have nuns become such a great threat to a government that they must be thrown in to prison and tortured? Since 1989 Ms. Nyidron has been subjected to torture and ill-treatment in the notorious Drapchi Prison which houses all female political prisoners. In 1993 Ms. Nyidron had her sentence extended to seventeen years simply because she and thirteen other nuns had secretly recorded songs about Tibetan independence and smuggled the recordings out of Drapchi prison. Once again I ask, where is the great threat to the Chinese government that requires a peaceful nun to be imprisoned for seventeen years? We now know that there are profound concerns for Ms. Nyidron's health as she is known to have liver, stomach and kidney problems which have no doubt been exacerbated by her brutal treatment in prison. It seems likely that the Chinese Government will be more than content to allow her to die in prison. The point of her imprisonment is not to eliminate a dangerous or threatening person, but instead to send a message to every other Tibetan that not only must they suffer Chinese occupation, but that they must do so in silence. This, Mr. Speaker, is unacceptable.

I call on every Member of this body to support this resolution. Let us send a message to every Tibetan who lives in fear that they have an ally in their struggle for their rights. Let us also send a message to the Chinese Government that the United States of America still holds the banner as the international protector of human rights and that we will not turn a blind eye to the open and vicious oppression of the Tibetan people. For more than fifty years they have endured this occupation with great dignity and an enduring faith. They are a living testament to the fact that brutality cannot crush the spirit of even the most oppressed people. I ask the Chinese people to come to the aid of these great human rights proponents. I hope the Chinese government will see fit to listen. I look forward to that dialogue.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. Res. 157, calling on the government of the People's Republic of China to release all prisoners of conscience, including Phuntsog Nyidron, a Tibetan nun who is currently the longest serving Tibetan political prisoner in China.

We know that the brutal regime in China has detained hundreds of Tibetan nuns, monks, and laypersons for speaking out against the Chinese occupation of Tibet. In the last session of Congress, I sponsored a resolution calling on the PRC to release the Panchen Lama, who is held in high esteem in Tibetan culture as the teacher of the Dalai Lama. The Panchen Lama was abducted nearly 10 years ago at age 5. Today, his whereabouts remains unknown.

This regime has been and continues to be relentless in squelching the voices of peaceful dissident. However, even in prison, these voices have been heard. In 1993 Phuntsog

Nyidron and 13 other nuns sang and recorded songs about the plight of the Tibetan people that were smuggled out of Draphci prison, inspiring those working for peaceful change. Her prison sentence was extended for 8 years because of the recording. In 1998 it was reported that she was badly beaten after trying to protect another prisoner and that she is in poor health.

Phuntsog Nyidron is a peaceful advocate for change who should be released immediately along with the hundreds of other of prisoners of conscience in China. Although we lack specific information on each case, we know that many other Tibetans are mistreated in Chinese prisons as well. Even though China ratified the U.N. Convention against Torture in 1988, it has been reported that more than 70 Tibetans have died as a direct result of torture and inhumane treatment in Chinese prisons.

We must not forget the many other ethnic and religious groups and political dissident persecuted in the PRC today. Serious human rights abuses are carried out against the Falun Gong, Uighur Muslims, Protestants, and Catholics are well documented in State Department Reports on Human Rights and Religious Freedom.

We know that opponents of the regime continue to be unjustly imprisoned and that women continue to be subject to forced abortions. We also know that the government continues to violate international law through forcibly deporting thousands of North Koreans, many of whom are subsequently placed and concentration camps where they face persecution and death.

As both our administration and other world leaders prepare for the annual U.N. Commission on Human Rights in Geneva, I along with many of my colleagues, strongly believe that a strong resolution on human rights in China should be introduced and passed. Given continued and systematic human rights abuses carried out by the regime, anything less would be simply inexcusable.

I strongly urge my colleagues to strongly support passage of this resolution. I call upon the regime in Beijing to release Phuntsog Nyidron and the hundreds of others of political prisoners languishing in China's prisons. And I strongly urge our Administration and other governments to work towards the introduction and passage of a human rights resolution in Geneva.

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of House Resolution 157, which urges the Chinese Government to release all prisoners held for exercising their fundamental rights to freedom of expression, belief, or association.

Thank you, Congressman TOM UDALL for taking the lead in introducing this resolution and for all of your efforts for the people of Tibet. I am proud to be a co-sponsor.

The Chinese Government continues to impose severely repressive measures against any display of support for an independent Tibet. We know the facts. The State Department's Annual Country Report on Human Rights states "... [Chinese] authorities continued to commit serious human rights abuses, including instances of torture, arbitrary arrest, detention without public trial, and lengthy detention of Tibetan nationalists for peacefully expressing their political or religious views."

We know that more than 1 million Tibetans have died under the Chinese occupation.

More than 6,000 monasteries and irreplaceable jewels of Tibetan culture have been destroyed. Tibetans are routinely imprisoned and tortured for non-violently expressing their views. Beatings, prolonged exposure to extreme heat and cold, electroshock, sleep and food deprivation and forced labor are among the techniques used to torture Tibetan political prisoners.

Since China's 1988 ratification of the United Nations Convention Against Torture, more than 70 Tibetans have died as a direct result of torture and inhumane treatment in Chinese prisons in Tibet. Hundreds of Tibetans are currently in prison for peaceful expressions of political or religious belief. I would like to mention a few of these brave individuals.

PHUNTSOG NYIDRON

Phuntsog Nyidron is a nun from outside Lhasa. She has been in prison for 16 years. On October 14, 1989, she participated in a peaceful demonstration to protest China's occupation of Tibet. During the arrest, she and other nuns were subjected to beatings with iron rods, kicks, and punches. She is now the longest serving female Tibetan political prisoner. She is reportedly in poor health and is suffering from a respiratory ailment and severe internal problems.

THE DRAPCHI 14: "SINGING NUNS"

While in a Chinese prison for political crimes in 1993, Phuntsog Nyidron and 13 other nuns secretly recorded songs proclaiming their love for their Tibetan homeland and their families. On the tape, each nun states her name and dedicates a song to her family and supporters.

The tapes were smuggled out of the prison and the recordings were circulated inside Tibet and around the world. These young women became known as the Drapchi 14 and the Singing Nuns.

TIBETAN REFUGEES SENT BACK TO TIBET

I am also concerned about Tibetan refugees sent back to China by the Government of Nepal. Last May, in close coordination with the Chinese Embassy, Nepal deported 18 Tibetan refugees who were seeking safe transit through Nepal. This violates the long-standing agreement that Nepal will turn over refugees to UNHCR to facilitate safe transit to the Tibetan exile community in India.

For many years, Nepal has worked cooperatively with UNHCR. They have earned a strong reputation for their humanitarian approach to Tibetan refugees. I am disturbed by the Government of Nepal's recent actions in violation of international and humanitarian norms. The prison conditions awaiting repatriated Tibetans are harsh. From first hand reports we have learned about the torture and maltreatment of the 18 Tibetans deported by Nepal. Unfortunately, the deportation of Tibetan refugees continues.

On January 9, Radio Free Asia reported on that 21 refugees were deported by Nepalese border security. On January 15, we have learned that three Tibetan refugees were handed over to Chinese border police by Nepalese officials.

We expect Nepal to adhere with its own written policy and turn over all Tibetan refugees to UNHCR. Today we are sending a clear message to the Government of Nepal—the U.S. Government is watching your actions closely.

CONCLUSION

The survival of the Tibetan identity is an issue of urgent U.S. and international concern.

I am proud to stand with my colleagues today to demand that the Chinese Government immediately release all prisoners of conscience in China and Tibet. As we honor the brave and heroic prisoners of conscience, we must heed the guidance of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. He is a constant reminder that the crisis in Tibet is a challenge to the conscience of the world. Unless we are prepared to confront the Chinese Government on the issue of Tibet, we cannot be consistent when we talk about human rights in any other place in the world. We have not forgotten the people of Tibet in their struggle. We must and will continue our efforts.

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GILCHREST). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, House Resolution 157.

The question was taken.

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

Mr. ROYCE. 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.

□ 1515

CONGO BASIN FOREST PARTNERSHIP ACT OF 2003

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and concur in the Senate amendments to the bill (H.R. 2264) to authorize appropriations for fiscal years 2004 and 2005 to carry out the Congo Basin Forest Partnership (CBFP) program, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read as follows:

Amendments:

Page 5, strike out all after line 23 over to and including line 11 on page 6, and insert:

(a) *IN GENERAL.*—There are authorized to be appropriated to the President to carry out the Congo Basin Forest Partnership (CBFP) program \$18,600,000 for fiscal year 2004.

(b) *CARPE.*—Of the amounts appropriated pursuant to the authorization of appropriations in subsection (a), \$16,000,000 is authorized to be made available to the Central Africa Regional Program for the Environment (CARPE) of the United States Agency for International Development.

(c) *AVAILABILITY.*—Amounts appropriated pursuant to the authorization of appropriations under subsection (a) are authorized to remain available until expended.

Amend the title so as to read: "An Act to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2004 to carry out the Congo Basin Forest Partnership program, and for other purposes."

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GILCHREST). Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) and the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA) each will control 20 minutes.