

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 question will be postponed.

CALLING ON VIETNAM TO IMMEDIATELY AND UNCONDITIONALLY RELEASE DR. PHAM HONG SON AND OTHER POLITICAL PRISONERS AND PRISONERS OF CONSCIENCE

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 320) calling on the Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam to immediately and unconditionally release Dr. Pham Hong Son and other political prisoners and prisoners of conscience, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 320

Whereas in March 2002, Dr. Pham Hong Son was arrested after he had translated an article entitled "What is Democracy?" from the Web site of the United States Embassy in Vietnam and sent it to both friends and senior party officials;

Whereas Dr. Son has written and published on the Internet articles entitled "The Promotion of Democracy: A Key Focus in a New World Order", "Sovereignty and Human Rights: The Search for Reconciliation", and "Hopeful Signs for Democracy in Viet Nam";

Whereas in none of his activities did Dr. Son advocate violence in his opposition to the Vietnamese Government or its policies;

Whereas Dr. Son has been arrested for the peaceful exercise of his fundamental rights to freedom of expression and association in violation of Article 69 of the Vietnamese Constitution which states: "The citizen shall enjoy freedom of opinion and speech, freedom of the press, the right to be informed and the right to assemble, form associations and hold demonstrations in accordance with the provisions of the law";

Whereas Dr. Son has been arrested, tried, convicted, and imprisoned in contravention of the rights enshrined in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) to which Vietnam is a state party, specifically Article 19 (freedom of expression) and Article 22 (freedom of association);

Whereas Dr. Son did not have a trial that would be considered fair and that met even the most basic standards of internationally accepted justice, in contravention of Article 14 (right to a fair trial) of the ICCPR;

Whereas Dr. Son was sentenced in June 2003, after a half-day closed trial in Hanoi, to 13 years of imprisonment and three years of house arrest on spurious espionage charges;

Whereas such spurious charges are routinely used to suppress peaceful democracy activists, as in the notorious cases of Father Thadeus Nguyen Van Ly, his two nephews and niece, and in the cases of Pham Que Duong, Tran Khue, and Tran Dung Tien;

Whereas Dr. Son's appeal was lost on August 26, 2003, in a closed trial before Vietnam's Supreme Court, from which international observers and Western journalists were barred, although diplomats from more than eight countries gathered outside the courthouse during the trial to register their concern;

Whereas, although the Vietnamese Supreme Court upheld Dr. Son's sentence, it reduced the sentence of imprisonment from 13 to five years;

Whereas Dr. Son remains imprisoned in harsh conditions, including imprisonment for more than a year in solitary confinement, which have endangered his health;

Whereas Vietnam has imprisoned, detained, placed under house arrest, or otherwise restricted numerous other peaceful democratic and religious activists for reasons related to their political or religious views, such as Do Van My, Mai Thi Dung, Nguyen Thanh Phong, Nguyen Thi Ha, Nguyen Van Dien, Nguyen Vu Binh, Phan Van Ban, To Van Manh, Vo Van Buu, Vo Van Thanh Liem (Nam Liem), Bui Thien Hue, Nguyen Lap Ma, Nguyen Nhat Thong, Nguyen Van Ly, Phan Van Loi, Thich Dong Tho, Thich Huyen Quang, Thich Nguyen Ly, Thich Nguyen Vuong, Thich Phuoc An, Thich Quang Do, Thich Tam Lien, Thich Thai Hoa, Thich Thanh Huyen, Thich Tien Hanh, Thich Tue Sy, Thich Vien Dinh, Ngo Van Ninh, Le Van Chuong, Le Van Tinh, Phuong Van Kiem, Nguyen Van Si, Tran Van Thien, Thich Thien Tam, Hoang Chinh Minh, and Do Nam Hai (Phuong Nam);

Whereas Dr. Son and other political prisoners and prisoners of conscience have been deprived of their basic human rights by being denied their ability to exercise freedom of opinion and expression;

Whereas the arbitrary imprisonment and the violation of the human rights of citizens of Vietnam are sources of continuing, grave concern to Congress;

Whereas Vietnam continues to restrict access to Western diplomats, journalists, and humanitarian organizations to the Central Highlands and the Northwest Highlands, where there are credible reports that ethnic minorities suffer serious violations of their human and civil rights, including property rights, and ongoing restrictions on religious activities, including forced conversions;

Whereas there are continuing and well-founded concerns about forcibly repatriated Montagnard refugees, access to whom is restricted;

Whereas on December 1, 2005, the European Parliament adopted a resolution calling on the Vietnamese authorities, among other measures, to undertake political and institutional reforms leading to democracy and the rule of law, starting by allowing a multi-party system and guaranteeing the right of all currents of opinion to express their views;

Whereas the resolution further calls on Vietnamese authorities to end all forms of repression against members of the Unified Buddhist Church of Vietnam and officially recognize its existence and that of other non-recognized Churches in the country;

Whereas the resolution further calls on Vietnamese authorities to release all Vietnamese political prisoners and prisoners of conscience detained for having legitimately and peacefully exercised their rights to freedom of opinion, expression, the press, and religion;

Whereas the resolution further calls on Vietnamese authorities to guarantee full enjoyment of the fundamental rights enshrined in the Vietnamese Constitution and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, in particular by allowing the creation of a genuinely free press; and

Whereas the resolution further calls on Vietnamese authorities to ensure the safe repatriation, under the Cambodia-Vietnam-UNHCR Agreement, of the Montagnards who fled Vietnam, and allow proper monitoring of the situation of the returnees by the UNHCR and international nongovernmental organizations: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That—

(1) Congress—

(A) condemns and deplores the arbitrary detention of Dr. Pham Hong Son by the Gov-

ernment of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam and calls for his immediate and unconditional release, and for the immediate and unconditional release of all other political prisoners;

(B) condemns and deplores the violations of freedom of speech, religion, movement, association, and the lack of due process afforded to individuals in Vietnam;

(C) strongly urges the Government of Vietnam to consider the implications of its actions for the broader relationship between the United States and Vietnam;

(D) urges the Government of Vietnam to allow unfettered access to the Central Highlands and to the Northwest Highlands by foreign diplomats, the international press, and nongovernmental organizations; and

(E) applauds the European Parliament for its resolution of December 1, 2005, regarding human rights in Vietnam, and urges the Government of Vietnam to comply with the terms of the resolution; and

(2) it is the sense of Congress that the United States should—

(A) make the immediate release of Dr. Pham Hong Son a top concern;

(B) continue to urge the Government of Vietnam to comply with internationally recognized standards for basic freedoms and human rights;

(C) make clear to the Government of Vietnam that it must adhere to the rule of law and respect the freedom of the press in order to broaden its relations with the United States;

(D) make clear to the Government of Vietnam that the detention of Dr. Son and other persons and the infliction of human rights violations on these individuals are not in the interest of Vietnam because they create obstacles to improved bilateral relations and cooperation with the United States; and

(E) reiterate the deep concern of the United States regarding the continued imprisonment of Dr. Son and other persons whose human rights are being violated and discuss the legal status and immediate humanitarian needs of such individuals with the Government of Vietnam.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) and the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to present this bill to my colleagues today in defense of a man who has fought for democracy in Vietnam at great personal cost. There has been a tremendous amount of publicity lately about Internet dissidents in China. As a matter of fact, we had a day-long hearing on this use of the Internet to capture and to really decapitate the dissidents and religious freedom movements in China, in Vietnam and Belarus and in other countries, but we now focus on one particular man, as well as others who have suffered because of that, in the case of Dr. Pham Hong Son of Vietnam.

In March 2002, Mr. Speaker, police arrested Dr. Son. He had translated an article from the Web site of the U.S. Embassy Hanoi that was entitled, "What is democracy?" and he sent it to some of his friends and senior Vietnamese officials. In addition, he had

written an open letter, published on the Internet, protesting the fact that his house had been searched illegally and his computer and documents confiscated.

Dr. Son was charged with espionage by the government, which accused him of collecting and dispatching news and documents for a foreign country to be used against the Socialist State of Vietnam. Let us not forget who that foreign country is. It is us. It is the U.S. Embassy's Web site in Hanoi, and that is where he went to download that essay, "What is democracy?"

After a closed trial and a closed appeal, from which Western reporters and diplomats from Europe, the United States and Canada were barred, Dr. Son was sentenced to 5 years, plus an additional 3 years of house arrest.

Dr. Son's case has been highlighted repeatedly by the U.S. Department of State's Human Rights Report for Vietnam and by Human Rights Watch, Reporters without Borders, the Committee to Protect Journalists, and Amnesty International.

Mr. Speaker, I went to Vietnam last year, accompanied by Eleanor Nagy, who is our Director of Policy on the Subcommittee on Africa, Global Human Rights and International Operations, and met with some 60 dissidents in the course of the better part of a week in Hanoi, Hue and in Ho Chi Minh City. We met with Dr. Son's extraordinary and courageous wife, Vu Thuy Ha, who continues to campaign for her husband's freedom despite constant surveillance and harassment, which I personally witnessed. I knew that we could not let this brave woman battle alone.

As a matter of fact, when Eleanor and I, along with some people from the embassy, sat with his wife, right across from us at a hotel were some thugs from the secret police who were taking pictures of her and trying to intimidate her, which they have been doing day in and day out.

The State Department, to its credit, put Dr. Son at the head of their list of political prisoners who need to be released during the February Human Rights Dialogue with Vietnam. As Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Barry Lowenkron told the Vietnamese, and this is his quote, "I bluntly told them that the American people will not understand why a country that wants to have better relations with us would imprison someone for translating an article on democracy."

On Friday March 31, Vietnam flatly rejected Lowenkron's call to release Dr. Son and 20 other religious and political prisoners, saying it only jails criminals. In Vietnam, they said, there are no prisoners of conscience, and no one has been arrested for their viewpoints or their religion.

That is unmitigated nonsense and a big lie, Mr. Speaker, and that has to be confronted by this Congress.

Less than a day after the unanimous subcommittee markup of this resolution

on December 9, plainclothes officers detained two other well-known Internet writers, Do Nam Hai, whom I met with in Vietnam and who is mentioned in our resolution. They were at a public Internet cafe. The police also forced Hai to open his personal e-mail account and printed about 30 of his sent messages.

□ 1215

The two writers were interrogated for 6 hours at the cafe and later at a police station in Hanoi. Both were released from police custody that day.

And the persecution continues, Mr. Speaker. On March 12, according to Reporters Without Borders, an Internet user calling himself "Freedom For the Country," joined the discussion group "Democracy and Freedom the Only Way for Vietnam." He went on-line in a Hanoi cyber cafe, and he discussed politics for about half an hour with two other people in the group. During the discussion, he said he was a member of a pro-democracy working group. The entire on-line conversation was recorded by the forum administrator, police entered the cyber cafe, and they arrested him.

On the recording, someone could be heard asking the Internet user to go with them, and then someone else shouting, hit him. The administrator continued recording after the police intervention, and no one came to disconnect the computer linked to Pal Talk. Afterwards, a man's voice is heard on the microphone introducing himself as the cyber cafe's owner and confirming that one of his customers had been taken away by the police. He added that he had been fined for violating Internet law. The Vietnamese denied the arrest, and the victim's identity is unknown. He joins three other cyber dissidents who were arrested in October and whose whereabouts remain unknown.

This sort of persecution, Mr. Speaker, will obviously not go away by itself. But tyranny hates and fears public exposure, and we need to keep attention focused on Vietnam's continuing violation of the rights that it claims to grant to its people.

Vietnam is at a critical crossroads. It wants to expand its burgeoning trade relations with the United States and seeks to join the WTO. There would be no better way to convince Vietnam of the seriousness of our human rights concerns and their centrality in any relation with the U.S. It seems to me you can't trust a country on intellectual property rights and copyright infringement if they jail, incarcerate, and beat their own people because they simply espouse basic fundamental human rights.

The European Parliament, I might add, has already passed a resolution calling for Vietnam to release all of its prisoners of conscience, allowing democracy and political pluralism and ensuring the human rights for Vietnam's Montagnards. It is appropriate

that we do likewise and that we do it today.

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

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

I would first like to commend my very good friend and distinguished colleague from New Jersey, Congressman CHRIS SMITH, for introducing this important resolution and for his unique, dogged pursuit of Vietnamese human rights issues.

None of us here today should be under any illusions about the Vietnamese government. According to the State Department's Human Rights Report, the Vietnamese government is an unrepentant authoritarian regime, and true political opposition is not allowed. Freedom of expression does not exist in Vietnam, and Vietnamese are locked in prison for simply expressing political opinions.

In the case which is the focus of this resolution, the Vietnamese government has even imprisoned someone from translating into Vietnamese an article entitled "What is Democracy," from the U.S. embassy Web site in Hanoi. It boggles the mind, Mr. Speaker, that the Vietnamese government is so fearful of dissent that it won't even allow citizens to discuss, let alone implement, meaningful democracy.

The Vietnamese government also places severe restrictions on the expression of religious beliefs, particularly upon Buddhists, who do not worship as part of the official church, and upon Christians in the Vietnamese highlands.

With the approval of the U.S.-Vietnam Bilateral Trade Agreement 5 years ago, the political security and economic relationship between the United States and Vietnam has become increasingly more complex, but we must continue to send a strong signal to Hanoi that the United States continues to make it a top priority to promote internationally recognized human rights everywhere, including Vietnam.

Passage of our resolution will indicate to the administration and to the government of Vietnam that we in Congress expect to see real progress on the human rights front in Vietnam, and that we have not forgotten those Vietnamese who are being persecuted for their beliefs.

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

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 3 minutes to my good friend and distinguished colleague from California, Congresswoman LORETTA SANCHEZ.

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of a dangerous man. In Vietnam, Dr. Pham Hong Son is considered a criminal, a man who must be silenced and incarcerated for the good of society.

Is Dr. Pham a violent man, a terrorist, perhaps? Does he advocate the

violent overthrow of his government? No, absolutely not. Dr. Pham is a dangerous man not because of his dangerous actions, but because of his dangerous ideas. Dr. Pham's great crime was to translate articles on democracy into Vietnamese and to write and publish his own articles about democracy and human rights in Vietnam.

Dr. Pham's case is typical of how the government of Vietnam deals with voices of peaceful and patriotic dissent. A case in point is a personal one for me. I was scheduled next week to go to Vietnam. I was interested in talking with their government about issues of human rights and religious freedom, issues that are very important to the people of Orange County, California. Unfortunately, I was informed last night that my visa application was denied by the Vietnamese government for the third time in 2 years, despite the fact that we have welcomed their dignitaries to the United States and that I was personally invited by Madam Ninh, the Vice Chair of the Committee of Foreign Affairs of the Vietnamese National Assembly.

Some of my colleagues continue to push for closer ties with Vietnam through trade relations and military partnerships and other forms of non-humanitarian cooperation and assistance. We, as a Congress, will be asked in the coming months to decide on issues fundamental to the nature of our relationship with Vietnam. Supporting this concurrent resolution today is an important step in the right direction, but I would also ask my colleagues to keep Dr. Pham and others like him in our minds for the future.

Vietnam's actions against its own patriots demonstrate that they are not ready yet to be full partners with the United States. The United States must live by our own professed values, our true values, and we must do everything we can do to protect the human rights of the people of Vietnam.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 3 minutes to our distinguished colleague, my good friend from Texas, Congresswoman SHEILA JACKSON-LEE.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. LANTOS. Again, I express my appreciation to Mr. SMITH, and I express my appreciation to Congresswoman SANCHEZ, who has been a strong stalwart of vocalizing the inconsistencies with the image of Vietnam, a united country, and the reality.

And let me express my personal outrage that Members of Congress extend themselves to a foreign land to be able to be a fact-finder, to find out information, to share that with their constituents; that foreign governments who are welcomed into the United States would be so arrogant as to deny a visa so that information could be written.

I have a personal story, of course, which I did not mention previously in the same way of attempting to visit the Sudan and going through the normal channels and finding that visas

would not be rendered. And they have done that to Members of Congress who are there doing the work of the American people. So to the Vietnamese government, we know what you are and what you are doing.

This is an important resolution that establishes the importance of human rights and dignity in Vietnam. Although the war is behind us, we realize that the Vietnamese people in the United States love democracy. They fled the country because they love democracy, but they want democracy for the existing Vietnam.

The plight of Dr. Pham and many, many others that are now being detained is a poor story, a poor assessment of the outright rejection of human rights and freedom of expression that should be the call of this Nation that claims that it wants to be part of the world human family. So I call upon this issue to be addressed not only by this resolution, which I enthusiastically support, and I thank the authors of this bill, but also for the United Nations to get in gear and get a grip.

The Human Rights Council, Mr. LANTOS, as you well know, has been revised just recently with some difficulty and opposition from the American government because it was a little less strong, if you will, a little less in great depth than we would have wanted it to be, where we could have prevented some of the more heinous actors against human rights from even being on this council. But it is a first step.

Now is the time for the United Nations, along with this resolution, to show itself truly committed to human rights. Do something about the Sudan. Do something about Vietnam. This is not to suggest that we don't want a thriving economy. For years, I voted against the Jackson amendment that deals with trade in Vietnam. Why? Not because I am against Vietnam, Mr. Speaker, but because I want human dignity and human rights.

So I rise in support of this resolution, H. Con. Res. 320, but I am asking that as we put forward this resolution, that institutions that deal with human rights wake up and smell the coffee or the tea and begin to address these questions in a forthright way.

And let me close by simply saying that there is a whole mountain of people that are being detained and their human rights violated. Can we suffer this indignity? I ask that this resolution be supported, and I ask the United Nations to do its job.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days 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 gentleman from New Jersey?

There was no objection.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I would close by especially

thanking Dennis Curry, Eleanor Nagy, and Dan Freeman, our staff who have worked so hard on this resolution. The hearing that we held recently was a very insightful hearing that focused on the ongoing and persistent violations of fundamental human rights in Vietnam. Last year, right before Prime Minister Khai came to the United States, we held another Vietnam human rights hearing, and it was very telling.

We can't reduce human rights to an asterisk or a "see page 3" footnote in our relationship with the government of Vietnam. I would urge every Member, when and if they travel to Vietnam, that they prepare themselves by really understanding the nature of this government. Yes, there may be some modest progress being made in the area of religious freedom, and I underscore the word "modest," but they still are a country of particular concern, so designated by the Department of State because of their egregious violations of religious freedom and the persecution of people, whether they be members of the Montagnards, the Evangelical Christians, or the Unified Buddhist Church, people like the Venerable Thich Quang Do, whom I met with.

Let me say finally that I met with the Venerable Thich Quang Do in his pagoda, as he is under house arrest. When we began to leave, all of a sudden he stopped, and he said, "I take one step beyond this and the guys across the street will have me in handcuffs." That is the reality of what is going on in Vietnam today. I would hope Members, before they go to Hanoi or Ho Chi Minh City, acquaint themselves very thoroughly with the human rights abuses the Vietnamese commit and raise those issues, particularly as it relates to trade.

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Con. Res. 320, calling on the Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam to immediately and unconditionally release Dr. Pham Hong Son and other political prisoners and prisoners of conscience.

The Vietnamese people have endured extensive struggles for many years in their ongoing fight for basic human rights and freedom.

As a member of the Vietnam Caucus, I am dedicated to promoting awareness and policy debates among the U.S. Congress, the American public, and the international community about the greater need for fundamental human rights in the Socialist Republic of Vietnam.

I would like to voice my support for H. Con. Res. 320, as it calls for the immediate release of Dr. Pham Hong Son and other political prisoners of conscience.

In March 2002, Dr. Pham was arrested after he had translated an article entitled "What is Democracy?" from the Web site of the United States Embassy in Vietnam and sent it to both friends and senior party officials. On August 26, 2003, the Vietnamese Supreme Court sentenced Dr. Pham to 5 years in prison, to be followed by 6 years of house arrest.

The arrests of Dr. Pham, along with many others, demonstrate the ongoing human rights abuses and lack of religious freedom in Vietnam. We must continue to bring attention to

these issues, generate pressure on Vietnamese officials, and hold the Vietnamese government accountable.

I am hopeful H. Con. Res. 320 will serve as a small stepping-stone towards the ultimate liberation and freedom of the Vietnamese people, and I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this resolution.

Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of House Concurrent Resolution 320, a resolution that calls for the release of Dr. Pham Hong Son and other political prisoners and prisoners of conscience in Vietnam.

Dr. Pham was imprisoned in 2002 for the simple act of translating a document posted on the U.S. Embassy's website entitled, "What is Democracy?" He has tirelessly worked in non-violent ways to promote democracy and freedom of speech, expression, and association in Vietnam.

But Dr. Pham is not alone. Thousands of peaceful activists have been harassed, imprisoned, or been placed under house arrest for calling for basic human rights in Vietnam. The State Department, the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom, Amnesty International, the Committee to Protect Journalists, and various Vietnamese-American groups have documented egregious violations of religious freedom, human rights, and free speech in the country.

For the past two years, the State Department has designated Vietnam a "country of particular concern" which means Vietnam has been engaged in systematic, ongoing, egregious violations of religious freedom. In company with Vietnam are such human rights violators as Sudan, Burma, China, Iran, and North Korea.

In its 2005 report, the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom states, "the government of Vietnam continues to commit systematic and egregious violations of religious freedom by harassing, detaining, imprisoning, and discriminating against leaders and practitioners from all of Vietnam's religious communities. Religious freedom conditions in Vietnam remain poor, and the overall human rights situation has deteriorated in the past two years."

The Committee to Protect Journalists says, "Press conditions in Vietnam largely stagnated in 2005, despite efforts by the country's leaders to project an image of greater openness. Three writers remained imprisoned on anti-state charges for material distributed online; print and broadcast media continued to work under the supervision of the government; and attacks on journalists were common."

For the past year, Vietnam has sought a new relationship with the United States. Prime Minister Phan Van Khai and several other high-level members of the Vietnamese government visited the U.S. in 2005. But if the Vietnamese government expects to cultivate this new relationship, it must start by respecting basic human rights of all citizens of Vietnam.

I hope this Congress will show strong support for change in Vietnam by unanimously passing House Concurrent Resolution 320 today.

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H. Con. Res. 320 which calls for the immediate and unconditional release of Dr. Pham Hong Son and other political prisoners in Vietnam. The Socialist Republic of Vietnam has been holding prisoners

because of their exercise of basic human rights including freedom of speech, religion, movement, and association.

Dr. Pham Hong Son was indicted and imprisoned for translating an article on the Web site of the U.S. Embassy in Vietnam entitled "What is Democracy?" and circulating the article among friends and senior party officials. He was subsequently sentenced to 13 years imprisonment and 3 years of house arrest on espionage charges after a half-day closed trial that deprived him of due process. The Vietnamese Constitution and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), of which Vietnam is a state party, both protect the rights to freedom of opinion and speech. The government of Vietnam should uphold their obligations under the ICCPR and honor other internationally recognized standards for basic freedoms and human rights before their accession into the World Trade Organization.

The fall of the Republic of Vietnam displaced approximately three million Vietnamese. My late husband Ricardo J. Bordallo was Governor of Guam at the time of Operation New Life. I vividly remember how the Guam community came together in solidarity with the Vietnamese people and worked hard to help comfort these brave individuals who had left all their worldly possessions behind in the name of freedom. The people of Guam empathized with the Vietnamese refugees, and we opened our hearts as well as our island to them. One of my assignments as First Lady was to organize the care for the hundreds of orphan babies that arrived in Operation Baby Lift. This was a moving experience that has remained one of my fondest memories of my husband's first term as Governor of Guam.

Of the 150,000 Vietnamese who arrived on Guam in April 1975, many decided to return to Vietnam to help rebuild their motherland. Unfortunately, those who remained in Vietnam now face a Socialist government that denies them basic human rights of freedom of speech, religion, movement, and association. They deserve the right to a fair trial and due process.

Today, Congress calls on Vietnamese authorities to end all forms of repression against small religious sects and for the release of all Vietnamese political prisoners who have legitimately and peacefully exercised their rights. I urge passage of H. Con. Res. 320.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

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

□ 1230

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 320, 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.

Mr. LANTOS. 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 question will be postponed.

EXPRESSING SENSE OF CONGRESS THAT SAUDI ARABIA SHOULD FULLY LIVE UP TO WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION COMMITMENTS AND END BOYCOTT ON ISRAEL

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 370) expressing the sense of the Congress that Saudi Arabia should fully live up to its World Trade Organization commitments and end all aspects of any boycott on Israel.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 370

Whereas the United States supported the accession of Saudi Arabia to the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 2005;

Whereas, as part of the working party report for the accession of Saudi Arabia to the WTO, Saudi Arabia reiterated its commitment to terminate the secondary and tertiary boycotts on Israel;

Whereas Saudi Arabia also committed not to discriminate against any WTO members and specifically did not invoke the non-application provisions of the WTO Agreement, and thus has rights and obligations to all WTO members, including Israel;

Whereas, in spite of these commitments to WTO members and United States officials, press reports indicate that an official of the Government of Saudi Arabia has stated that Saudi Arabia has not committed to ending the primary boycott on Israel, which would violate Saudi Arabia's WTO obligations toward Israel;

Whereas United States Trade Representative Portman has testified to the Committee on Ways and Means of the House of Representatives that Saudi Arabia's application of the boycott is a "big concern" of the United States; that Saudi Arabia did not invoke non-application of WTO commitments to Israel, so that Saudi Arabia is required to provide nondiscriminatory treatment to Israel; and that the United States Trade Representative has received assurances from Saudi Arabia that it will abide by its WTO commitments; and

Whereas the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) scheduled its "Ninth Meeting of the Liaison Officers of Islamic Regional Officers for the Boycott of Israel" for the week of March 13, 2006, at the OIC's headquarters in Saudi Arabia: Now, therefore, be it

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

(1) Saudi Arabia should maintain and fully live up to its commitments under the World Trade Organization (WTO) and end all aspects of any boycott on Israel; and

(2) the President, the United States Trade Representative, and the Secretary of State—

(A) should continue their active involvement on this issue by strongly urging the Government of Saudi Arabia to comply with its WTO obligations; and

(B) should urge Saudi Arabia to end any boycott on Israel.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SHAW) and the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida.