

Whereas President George W. Bush then stated that the mission in Iraq was to train the security forces of Iraq so that they can do the fighting in Iraq;

Whereas the Pentagon reports that more than 240,000 military and police personnel of Iraq are now trained and equipped;

Whereas on May 1, 2003, President George W. Bush stood under a banner proclaiming "Mission Accomplished" and declared that Iraq was an ally of al Qaeda;

Whereas the report of the 9/11 Commission found no collaborative operational relationship between Iraq and al Qaeda;

Whereas the commander of the Multi-national Forces Iraq, General George Casey, testified before the Senate Committee on Armed Services on September 29, 2005, that "[i]ncreased coalition presence feeds the notion of occupation . . . contributes to the dependency of Iraqi security forces on the coalition . . . [and] extends the amount of time that it will take for Iraqi security forces to become self reliant"; and

Whereas, according to a January 2006 poll, 64 percent of Iraqis believe that crime and violent attacks will decrease when the United States redeploys from Iraq, 67 percent of Iraqis believe that their day-to-day security will increase if the United States redeploys from Iraq, and 73 percent of Iraqis believe that there will be greater cooperation among the political factions of Iraq when the United States redeploys from Iraq: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That—

(1) United States military forces in Iraq are to be redeployed from Iraq by December 31, 2006, or earlier if practicable;

(2) nothing in this resolution prohibits the use of United States military forces from training Iraqi security forces in the region outside of Iraq; and

(3) nothing in this resolution prohibits the use of United States military forces based outside of Iraq to—

(A) conduct targeted and specialized counter-terrorism missions in Iraq; and

(B) protect military and civilian personnel of the United States in Iraq.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 500—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF CONGRESS THAT THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION SHOULD FULLY PROTECT THE FREEDOMS OF ALL RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES WITHOUT DISTINCTION, WHETHER REGISTERED OR UNREGISTERED, AS STIPULATED BY THE RUSSIAN CONSTITUTION AND INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS

Mr. BROWNBACK (for himself, Mr. BIDEN, Mr. SMITH, and Mr. NELSON of Florida) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

Mr. BROWNBACK. Mr. President, I rise today to introduce a resolution whereby the Senate calls upon the Government of the Russian Federation to fully protect the right of individuals to worship and to practice their faith as they see fit. This resolution reiterates provisions on religious freedom that are contained within the Russian Constitution of 1993 and international agreements to which the Russian Federation is a party.

I am especially appreciative for the co-sponsorship of this important resolution by my colleagues and friends, the senior Senator from Delaware, Mr. BIDEN, the junior Senator from Oregon, Mr. SMITH, and the senior Senator from Florida, Mr. NELSON.

It is true that religious practice in Russia today is much freer than during the Soviet era. However, many minority religious communities throughout the Russian Federation continue to suffer harassment and discrimination on the part of some local officials who, either through personal prejudice or misplaced paranoia, see a threat to their society by religious faiths with whom they are unfamiliar.

Until fairly recently, the U.S. Helsinki Commission, which I chair, was receiving troubling reports of several instances of violence against religious minorities in Russia. Arson attacks against churches in Russia have occurred in several towns and cities with little or no police response. I would note that reports of such attacks have decreased in number of late.

I would like to quote from the International Religious Freedom Report for 2005, which is published by the State Department Office on International Religions Freedom annually:

Some Federal agencies and many local authorities continue to restrict the rights of various religious minorities. Moreover, contradictions between Federal and local laws and varying interpretations of the law provide regional officials with opportunities to restrict the activities of religious minorities. Many observers attribute discriminatory practices at the local level to the greater susceptibility of local governments than the Federal Government to discriminatory attitudes in lobbying by local majority religious groups. The government only occasionally intervenes to prevent or reverse discrimination at the local level.

Mr. President, on April 14, 2005, the Helsinki Commission held hearings on the treatment of religious minorities in Russia. Mr. Larry Uzzell, a journalist and researcher specializing in religious liberty issues, noted that Russian bureaucrats had increased the pressure on minority religious confessions, especially by denying them places to worship.

In March 2004, a city court banned the religious activity of Jehovah's Witnesses in Moscow. Since that time, officials in St. Petersburg have been threatening to "liquidate" the Jehovah's Witnesses Administration Center in that city. If the administrative center were to cease to exist, the effect on local congregations could be devastating. Just this month, police in Ivanovo, Russia, reportedly broke up an evangelical event where Bibles were being distributed and detained three members. Catholic parishes in the cities of Sochi and Rostov-on-Don have also had difficulty with local officials in obtaining official permission to use their new church buildings.

Concerning anti-Semitism, on January 11 of this year a "skinhead" attacked worshipers with a knife and

wounded eight persons in the Moscow Headquarters and Synagogue of Agudas Chasidei Chabad of the Former Soviet Union. Thankfully, the Moscow City Court sentenced the attacker to 13 years in prison for attempted murder. However, a copycat attack that followed in Rostov-on-Don was not handled as well, with the perpetrator only being charged with "hooliganism" and given 5 days administrative detention. I urge Russian authorities to be more consistent with their response to these heinous crimes.

Another difficult situation is that of Muslim believers in Russia today, with officials often harassing communities practicing outside of government approved mosques. For instance, there are repeated and credible reports that police are arresting Russian Muslim citizens on charges of terrorism on the basis of fabricated evidence. Certainly Russia has a right to defend itself from terrorism, but I would urge authorities not to sow the seeds of further bitterness and violence through wholesale arrests and unjust trials.

Mr. President, I certainly don't want to suggest that all Russian officials are hostile to religious faith and practice. There are countries with worse far records, and there are many areas of the Russian Federation where the principles of religious freedom are genuinely observed and still others where progress is being made. Moreover, many officials at the federal level have made sincere efforts to see that their government observes its own laws as well as international standards.

This resolution reminds the leadership of the Russian Federation of the critical importance of enforcing Russian constitution and Russia's international commitments on religious freedom. Considering Russia's presidency of the G-8, a grouping of the world's major industrialized democracies, it is time to live up to the standards of religious liberty that characterize the nations of the G-8 and the community of democracies as a whole.

I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

S. RES. 500

Whereas the Russian Federation is a participating State of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and has freely committed to fully respect the rights of individuals, whether alone or in community with others, to profess and practice religion or belief;

Whereas the 1989 Vienna Concluding Document calls on OSCE participating States to "take effective measures to prevent and eliminate discrimination against individuals or communities on the grounds of religion or belief" and to "grant upon their request to communities of believers, practicing or prepared to practice their faith within the constitutional framework of their States, recognition of the status provided for them in the respective countries";

Whereas Article 28 of the Constitution of the Russian Federation declares that "every-one shall be guaranteed the right to freedom of conscience, to freedom of religious worship, including the right to profess, individually or jointly with others, any religion"

and Article 8 of the 1997 Law on Freedom of Conscience and Religious Associations provides for registration for religious communities as "religious organizations," if they have at least 10 members and have operated within the Russian Federation with legal status for at least 15 years;

Whereas religious freedom has advanced significantly for the vast majority of people in Russia since the collapse of the Soviet Union;

Whereas many rights and privileges afforded to religious communities in the Russian Federation remain contingent on the ability of the communities to obtain government registration;

Whereas some religious groups have not attempted to register with government authorities due to theological considerations, and other communities have been unjustly denied registration or had their registration improperly terminated by local authorities;

Whereas many of the unregistered communities in the Russian Federation today were never registered under the Soviet system because they refused to collaborate with that government's anti-religious policies and they are now experiencing renewed discrimination and repression by authorities of the Russian Federation;

Whereas over the past 2 years there have been an estimated 10 arson attacks on unregistered Protestant churches, with little or no effective response by law enforcement officials to bring the perpetrators to justice;

Whereas the Government of the Russian Federation reacted swiftly in response to the January 2006 attack on a Moscow synagogue, but there have been numerous other anti-Semitic attacks against Jews and Jewish institutions in the Russian Federation, and there is increasing tolerance of anti-Semitism in certain segments of society in that country;

Whereas there has been evidence of an increase in the frequency and severity of oppressive actions by security forces and federal and local officials against some Muslim communities and their members;

Whereas there are many cases involving restitution for religious property seized by the Soviet regime that remain unresolved;

Whereas in some areas of the Russian Federation law enforcement personnel have carried out acts of harassment and oppression against members of religious communities peacefully practicing their faith and local officials have put overly burdensome restrictions on the ability of some religious communities to engage in religious activity; and

Whereas the United States has sought to protect the fundamental and inalienable right of individuals to profess and practice their faith, alone or in community with others, according to the dictates of their conscience, and in accordance with international agreements committing nations to respect individual freedom of thought, conscience, and belief: Now, therefore, be it

Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That it is the sense of Congress that the United States Government should—

(1) urge the Government of the Russian Federation to ensure full protection of freedoms for all religious communities without distinction, whether registered or unregistered, and end the harassment of unregistered religious groups by the security apparatus and other government agencies, thereby building upon the progress made over the past 15 years in promoting religious freedom in the Russian Federation;

(2) urge the Government of the Russian Federation to ensure that law enforcement officials vigorously investigate and prosecute acts of violence, arson, and desecration perpetrated against registered and unregistered religious communities, as well as make

certain that government authorities are not complicit in such incidents;

(3) continue to raise concerns with the Government of the Russian Federation over violations of religious freedom, including those against unregistered religious communities, especially indigenous denominations not well known in the United States;

(4) ensure that United States Embassy officials engage local officials throughout the Russian Federation, especially when violations of freedom of religion occur, and undertake outreach activities to educate local officials about the rights of unregistered religious communities;

(5) urge the Government of the Russian Federation to invite the three Personal Representatives of the OSCE Chair-in-Office and the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief to visit the Russian Federation and discuss with federal and local officials concerns about the religious freedom of both registered and unregistered religious communities; and

(6) urge the Council of Europe, its member countries, and the other members of the G-8 to raise issues relating to religious freedom with Russian officials in the context of the Russian Federation's responsibilities both as President of the Council in 2006 and as a member of the G-8.

SENATE RESOLUTION 501—COM-MENDING THE UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA CAVALIERS MEN'S LACROSSE TEAM FOR WINNING THE 2006 NATIONAL COLLEGIATE ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION DIVISION I NATIONAL LACROSSE CHAMPIONSHIP.

Mr. ALLEN (for himself and Mr. WARNER) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 501

Whereas the students, alumni, faculty, and supporters of the University of Virginia are to be congratulated for their commitment to, and pride in, the University of Virginia Cavaliers national champion men's lacrosse team;

Whereas the University of Virginia Cavaliers men's lacrosse team won the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) championship game 15-7 against the University of Massachusetts Amherst Minutemen, and became the first team in NCAA history to finish with a 17-0 record and the 12th team in NCAA history to win the national championship with an undefeated record;

Whereas the University of Virginia Cavaliers men's lacrosse team won the 2006 NCAA Division I National Championship, which was dominated by the Cavaliers possession, due to the impressive play of Drew Thompson who won 8 out of 12 face offs, goals scored by Matt Poskay, Ben Rubeor, Kyle Dixon, and Danny Glading, sparkling goaltending by Kip Turner, and the outstanding performance of NCAA Men's Division I Lacrosse Tournament's Most Outstanding Player Matt Ward;

Whereas the University of Virginia Cavaliers men's lacrosse team added the Division I title to 5 previous national championships;

Whereas every player on the University of Virginia lacrosse team, Will Barrow, Garrett Billings, Mike Britt, Douglas Brody, Patrick Buchanan, Kevin Coale, Chris Conlon, Michael Culver, Joe Dewey, Kyle Dixon, Adam Fassnacht, Drew Garrison, Steve Giannone, Foster Gilbert, Gavin Gill, Danny Glading, Charlie Glazer, Pike Howard, Drew Jordan, Matt Kelly, Ryan Kelly, James King, Jared

Little, J.J. Morrissey, Chris Ourisman, Matt Paquet, Michael "Bud" Petit, Derek Pilipiak, Max Pomper, Matt Poskay, Jack Riley, Ben Rubeor, Tim Shaw, Ricky Smith, Drew Thompson, Mike Timms, Kip Turner, Mark Wade, and Matt Ward, contributed to the team's success in this undefeated championship season;

Whereas the University of Virginia Cavaliers outstanding, creative, and motivational lacrosse Head Coach Dom Starsia has had a successful 14-year tenure as the University of Virginia's head lacrosse coach that includes 3 NCAA Division I Men's Lacrosse National Championships; and

Whereas Assistant Coaches Marc Van Arsdale and Hannon Wright deserve high commendation for their strong leadership and superb coaching support, as well as the dedication of team staff members Lorenzo Rivers, Katie Serenelli, Matt Diehl, Jade White, and Dr. Danny Mistry to the University of Virginia Cavaliers men's lacrosse team: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) congratulates the University of Virginia Cavaliers men's lacrosse team for winning the 2006 National Collegiate Athletic Association Division I, National Championship; and

(2) respectfully requests the Secretary of the Senate to transmit an enrolled copy of this resolution to Dom Starsia of the National Champion University of Virginia Cavaliers and a copy to John T. Casteen III, the president of the University of Virginia.

SENATE RESOLUTION 502—CONGRATULATING ALL THE CONTESTANTS OF THE 2006 SCRIPPS NATIONAL SPELLING BEE

Mr. LAUTENBERG (for himself and Mr. MENDEDEZ) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 502

Whereas the Scripps National Spelling Bee is the largest and longest-running educational promotion in the United States, and is administered by the E.W. Scripps Company and 268 local sponsors, most of whom publish daily and weekly newspapers;

Whereas the 2006 Scripps National Spelling Bee began with 275 competitors from across the United States, American Samoa, the Bahamas, Canada, Europe, Guam, Jamaica, New Zealand, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands, each of whom had qualified for the contest by winning locally-sponsored spelling bees;

Whereas Miss Katharine "Kerry" Close is an 8th-grade student at the H.W. Mountz School in Spring Lake, New Jersey;

Whereas the 13-year-old Miss Close first competed in the Scripps National Spelling Bee as a 9-year-old, tied for 7th place in 2005, and competed for the 5th time this year, sponsored by the Asbury Park Press and the Home News Tribune;

Whereas Miss Close has spent between 1 hour and 2 hours a day looking up words and their origins during the previous 5 years, yet has still found time for sailing, playing soccer, and going to the mall and the movies with her friends;

Whereas Miss Close survived 19 rounds of fierce competition this year and won the 2006 Scripps National Spelling Bee in the 20th round by correctly spelling "ursprache", which is defined as "a parent language, especially one reconstructed from the evidence of later languages"; and

Whereas the achievement of Miss Close brings an immense sense of pride to H.W. Mountz School, her hometown of Spring