

designated for submitting petitions and returned home that same day. However, some people falsely characterized and distorted what happened, claiming that the government suppressed and detained the petitioners. At present, the land-related petition of the Thai Ha Parish is being handled by the responsible agency according to the law.

Muong Nhe: In late April and early May 2011, in the Muong Nhe district of Dien Bien province, some H'Mong extremists deceived, incited, displaced and even forced a number of H'Mong people from several localities to move to some villages in the Muong Nhe district of Dien Bien province. The extremists then called for the establishment of a H'Mong kingdom, to secede from Viet Nam Attempting to foment secession from the Vietnamese nation violates Vietnam's law and causes other threats to law and order. The actions of these extremists also negatively affected the people's lives and livelihood. Due to the bad weather and bad living conditions at the place where the extremists took people, some got sick and one child died.

After the bad experiences suffered by those tricked into following the extremists, the authorities and people's mass organisations in Muong Nhe district were easily able to explain to people how they were misled by the unscrupulous secessionists. The people returned home voluntarily, with local authorities providing them with transportation, food, medication and financial support to help in their resettlement. Only the extremists who broke the law were detained. Those who failed to ignite a split among our people have now spread false and malicious rumours about fighting between the army and demonstrators claiming 'many are wounded and dead'. Nothing could be further from the truth. Now that the people are back in their homes, peace and order has been restored.

In spite of economic difficulties, the Vietnamese government always cares about and supports people in mountainous and remote areas, including the H'Mong people. The government goes to great lengths to help stabilise their lives through socio-economic development programmes and poverty reduction projects as well as promoting their indigenous cultures and languages. In future, the Vietnamese government will continue to promote and fund programmes in housing, healthcare, education and development of production and infrastructure.

Viet Nam has facilitated the travel of foreign press, foreign diplomatic missions (including the U.S. Embassy, EU Delegation and Norwegian embassy) and international media to Muong Nhe to cover the news and learn about the reality there.

Cau Ram Parish: The current Cua Nam garden in Cua Nam ward of Vinh City was formerly the old Cau Ram church. This church was completely destroyed by U.S. bombing. At that time, the authorities of Nghe An allowed Cau Ram parish to build a new church on another plot of land, where the church still stands today. The former site of the church was allocated by the Nghe An People's Committee to the Vinh City People's Committee for the development of a public garden to provide 8 green space to city residents. Since the Cau Ram parish received land for its church to replace the site that was destroyed by U.S. bombs and its former site is now zoned for use as a public park, the request for the return of the former site is groundless.

Local authorities have handled the Cau Ram parish's and parishioners' request in accordance with the law. The Nghe An People's Committee sent an official note to the officials in charge of the Vinh diocese and Cau Ram parish responding to the proposal made by the Cau Ram parish, making clear the government's policy regarding use of public lands. Public opinion also supports the use of the land as a garden. The People's Committee collected public opinion in the newspapers regarding the location for a Martyrs' Memorial, and propose Cua Nam garden as one of 5 possible locations. However, the Nghe An People's Committee did not selected Cua Nam Garden as the place to build the Martyrs' Memorial

On August 17, 2011, the Cau Ram parish held a meeting to sum up its theological works and reward young parishioners. They then made a procession from Cau Ram church to Yen Dai Parish to attend a mass for the Blessed Virgin. As the procession went on, some parishioners violated traffic rules, causing public disorder. Following the mass, parishioners dispersed voluntarily. There was no such thing as building the Martyrs' Memorial as given in some news. No one was arrested or detained.

Con Dau: In Con Dau an urban planning project was implemented—a project that had been announced in advance and discussed with the public and was supported by most households, both religious and non-religious, in the area. To assure harmony, Catholic households who lost land due to eminent domain were given increased compensation by the Da Nang authorities. Despite the fact that this project was carried out in accordance with all laws and regulations, some persons with malicious intentions took advantage of a Christian funeral to incite people and cause chaos, cynically attempting to turn a sacred religious ceremony into a place to vent their hostility.

Ky Dong: In the past, the Redemptorist Church donated the house at No. 8 Ba Huyen Thanh Quan Street, which was just in front the house at No. 38 Ky Dong, District 3, Ho Chi Minh City, to the government to turn it into a school. Now the school has been renovated and has become 'Pre-school No. 9'. The Redemptorist Church would like to now change its mind and has asked for the building back. However, as the transfer was voluntary and accomplished in accordance with Vietnamese law and the building is now properly being used as a school for the education of the children of the district, the church has no legal or other claim as to the site.

CONCLUSION

Vietnam is a diverse country of many nationalities, cultures and religions. We treasure this diversity, including the many religions and faiths that arise from our history and shape our future. In recent years, our laws have developed in parallel with our commitment to freedom of religious expression and worship. As is the case with every country, not every law is always perfectly applied in practice in every instance. However Viet Nam aspires and is working to apply our laws in keeping with our policy of guaranteeing religious rights to our people.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) that the House suspend

the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1410, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

NORTH KOREAN REFUGEE ADOPTION ACT OF 2011

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1464) to develop a strategy for assisting stateless children from North Korea, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1464

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "North Korean Refugee Adoption Act of 2011".

SEC. 2. SENSE OF CONGRESS.

It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) thousands of North Korean children do not have families and are threatened with starvation and disease if they remain in North Korea or as stateless refugees in surrounding countries;

(2) thousands of United States citizens would welcome the opportunity to adopt North Korean orphans living outside North Korea as de jure or de facto stateless refugees; and

(3) the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Homeland Security should make every effort to facilitate the immediate care, family reunification, and, if necessary and appropriate, the adoption of any eligible North Korean children living outside North Korea as de jure or de facto stateless refugees.

SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) FOREIGN-SENDING COUNTRY.—The term "foreign-sending country"—

(A) means—

(i) the country of the orphan's citizenship; or

(ii) if the orphan is not permanently residing in the country of citizenship, the country of the orphan's habitual residence; and

(B) excludes any country to which the orphan—

(i) travels temporarily; or

(ii) travels as a prelude to, or in conjunction with, his or her adoption or immigration to the United States.

(2) HAGUE COUNTRY.—The term "Hague country" means a country that is a signatory of the Convention on Protection of Children and Cooperation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption, done at The Hague on May 29, 1993.

(3) NON-HAGUE COUNTRY.—The term "non-Hague country" means a country that is not a signatory of the Convention on Protection of Children and Cooperation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption, done at The Hague on May 29, 1993.

SEC. 4. STRATEGY ON ADOPTION OF NORTH KOREAN CHILDREN BY UNITED STATES CITIZENS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of State, in consultation with the Secretary of Homeland Security, shall develop a comprehensive strategy for facilitating the adoption of North Korean children by United States citizens.

(b) CONSIDERATIONS.—In developing the strategy under this section, the Secretary shall—

(1) consider the challenges that United States citizens would encounter in attempting to adopt children from North Korea who are currently living in Hague countries and non-Hague countries regardless of their legal status in such countries;

(2) propose solutions to dealing with the situation in which a North Korean refugee child does not have access to a competent authority in the foreign-sending country;

(3) propose solutions to dealing with North Korean refugee children who are not considered habitual residents of the countries in which they are located;

(4) evaluate alternative mechanisms for foreign-sending countries to prove that North Korean refugee children are orphans when documentation, such as birth certificates, death certificates of birth parents, and orphanage documentation, is missing or destroyed;

(5) provide suggestions for working with South Korea to establish pilot programs that identify, provide for the immediate care of, assist in the family reunification of, and assist in the international adoption of, orphaned North Korean children living within South Korea;

(6) provide suggestions for working with international adoption agencies and aid organizations in Asia to identify and establish pilot programs for the identification, immediate care, family reunification, and international adoption of North Korean orphans living outside North Korea as de jure or de facto stateless refugees;

(7) identify other nations in which large numbers of stateless, orphaned children are living who might be helped by international adoption; and

(8) propose solutions for assisting orphaned children with Chinese fathers and North Korean mothers who are living in China and have no access to Chinese or North Korean resources.

(c) REPORTING REQUIREMENT.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of State shall submit a written report to Congress that contains the details of the strategy developed under this section.

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

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I kindly ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to insert extraneous materials into the RECORD on this measure.

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

There was no objection.

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

I rise in strong support of H.R. 1464, the North Korean Refugee Adoption Act, of which I am a proud cosponsor.

I want to thank my good friend from California (Mr. ROYCE), who is the chairman of the Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade on our Foreign Affairs Committee and who is a longtime advocate on North Korean human rights and refugee issues, for introducing this important bill.

We are all too keenly aware of the extreme repression, the malnutrition, and the poverty suffered by so many inside North Korea today. Those threats often take the greatest toll on children.

□ 1820

Imagine what happens when a child's natural protectors—parents—are no longer in the picture. Imagine what happens when that child is born or orphaned inside China when the child lacks legal status or dependable access to social services: malnutrition, abuse, exploitation, lack of education. These are the horrors that are faced by orphans of North Korean origin who are effectively stateless and without protection.

Mr. Speaker, the United States is home to the largest ethnic Korean population outside of Northeast Asia, and many of the nearly 2 million Americans of Korean descent have family ties to North Korea. Numerous American families would like to provide caring homes to these stateless North Korean orphans. H.R. 1464 is a responsible first step toward making that possible.

This bill does not ignore the unique challenges involved with ensuring that North Korean adoptees are genuine orphans and not fraudulent victims of trafficking. It does not change U.S. immigration law, nor the legal standards for adoption. It does not reduce the need for China to begin abiding by its refugee convention obligations to vulnerable North Koreans within its borders. And it does not diminish our commitment to assisting intact refugee families or to reunifying families that are separated.

What it does do, Mr. Speaker, is require that our State Department take a broad look at the diplomatic and documentation challenges facing American families who would like to adopt North Korean orphans and report to Congress on potential strategies to address them.

Doing the right thing is not always easy.

I especially want to applaud those adoptive parents, both past and future, who invest their own lives and homes to provide loving families for some of the world's most endangered children. H.R. 1464 is a welcome step forward, Mr. Speaker, and deserves our unanimous support.

With that, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 1464.

I would like to thank the sponsor of this legislation, the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE), as well as the chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, for their leadership on this issue and for their work in supporting the plight of North Korean refugees.

Despite North Korea's efforts to appear "strong and prosperous" this year

to celebrate the 100th birthday of the country's founder, vast numbers of its people live in dire conditions. Sadly, the North Korean regime's misguided priorities, pouring hundreds of millions of dollars into its so-called "space program," its nuclear programs, and its massive military only underscore its cold-hearted callousness and blatant disregard for its own citizens.

Thousands of North Korean children do not have families to care for them and are threatened with starvation and disease if they remain in North Korea or as refugees in neighboring countries, especially China. Many of the children that have fled the north are hiding and live in mortal fear of being caught and sent back to North Korea where they would face severe punishment and even death. Equally terrifying is the prospect of being sold into bondage by human traffickers in China.

As a beacon of hope for the rest of the world, the United States must do all it can to help these vulnerable and destitute children. That's why I'm proud to be a cosponsor of Mr. ROYCE's legislation, H.R. 1464, the North Korea Refugee Adoption Act. This bill calls on the Secretaries of State and Homeland Security to formulate and report to Congress on a strategy for facilitating the adoption of North Korean children by U.S. citizens. Passage of this bill will be the first step in helping the thousands of North Korean child refugees living alone in foreign lands, and it would provide a glimmer of hope to the American families who would welcome the opportunity to adopt North Korean orphans.

The impending passage of this bill speaks to the broad bipartisan consensus in Congress regarding the atrocious human rights situation in North Korea. As innocent men, women, and children flee the repressive North Korean regime at great personal risk, we have a moral obligation to assist them. H.R. 1464 is not merely about adoption, but also an issue of human rights for the North Korean people. We must continue working to ensure that the North Korean people are not forgotten and that orphaned North Korean children will get the care and support they need.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I'm so pleased to yield 6 minutes to the other gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE), the chairman of the Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation and Trade, and the author of this important bill.

Mr. ROYCE. I thank the gentlelady for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, this is the North Korean Refugee Adoption Act of 2011, and I want to thank Chairman ROS-LEHTINEN and Ranking Member BERMAN for their support of this bill, and also I think we should thank the numerous Korean American organizations

from around this country that tirelessly advocated on behalf of its passage. They are the groups that originally came to me with the heart-wrenching problem that these orphans face, and they suggested an idea for a solution. I would like to recognize the Defense Forum Foundation, the North Korea Freedom Coalition, the Korean Church Coalition for North Korea Freedom, the Korean American Coalition, the Korean Churches for Community Development, the 300 Pastoral Coalition, and the 318 Partners. These are the groups that suggested that with a lot of hard work we might get this legislation through. They put through countless phone calls and meetings and rallies up here on Capitol Hill and I think really helped generate the widespread support that this bill has today.

Of course, the bill stems from the problem that for over 50 years North Korea has been one of the world's most repressive regimes. Every imaginable freedom that we enjoy here—speech or assembly or association or worship, and actually oddly enough, even the right to smile—is denied in North Korea by one statute or another. Meanwhile, the regime's elites live in luxury. Of course, the people, especially in the rural areas of North Korea, starve.

It is little wonder why tens of thousands of North Koreans, many of them women and children, flee to China. For many, it's a last resort. It's a final chance to avoid starvation for those children and avoid unspeakable oppression. Yet that choice is not always an easy one. That path to freedom is very perilous. Those fleeing North Korea often make their journey during the winter, and they cross over that Tumen River as it's frozen. Those temperatures there are subzero, and the terrain is treacherous. It is an obstacle course of checkpoints and of informants, and they make that a very dangerous journey. Sadly, but not surprisingly, many refugees succumb to the elements. There are many bodies frozen along that bank.

Those that survive also face dangers from human traffickers. As one dissident told National Geographic, crossing the Tumen was easy compared to what happened next as she was tricked into getting into a car that belonged to a sex trafficker. For the next year, she remained locked in a room, forced into selling her body. The result of all of this is that many North Korean orphans are left in China. Worse yet, they are stateless and they are without identification. Estimates show that thousands of children are left stateless in the border region between North Korea and China, and there they suffer. If they're sent back to North Korea, they suffer unimaginably.

Mr. Speaker, this is why we need to pass this legislation. This bill is a good first step in responding to this human rights crisis. Specifically, this bill would have the State Department develop a strategy for assisting stateless children from North Korea.

□ 1830

While many American families would welcome the opportunity to adopt a North Korean orphan, many hurdles remain. For example, children must certify that they have lost their parents or legal guardians and that they have absolutely no one to rely on. A child orphan in North Korea would have a very hard time proving that attestation.

Most of these children have great difficulty proving this to their own understanding, and they have no death certificate of parents, and many have no proof that they truly are orphans. By passing this bill, we will be taking an important step towards solving these problems.

We are not committing to any particular policies, but we are committing to doing what we can to help these defenseless children. We are trying to create a win/win for these desperate young ones, orphans living in deplorable conditions and their potential new families.

Again, I thank you, Chairman ROS-LEHTINEN, I thank you for your support, and we thank the numerous American Korean organizations, and we thank Ranking Member BERMAN for all of this help. I urge my colleagues to support this important bill.

Mr. BERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I urge support for the legislation.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I think Mr. ROYCE did a wonderful job in summing up our bipartisan position.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1464.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

CALLING ON VIETNAM TO RESPECT BASIC HUMAN RIGHTS AND CEASE ABUSING VAGUE NATIONAL SECURITY PROVISIONS

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 484) calling on the Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam to respect basic human rights and cease abusing vague national security provisions such as articles 79 and 88 of the Vietnamese penal code, which are often the pretext to arrest and detain citizens who peacefully advocate for religious and political freedom, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 484

Whereas article 79, which penalizes "carrying out activities aimed at overthrowing

the people's administration", carries a maximum penalty of death and is used by the Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam to crack down on citizens advocating for political pluralism or associating with prodemocracy parties, including—

(1) Le Cong Dinh, Tran Huynh Duy Thuc, Nguyen Tien Trung, Le Thang Long, and Tran Anh Kim arrested in 2009;

(2) Cao Van Tinh, Duong Kim Khai, Nguyen Chi Thanh, Nguyen Thanh Tam, Pham Minh Hoang, Pham Ngoc Hoa, Pham Van Thong, and Tran Thi Thuy arrested in 2010; and

(3) Dang Xuan Dieu, Ho Duc Hoa, Ho Van Oanh, Nguyen Dinh Cuong, Nguyen Van Duyet, Nguyen Van Oai, Nguyen Xuan Anh, Nong Hung Anh, Paulus Le Son, Thai Van Dung, and Tran Minh Nhat arrested during the summer of 2011;

Whereas article 88, which penalizes "conducting propaganda against the State", carries a maximum sentence of 12 years imprisonment and is used by the Government of Vietnam to detain writers and bloggers, including—

(1) Father Nguyen Van Ly, Nguyen Phong, and Tran Quoc Hien arrested in 2007;

(2) Nguyen Van Hai ("Dieu Cay"), Nguyen Xuan Nghia, Pham Thanh Nghien, and Pham Van Troi arrested in 2008;

(3) Cu Huy Ha Vu, Phan Thanh Hai, and Vi Duc Hoi arrested in 2010; and

(4) Chu Manh Son, Dinh Dang Dinh, Dinh Van Nhung, Do Van Hoa, Hoang Phong, Lu Van Bay, Nguyen Kim Nhan, Ta Phong Tan, Tran Huu Duc, and Viet Khang arrested in 2011;

Whereas Vietnam is a signatory to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; and

Whereas closer economic and security ties between the United States and Vietnam are ultimately contingent on the Government of Vietnam's respect for basic freedoms: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) condemns the continued and worsening crackdown in the Socialist Republic of Vietnam against community organizers, bloggers, and democracy activists;

(2) calls on the Government of Vietnam to repeal articles 79 and 88 of the Vietnamese penal code and similar vague national security measures used to persecute peaceful political opposition and dissent;

(3) calls on the Government of Vietnam to release all political prisoners, especially all activists, writers, and bloggers who have been detained or sentenced under articles 79 and 88 of the Vietnamese penal code; and

(4) urges the United States Department of State to monitor rule of law developments in Vietnam, to help ensure that Vietnamese laws are administered in ways that are consistent with Vietnam's international human rights commitments.

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

The recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to insert extraneous material into the RECORD on this measure.

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