

will put the Congress on record supporting ECOMOG and other positive institutions in Sierra Leone. Accordingly, I urge my colleagues to support this measure.

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

Mr. CLEMENT. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume. I support this resolution. The United States must take steps to stop the killing, human rights abuses and humanitarian disaster that is taking place in Sierra Leone. This resolution puts the House on record behind a series of actions that would help. It sends an important message to all parties to the conflict as well as to our administration. I urge my colleagues to support the resolution.

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

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Tennessee for his supporting remarks.

Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. EHLERS), the author of this resolution.

Mr. EHLERS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for his support of the bill and thank him also for bringing the bill to the floor.

While our Nation and many nations are very concerned about bloodshed and potential warfare in the Balkans, we tend too often to ignore the problems in Africa, a continent that is in danger of drowning in an ocean of blood if further action is not taken.

A good example of that is the nation of Sierra Leone, a peace-loving nation, which unfortunately on May 27, 1997 suffered a coup in which the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council seized power from Sierra Leone's democratically elected government. It, together with another armed group, the Revolutionary United Front, began a nine-month regime characterized by abuse of power and misgovernment.

The neighboring nation of Sierra Leone decided to take action to end the bloodbath and to restore the democratically elected government. This organization, the Economic Community of West African States, better known as ECOWAS, and its military peacekeeping arm, called ECOMOG, led a West African peacekeeping force in February 1998. This force sought to restore the democratically elected government of Sierra Leone.

Since the civilian government was restored successfully, the deposed military junta has engaged in a campaign of terror against the government, the civilian population and ECOMOG. They have fled into the bush, particularly in the eastern part of the country, and continue their battle of terror from that region.

As a result of this conflict, thousands of civilians have become victims of gross violations of human rights, mostly at the hands of the rebels, the AFRC/RUF. Abuses include physical mutilation, torture, murder. Hundreds

of men, women and children have been abducted, raped, sold into forced labor. Worst of all, young children are being inducted into combat and taught to kill before they are old enough to recognize what they are doing.

Approximately one-quarter million refugees from Sierra Leone have fled into neighboring Guinea and Liberia. The location of the refugee camps does not allow for provision of adequate relief, and it is essential that the ECOMOG forces be able to conquer the rebel forces, which unfortunately are receiving arms from some unknown sources.

There is poor security, a lack of resources and minimal access to these camps, resulting in hundreds of deaths simply because the aid forces are not able to reach those needing relief. Arms and weapons continue to be supplied to the rebels in direct violation of the United Nations arms embargo. The international community has simply failed to respond vigorously and adequately to this growing humanitarian crisis within and outside of Sierra Leone.

Therefore, this resolution urges in the strongest terms that the President and Secretary of State of our Nation give high priority to solving the conflict in Sierra Leone and to bring stability to West Africa in general. It also urges the State Department to give logistical support to ECOMOG and to the government of Sierra Leone. It also condemns the use of children as combatants, and urges the establishment of a secure humanitarian corridor for the safe delivery of food and medicine to all those who are suffering.

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Furthermore, the resolution urges the President and Secretary of State to strictly enforce the United Nations armed embargo on rebel forces. It also urges the President and Secretary of State to work with West African states nations to ensure that there are sufficient African forces and arms provided for peacekeeping.

It is a very serious situation and has resulted in considerable human suffering, and I urge that this resolution be adopted, and once again I thank the gentleman for taking this bill up and yielding this time to me.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I want to commend the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. EHLERS), who is not a member of our committee, for bringing this critical situation to the attention of the floor at this time, and we commend him.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN) that the House suspend the

rules and agree to the resolution H. Res. 559, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

## INTERNATIONAL RELIGIOUS FREEDOM ACT OF 1998

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and take from the speaker's table the bill (H.R. 2431) to establish an Office of Religious Persecution Monitoring, to provide for the imposition of sanctions against countries engaged in a pattern of religious persecution, and for other purposes, with Senate amendments thereto, and concur in the Senate amendments.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The Clerk read the Senate amendments, as follows:

Senate amendments:

Strike out all after the enacting clause and insert:

### SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) *SHORT TITLE.*—This Act may be cited as the "International Religious Freedom Act of 1998".

(b) *TABLE OF CONTENTS.*—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

Sec. 2. Findings; policy.

Sec. 3. Definitions.

### TITLE I—DEPARTMENT OF STATE ACTIVITIES

Sec. 101. Office on International Religious Freedom; Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom.

Sec. 102. Reports.

Sec. 103. Establishment of a religious freedom Internet site.

Sec. 104. Training for Foreign Service officers.

Sec. 105. High-level contacts with nongovernmental organizations.

Sec. 106. Programs and allocations of funds by United States missions abroad.

Sec. 107. Equal access to United States missions abroad for conducting religious activities.

Sec. 108. Prisoner lists and issue briefs on religious freedom concerns.

### TITLE II—COMMISSION ON INTERNATIONAL RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

Sec. 201. Establishment and composition.

Sec. 202. Duties of the Commission.

Sec. 203. Report of the Commission.

Sec. 204. Applicability of other laws.

Sec. 205. Authorization of appropriations.

Sec. 206. Termination.

### TITLE III—NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

Sec. 301. Special Adviser on International Religious Freedom.

### TITLE IV—PRESIDENTIAL ACTIONS

Subtitle I—Targeted Responses to Violations of Religious Freedom Abroad

Sec. 401. Presidential actions in response to violations of religious freedom.

Sec. 402. Presidential actions in response to particularly severe violations of religious freedom.

Sec. 403. Consultations.

Sec. 404. Report to Congress.

Sec. 405. Description of Presidential actions.

Sec. 406. Effects on existing contracts.

Sec. 407. Presidential waiver.

Sec. 408. Publication in Federal Register.

Sec. 409. Termination of Presidential actions.  
Sec. 410. Preclusion of judicial review.

Subtitle II—Strengthening Existing Law

Sec. 421. United States assistance.  
Sec. 422. Multilateral assistance.  
Sec. 423. Exports of certain items used in particularly severe violations of religious freedom.

TITLE V—PROMOTION OF RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

Sec. 501. Assistance for promoting religious freedom.  
Sec. 502. International broadcasting.  
Sec. 503. International exchanges.  
Sec. 504. Foreign Service awards.

TITLE VI—REFUGEE, ASYLUM, AND CONSULAR MATTERS

Sec. 601. Use of Annual Report.  
Sec. 602. Reform of refugee policy.  
Sec. 603. Reform of asylum policy.  
Sec. 604. Inadmissibility of foreign government officials who have engaged in particularly severe violations of religious freedom.  
Sec. 605. Studies on the effect of expedited removal provisions on asylum claims.

TITLE VII—MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

Sec. 701. Business codes of conduct.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS; POLICY.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following findings:

(1) The right to freedom of religion undergirds the very origin and existence of the United States. Many of our Nation's founders fled religious persecution abroad, cherishing in their hearts and minds the ideal of religious freedom. They established in law, as a fundamental right and as a pillar of our Nation, the right to freedom of religion. From its birth to this day, the United States has prized this legacy of religious freedom and honored this heritage by standing for religious freedom and offering refuge to those suffering religious persecution.

(2) Freedom of religious belief and practice is a universal human right and fundamental freedom articulated in numerous international instruments, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the Helsinki Accords, the Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief, the United Nations Charter, and the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.

(3) Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights recognizes that "Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion. This right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship, and observance." Article 18(1) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights recognizes that "Everyone shall have the right to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion. This right shall include freedom to have or to adopt a religion or belief of his choice, and freedom, either individually or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in worship, observance, practice, and teaching". Governments have the responsibility to protect the fundamental rights of their citizens and to pursue justice for all. Religious freedom is a fundamental right of every individual, regardless of race, sex, country, creed, or nationality, and should never be arbitrarily abridged by any government.

(4) The right to freedom of religion is under renewed and, in some cases, increasing assault in many countries around the world. More than one-half of the world's population lives under regimes that severely restrict or prohibit the

freedom of their citizens to study, believe, observe, and freely practice the religious faith of their choice. Religious believers and communities suffer both government-sponsored and government-tolerated violations of their rights to religious freedom. Among the many forms of such violations are state-sponsored slander campaigns, confiscations of property, surveillance by security police, including by special divisions of "religious police", severe prohibitions against construction and repair of places of worship, denial of the right to assemble and relegation of religious communities to illegal status through arbitrary registration laws, prohibitions against the pursuit of education or public office, and prohibitions against publishing, distributing, or possessing religious literature and materials.

(5) Even more abhorrent, religious believers in many countries face such severe and violent forms of religious persecution as detention, torture, beatings, forced marriage, rape, imprisonment, enslavement, mass resettlement, and death merely for the peaceful belief in, change of or practice of their faith. In many countries, religious believers are forced to meet secretly, and religious leaders are targeted by national security forces and hostile mobs.

(6) Though not confined to a particular region or regime, religious persecution is often particularly widespread, systematic, and heinous under totalitarian governments and in countries with militant, politicized religious majorities.

(7) Congress has recognized and denounced acts of religious persecution through the adoption of the following resolutions:

(A) House Resolution 515 of the One Hundred Fourth Congress, expressing the sense of the House of Representatives with respect to the persecution of Christians worldwide.

(B) Senate Concurrent Resolution 71 of the One Hundred Fourth Congress, expressing the sense of the Senate regarding persecution of Christians worldwide.

(C) House Concurrent Resolution 102 of the One Hundred Fourth Congress, expressing the sense of the House of Representatives concerning the emancipation of the Iranian Baha'i community.

(b) POLICY.—It shall be the policy of the United States, as follows:

(1) To condemn violations of religious freedom, and to promote, and to assist other governments in the promotion of, the fundamental right to freedom of religion.

(2) To seek to channel United States security and development assistance to governments other than those found to be engaged in gross violations of the right to freedom of religion, as set forth in the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, in the International Financial Institutions Act of 1977, and in other formulations of United States human rights policy.

(3) To be vigorous and flexible, reflecting both the unwavering commitment of the United States to religious freedom and the desire of the United States for the most effective and principled response, in light of the range of violations of religious freedom by a variety of persecuting regimes, and the status of the relations of the United States with different nations.

(4) To work with foreign governments that affirm and protect religious freedom, in order to develop multilateral documents and initiatives to combat violations of religious freedom and promote the right to religious freedom abroad.

(5) Standing for liberty and standing with the persecuted, to use and implement appropriate tools in the United States foreign policy apparatus, including diplomatic, political, commercial, charitable, educational, and cultural channels, to promote respect for religious freedom by all governments and peoples.

SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) AMBASSADOR AT LARGE.—The term "Ambassador at Large" means the Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom appointed under section 101(b).

(2) ANNUAL REPORT.—The term "Annual Report" means the Annual Report on International Religious Freedom described in section 102(b).

(3) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.—The term "appropriate congressional committees" means—

(A) the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate and the Committee on International Relations of the House of Representatives; and

(B) in the case of any determination made with respect to the taking of President action under paragraphs (9) through (15) of section 405(a), the term includes the committees described in subparagraph (A) and, where appropriate, the Committee on Banking and Financial Services of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs of the Senate.

(4) COMMENSURATE ACTION.—The term "commensurate action" means action taken by the President under section 405(b).

(5) COMMISSION.—The term "Commission" means the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom established in section 201(a).

(6) COUNTRY REPORTS ON HUMAN RIGHTS PRACTICES.—The term "Country Reports on Human Rights Practices" means the annual reports required to be submitted by the Department of State to Congress under sections 116(d) and 502B(b) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961.

(7) EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.—The term "Executive Summary" means the Executive Summary to the Annual Report, as described in section 102(b)(1)(F).

(8) GOVERNMENT OR FOREIGN GOVERNMENT.—The term "government" or "foreign government" includes any agency or instrumentality of the government.

(9) HUMAN RIGHTS REPORTS.—The term "Human Rights Reports" means all reports submitted by the Department of State to Congress under sections 116 and 502B of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961.

(10) OFFICE.—The term "Office" means the Office on International Religious Freedom established in section 101(a).

(11) PARTICULARLY SEVERE VIOLATIONS OF RELIGIOUS FREEDOM.—The term "particularly severe violations of religious freedom" means systematic, ongoing, egregious violations of religious freedom, including violations such as—

(A) torture or cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment;

(B) prolonged detention without charges;

(C) causing the disappearance of persons by the abduction or clandestine detention of those persons; or

(D) other flagrant denial of the right to life, liberty, or the security of persons.

(12) SPECIAL ADVISER.—The term "Special Adviser" means the Special Adviser to the President on International Religious Freedom described in section 101(i) of the National Security Act of 1947, as added by section 301 of this Act.

(13) VIOLATIONS OF RELIGIOUS FREEDOM.—The term "violations of religious freedom" means violations of the internationally recognized right to freedom of religion and religious belief and practice, as set forth in the international instruments referred to in section 2(a)(2) and as described in section 2(a)(3), including violations such as—

(A) arbitrary prohibitions on, restrictions of, or punishment for—

(i) assembling for peaceful religious activities such as worship, preaching, and prayer, including arbitrary registration requirements,

(ii) speaking freely about one's religious beliefs,

(iii) changing one's religious beliefs and affiliation,

(iv) possession and distribution of religious literature, including Bibles, or

(v) raising one's children in the religious teachings and practices of one's choice, or

(B) any of the following acts if committed on account of an individual's religious belief or

practice: detention, interrogation, imposition of an onerous financial penalty, forced labor, forced mass resettlement, imprisonment, forced religious conversion, beating, torture, mutilation, rape, enslavement, murder, and execution.

#### **TITLE I—DEPARTMENT OF STATE ACTIVITIES**

##### **SEC. 101. OFFICE ON INTERNATIONAL RELIGIOUS FREEDOM; AMBASSADOR AT LARGE FOR INTERNATIONAL RELIGIOUS FREEDOM.**

(a) **ESTABLISHMENT OF OFFICE.**—There is established within the Department of State an Office on International Religious Freedom that shall be headed by the Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom appointed under subsection (b).

(b) **APPOINTMENT.**—The Ambassador at Large shall be appointed by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate.

(c) **DUTIES.**—The Ambassador at Large shall have the following responsibilities:

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The primary responsibility of the Ambassador at Large shall be to advance the right to freedom of religion abroad, to denounce the violation of that right, and to recommend appropriate responses by the United States Government when this right is violated.

(2) **ADVISORY ROLE.**—The Ambassador at Large shall be a principal adviser to the President and the Secretary of State regarding matters affecting religious freedom abroad and, with advice from the Commission on International Religious Freedom, shall make recommendations regarding—

(A) the policies of the United States Government toward governments that violate the freedom of religion or that fail to ensure the individual's right to religious belief and practice; and

(B) policies to advance the right to religious freedom abroad.

(3) **DIPLOMATIC REPRESENTATION.**—Subject to the direction of the President and the Secretary of State, the Ambassador at Large is authorized to represent the United States in matters and cases relevant to religious freedom abroad in—

(A) contacts with foreign governments, nongovernmental organizations, and specialized agencies of the United Nations, the Organization on Security and Cooperation in Europe, and other international organizations of which the United States is a member; and

(B) multilateral conferences and meetings relevant to religious freedom abroad.

(4) **REPORTING RESPONSIBILITIES.**—The Ambassador at Large shall have the reporting responsibilities described in section 102.

(d) **FUNDING.**—The Secretary of State shall provide the Ambassador at Large with such funds as may be necessary for the hiring of staff for the Office, for the conduct of investigations by the Office, and for necessary travel to carry out the provisions of this section.

##### **SEC. 102. REPORTS.**

(a) **PORTIONS OF ANNUAL HUMAN RIGHTS REPORTS.**—The Ambassador at Large shall assist the Secretary of State in preparing those portions of the Human Rights Reports that relate to freedom of religion and freedom from discrimination based on religion and those portions of other information provided Congress under sections 116 and 502B of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2151m, 2304) that relate to the right to freedom of religion.

(b) **ANNUAL REPORT ON INTERNATIONAL RELIGIOUS FREEDOM.**—

(1) **DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION.**—On September 1 of each year or the first day thereafter on which the appropriate House of Congress is in session, the Secretary of State, with the assistance of the Ambassador at Large, and taking into consideration the recommendations of the Commission, shall prepare and transmit to Congress an Annual Report on International Religious Freedom supplementing the most recent Human Rights Reports by providing additional

detailed information with respect to matters involving international religious freedom. Each Annual Report shall contain the following:

(A) **STATUS OF RELIGIOUS FREEDOM.**—A description of the status of religious freedom in each foreign country, including—

(i) trends toward improvement in the respect and protection of the right to religious freedom and trends toward deterioration of such right;

(ii) violations of religious freedom engaged in or tolerated by the government of that country; and

(iii) particularly severe violations of religious freedom engaged in or tolerated by the government of that country.

(B) **VIOLATIONS OF RELIGIOUS FREEDOM.**—An assessment and description of the nature and extent of violations of religious freedom in each foreign country, including persecution of one religious group by another religious group, religious persecution by governmental and nongovernmental entities, persecution targeted at individuals or particular denominations or entire religions, the existence of government policies violating religious freedom, and the existence of government policies concerning—

(i) limitations or prohibitions on, or lack of availability of, openly conducted, organized religious services outside of the premises of foreign diplomatic missions or consular posts; and

(ii) the forced religious conversion of minor United States citizens who have been abducted or illegally removed from the United States, and the refusal to allow such citizens to be returned to the United States.

(C) **UNITED STATES POLICIES.**—A description of United States actions and policies in support of religious freedom in each foreign country engaging in or tolerating violations of religious freedom, including a description of the measures and policies implemented during the preceding 12 months by the United States under titles I, IV, and V of this Act in opposition to violations of religious freedom and in support of international religious freedom.

(D) **INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS IN EFFECT.**—A description of any binding agreement with a foreign government entered into by the United States under section 401(b) or 402(c).

(E) **TRAINING AND GUIDELINES OF GOVERNMENT PERSONNEL.**—A description of—

(i) the training described in section 602 (a) and (b) and section 603 (b) and (c) on violations of religious freedom provided to immigration judges and consular, refugee, immigration, and asylum officers; and

(ii) the development and implementation of the guidelines described in sections 602(c) and 603(a).

(F) **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.**—An Executive Summary to the Annual Report highlighting the status of religious freedom in certain foreign countries and including the following:

(i) **COUNTRIES IN WHICH THE UNITED STATES IS ACTIVELY PROMOTING RELIGIOUS FREEDOM.**—An identification of foreign countries in which the United States is actively promoting religious freedom. This section of the report shall include a description of United States actions taken to promote the internationally recognized right to freedom of religion and oppose violations of such right under title IV and title V of this Act during the period covered by the Annual Report. Any country designated as a country of particular concern for religious freedom under section 402(b)(1) shall be included in this section of the report.

(ii) **COUNTRIES OF SIGNIFICANT IMPROVEMENT IN RELIGIOUS FREEDOM.**—An identification of foreign countries the governments of which have demonstrated significant improvement in the protection and promotion of the internationally recognized right to freedom of religion during the period covered by the Annual Report. This section of the report shall include a description of the nature of the improvement and an analysis of the factors contributing to such improvement, including actions taken by the United States under this Act.

(2) **CLASSIFIED ADDENDUM.**—If the Secretary of State determines that it is in the national security interests of the United States or is necessary for the safety of individuals to be identified in the Annual Report or is necessary to further the purposes of this Act, any information required by paragraph (1), including measures or actions taken by the United States, may be summarized in the Annual Report or the Executive Summary and submitted in more detail in a classified addendum to the Annual Report or the Executive Summary.

(c) **PREPARATION OF REPORTS REGARDING VIOLATIONS OF RELIGIOUS FREEDOM.**—

(1) **STANDARDS AND INVESTIGATIONS.**—The Secretary of State shall ensure that United States missions abroad maintain a consistent reporting standard and thoroughly investigate reports of violations of the internationally recognized right to freedom of religion.

(2) **CONTACTS WITH NONGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS.**—In compiling data and assessing the respect of the right to religious freedom for the Human Rights Reports, the Annual Report on International Religious Freedom, and the Executive Summary, United States mission personnel shall, as appropriate, seek out and maintain contacts with religious and human rights nongovernmental organizations, with the consent of those organizations, including receiving reports and updates from such organizations and, when appropriate, investigating such reports.

(d) **AMENDMENTS TO THE FOREIGN ASSISTANCE ACT.**—

(1) **CONTENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS REPORTS FOR COUNTRIES RECEIVING ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE.**—Section 116(d) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2151n(d)) is amended—

(A) by striking “and” at the end of paragraph (4);

(B) by striking the period at the end of paragraph (5) and inserting “; and”; and

(C) by adding at the end the following:

“(6) wherever applicable, violations of religious freedom, including particularly severe violations of religious freedom (as defined in section 3 of the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998).”

(2) **CONTENTS OF HUMAN RIGHTS REPORTS FOR COUNTRIES RECEIVING SECURITY ASSISTANCE.**—Section 502B(b) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2304(b)) is amended—

(A) by inserting “and with the assistance of the Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom” after “Labor”; and

(B) by inserting after the second sentence the following new sentence: “Such report shall also include, wherever applicable, information on violations of religious freedom, including particularly severe violations of religious freedom (as defined in section 3 of the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998).”

##### **SEC. 103. ESTABLISHMENT OF A RELIGIOUS FREEDOM INTERNET SITE.**

In order to facilitate access by nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and by the public around the world to international documents on the protection of religious freedom, the Secretary of State, with the assistance of the Ambassador at Large, shall establish and maintain an Internet site containing major international documents relating to religious freedom, the Annual Report, the Executive Summary, and any other documentation or references to other sites as deemed appropriate or relevant by the Ambassador at Large.

##### **SEC. 104. TRAINING FOR FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICERS.**

Chapter 2 of title I of the Foreign Service Act of 1980 is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

##### **“SEC. 708. TRAINING FOR FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICERS.**

“The Secretary of State, with the assistance of other relevant officials, such as the Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom appointed under section 101(b) of the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 and the

director of the National Foreign Affairs Training Center, shall establish as part of the standard training provided after January 1, 1999, for officers of the Service, including chiefs of mission, instruction in the field of internationally recognized human rights. Such training shall include—

“(1) instruction on international documents and United States policy in human rights, which shall be mandatory for all members of the Service having reporting responsibilities relating to human rights and for chiefs of mission; and

“(2) instruction on the internationally recognized right to freedom of religion, the nature, activities, and beliefs of different religions, and the various aspects and manifestations of violations of religious freedom.”.

**SEC. 105. HIGH-LEVEL CONTACTS WITH NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS.**

United States chiefs of mission shall seek out and contact religious nongovernmental organizations to provide high-level meetings with religious nongovernmental organizations where appropriate and beneficial. United States chiefs of mission and Foreign Service officers abroad shall seek to meet with imprisoned religious leaders where appropriate and beneficial.

**SEC. 106. PROGRAMS AND ALLOCATIONS OF FUNDS BY UNITED STATES MISSIONS ABROAD.**

It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) United States diplomatic missions in countries the governments of which engage in or tolerate violations of the internationally recognized right to freedom of religion should develop, as part of annual program planning, a strategy to promote respect for the internationally recognized right to freedom of religion; and

(2) in allocating or recommending the allocation of funds or the recommendation of candidates for programs and grants funded by the United States Government, United States diplomatic missions should give particular consideration to those programs and candidates deemed to assist in the promotion of the right to religious freedom.

**SEC. 107. EQUAL ACCESS TO UNITED STATES MISSIONS ABROAD FOR CONDUCTING RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—Subject to this section, the Secretary of State shall permit, on terms no less favorable than that accorded other nongovernmental activities unrelated to the conduct of the diplomatic mission, access to the premises of any United States diplomatic mission or consular post by any United States citizen seeking to conduct an activity for religious purposes.

(b) TIMING AND LOCATION.—The Secretary of State shall make reasonable accommodations with respect to the timing and location of such access in light of—

(1) the number of United States citizens requesting the access (including any particular religious concerns regarding the time of day, date, or physical setting for services);

(2) conflicts with official activities and other nonofficial United States citizen requests;

(3) the availability of openly conducted, organized religious services outside the premises of the mission or post;

(4) availability of space and resources; and

(5) necessary security precautions.

(c) DISCRETIONARY ACCESS FOR FOREIGN NATIONALS.—The Secretary of State may permit access to the premises of a United States diplomatic mission or consular post to foreign nationals for the purpose of attending or participating in religious activities conducted pursuant to this section.

**SEC. 108. PRISONER LISTS AND ISSUE BRIEFS ON RELIGIOUS FREEDOM CONCERNS.**

(a) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—To encourage involvement with religious freedom concerns at every possible opportunity and by all appropriate representatives of the United States Government, it is the sense of Congress that officials of the executive branch of Government should

promote increased advocacy on such issues during meetings between foreign dignitaries and executive branch officials or Members of Congress.

(b) PRISONER LISTS AND ISSUE BRIEFS ON RELIGIOUS FREEDOM CONCERNS.—The Secretary of State, in consultation with the Ambassador at Large, the Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, United States chiefs of mission abroad, regional experts, and nongovernmental human rights and religious groups, shall prepare and maintain issue briefs on religious freedom, on a country-by-country basis, consisting of lists of persons believed to be imprisoned, detained, or placed under house arrest for their religious faith, together with brief evaluations and critiques of the policies of the respective country restricting religious freedom. In considering the inclusion of names of prisoners on such lists, the Secretary of State shall exercise appropriate discretion, including concerns regarding the safety, security, and benefit to such prisoners.

(c) AVAILABILITY OF INFORMATION.—The Secretary shall, as appropriate, provide religious freedom issue briefs under subsection (b) to executive branch officials and Members of Congress in anticipation of bilateral contacts with foreign leaders, both in the United States and abroad.

**TITLE II—COMMISSION ON INTERNATIONAL RELIGIOUS FREEDOM**

**SEC. 201. ESTABLISHMENT AND COMPOSITION.**

(a) GENERALLY.—There is established the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom.

(b) MEMBERSHIP.—

(1) APPOINTMENT.—The Commission shall be composed of—

(A) the Ambassador at Large, who shall serve ex officio as a nonvoting member of the Commission; and

(B) 9 other members, who shall be United States citizens who are not being paid as officers or employees of the United States, and who shall be appointed as follows:

(i) 3 members of the Commission shall be appointed by the President.

(ii) 3 members of the Commission shall be appointed by the President pro tempore of the Senate, of which 2 of the members shall be appointed upon the recommendation of the leader in the Senate of the political party that is not the political party of the President, and of which 1 of the members shall be appointed upon the recommendation of the leader in the Senate of the other political party.

(iii) 3 members of the Commission shall be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives, of which 2 of the members shall be appointed upon the recommendation of the leader in the House of the political party that is not the political party of the President, and of which 1 of the members shall be appointed upon the recommendation of the leader in the House of the other political party.

(2) SELECTION.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Members of the Commission shall be selected among distinguished individuals noted for their knowledge and experience in fields relevant to the issue of international religious freedom, including foreign affairs, direct experience abroad, human rights, and international law.

(B) SECURITY CLEARANCES.—Each Member of the Commission shall be required to obtain a security clearance.

(3) TIME OF APPOINTMENT.—The appointments required by paragraph (1) shall be made not later than 120 days after the date of enactment of this Act.

(c) TERMS.—The term of office of each member of the Commission shall be 2 years. Members of the Commission shall be eligible for reappointment to a second term.

(d) ELECTION OF CHAIR.—At the first meeting of the Commission in each calendar year, a majority of the members of the Commission present and voting shall elect the Chair of the Commission.

(e) QUORUM.—Six voting members of the Commission shall constitute a quorum for purposes of transacting business.

(f) MEETINGS.—Each year, within 15 days, or as soon as practicable, after the issuance of the Country Report on Human Rights Practices, the Commission shall convene. The Commission shall otherwise meet at the call of the Chair or, if no Chair has been elected for that calendar year, at the call of six voting members of the Commission.

(g) VACANCIES.—Any vacancy of the Commission shall not affect its powers, but shall be filled in the manner in which the original appointment was made.

(h) ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT.—The Secretary of State shall assist the Commission by providing to the Commission such staff and administrative services of the Office as may be necessary and appropriate for the Commission to perform its functions. Any employee of the executive branch of Government may be detailed to the Commission without reimbursement to the agency of that employee and such detail shall be without interruption or loss of civil service status or privilege.

(i) FUNDING.—Members of the Commission shall be allowed travel expenses, including per diem in lieu of subsistence at rates authorized for employees of agencies under subchapter I of chapter 57 of title 5, United States Code, while away from their homes or regular places of business in the performance of services for the Commission.

**SEC. 202. DUTIES OF THE COMMISSION.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Commission shall have as its primary responsibility—

(1) the annual and ongoing review of the facts and circumstances of violations of religious freedom presented in the Country Reports on Human Rights Practices, the Annual Report, and the Executive Summary, as well as information from other sources as appropriate; and

(2) the making of policy recommendations to the President, the Secretary of State, and Congress with respect to matters involving international religious freedom.

(b) POLICY REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS IN RESPONSE TO VIOLATIONS.—The Commission, in evaluating United States Government policies in response to violations of religious freedom, shall consider and recommend options for policies of the United States Government with respect to each foreign country the government of which has engaged in or tolerated violations of religious freedom, including particularly severe violations of religious freedom, including diplomatic inquiries, diplomatic protest, official public protest demarche of protest, condemnation within multilateral fora, delay or cancellation of cultural or scientific exchanges, delay or cancellation of working, official, or state visits, reduction of certain assistance funds, termination of certain assistance funds, imposition of targeted trade sanctions, imposition of broad trade sanctions, and withdrawal of the chief of mission.

(c) POLICY REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS IN RESPONSE TO PROGRESS.—The Commission, in evaluating the United States Government policies with respect to countries found to be taking deliberate steps and making significant improvement in respect for the right of religious freedom, shall consider and recommend policy options, including private commendation, diplomatic commendation, official public commendation, commendation within multilateral fora, an increase in cultural or scientific exchanges, or both, termination or reduction of existing Presidential actions, an increase in certain assistance funds, and invitations for working, official, or state visits.

(d) EFFECTS ON RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES AND INDIVIDUALS.—Together with specific policy recommendations provided under subsections (b) and (c), the Commission shall also indicate its

evaluation of the potential effects of such policies, if implemented, on the religious communities and individuals whose rights are found to be violated in the country in question.

(e) **MONITORING.**—The Commission shall, on an ongoing basis, monitor facts and circumstances of violations of religious freedom, in consultation with independent human rights groups and nongovernmental organizations, including churches and other religious communities, and make such recommendations as may be necessary to the appropriate officials and offices in the United States Government.

(f) **HEARINGS AND SESSIONS.**—The Commission may, for the purpose of carrying out its duties under this title, hold hearings, sit and act at times and places in the United States, take testimony, and receive evidence as the Commission considers advisable to carry out the purposes of this Act.

#### **SEC. 203. REPORT OF THE COMMISSION.**

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than May 1 of each year, the Commission shall submit a report to the President, the Secretary of State, and Congress setting forth its recommendations for United States policy options based on its evaluations under section 202.

(b) **CLASSIFIED FORM OF REPORT.**—The report may be submitted in classified form, together with a public summary of recommendations, if the classification of information would further the purposes of this Act.

(c) **INDIVIDUAL OR DISSENTING VIEWS.**—Each member of the Commission may include the individual or dissenting views of the member.

#### **SEC. 204. APPLICABILITY OF OTHER LAWS.**

The Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.) shall not apply to the Commission.

#### **SEC. 205. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—There are authorized to be appropriated to the Commission \$3,000,000 for each of the fiscal years 1999 and 2000 to carry out the provisions of this title.

(b) **AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS.**—Amounts authorized to be appropriated under subparagraph (a) are authorized to remain available until expended but not later than the date of termination of the Commission.

#### **SEC. 206. TERMINATION.**

The Commission shall terminate 4 years after the initial appointment of all of the Commissioners.

### **TITLE III—NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL**

#### **SEC. 301. SPECIAL ADVISER ON INTERNATIONAL RELIGIOUS FREEDOM.**

Section 101 of the National Security Act of 1947 (50 U.S.C. 402) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(i) It is the sense of the Congress that there should be within the staff of the National Security Council a Special Adviser to the President on International Religious Freedom, whose position should be comparable to that of a director within the Executive Office of the President. The Special Adviser should serve as a resource for executive branch officials, compiling and maintaining information on the facts and circumstances of violations of religious freedom (as defined in section 3 of the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998), and making policy recommendations. The Special Adviser should serve as liaison with the Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom, the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, Congress and, as advisable, religious nongovernmental organizations.”.

### **TITLE IV—PRESIDENTIAL ACTIONS**

#### **Subtitle I—Targeted Responses to Violations of Religious Freedom Abroad**

#### **SEC. 401. PRESIDENTIAL ACTIONS IN RESPONSE TO VIOLATIONS OF RELIGIOUS FREEDOM.**

(a) **RESPONSE TO VIOLATIONS OF RELIGIOUS FREEDOM.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—

(A) **UNITED STATES POLICY.**—It shall be the policy of the United States—

(i) to oppose violations of religious freedom that are or have been engaged in or tolerated by the governments of foreign countries; and

(ii) to promote the right to freedom of religion in those countries through the actions described in subsection (b).

(B) **REQUIREMENT OF PRESIDENTIAL ACTION.**—For each foreign country the government of which engages in or tolerates violations of religious freedom, the President shall oppose such violations and promote the right to freedom of religion in that country through the actions described in subsection (b).

(2) **BASIS OF ACTIONS.**—Each action taken under paragraph (1)(B) shall be based upon information regarding violations of religious freedom, as described in the latest Country Reports on Human Rights Practices, the Annual Report and Executive Summary, and on any other evidence available, and shall take into account any findings or recommendations by the Commission with respect to the foreign country.

(b) **PRESIDENTIAL ACTIONS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Subject to paragraphs (2) and (3), the President, in consultation with the Secretary of State, the Ambassador at Large, the Special Adviser, and the Commission, shall, as expeditiously as practicable in response to the violations described in subsection (a) by the government of a foreign country—

(A) take one or more of the actions described in paragraphs (1) through (15) of section 405(a) (or commensurate action in substitution thereto) with respect to such country; or

(B) negotiate and enter into a binding agreement with the government of such country, as described in section 405(c).

(2) **DEADLINE FOR ACTIONS.**—Not later than September 1 of each year, the President shall take action under any of the paragraphs (1) through (15) of section 405(a) (or commensurate action in substitution thereto) with respect to each foreign country the government of which has engaged in or tolerated violations of religious freedom at any time since September 1 of the preceding year, except that in the case of action under any of the paragraphs (9) through (15) of section 405(a) (or commensurate action in substitution thereto)—

(A) the action may only be taken after the requirements of sections 403 and 404 have been satisfied; and

(B) the September 1 limitation shall not apply.

(3) **AUTHORITY FOR DELAY OF PRESIDENTIAL ACTIONS.**—The President may delay action under paragraph (2) described in any of the paragraphs (9) through (15) of section 405(a) (or commensurate action in substitution thereto) if he determines and certifies to Congress that a single, additional period of time, not to exceed 90 days, is necessary pursuant to the same provisions applying to countries of particular concern for religious freedom under section 402(c)(3).

(c) **IMPLEMENTATION.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—In carrying out subsection (b), the President shall—

(A) take the action or actions that most appropriately respond to the nature and severity of the violations of religious freedom;

(B) seek to the fullest extent possible to target action as narrowly as practicable with respect to the agency or instrumentality of the foreign government, or specific officials thereof, that are responsible for such violations; and

(C) when appropriate, make every reasonable effort to conclude a binding agreement concerning the cessation of such violations in countries with which the United States has diplomatic relations.

(2) **GUIDELINES FOR PRESIDENTIAL ACTIONS.**—In addition to the guidelines under paragraph (1), the President, in determining whether to take a Presidential action under paragraphs (9) through (15) of section 405(a) (or commensurate action in substitution thereto), shall seek to minimize any adverse impact on—

(A) the population of the country whose government is targeted by the Presidential action or actions; and

(B) the humanitarian activities of United States and foreign nongovernmental organizations in such country.

#### **SEC. 402. PRESIDENTIAL ACTIONS IN RESPONSE TO PARTICULARLY SEVERE VIOLATIONS OF RELIGIOUS FREEDOM.**

(a) **RESPONSE TO PARTICULARLY SEVERE VIOLATIONS OF RELIGIOUS FREEDOM.**—

(1) **UNITED STATES POLICY.**—It shall be the policy of the United States—

(A) to oppose particularly severe violations of religious freedom that are or have been engaged in or tolerated by the governments of foreign countries; and

(B) to promote the right to freedom of religion in those countries through the actions described in subsection (c).

(2) **REQUIREMENT OF PRESIDENTIAL ACTION.**—Whenever the President determines that the government of a foreign country has engaged in or tolerated particularly severe violations of religious freedom, the President shall oppose such violations and promote the right to religious freedom through one or more of the actions described in subsection (c).

(b) **DESIGNATIONS OF COUNTRIES OF PARTICULAR CONCERN FOR RELIGIOUS FREEDOM.**—

(1) **ANNUAL REVIEW.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than September 1 of each year, the President shall review the status of religious freedom in each foreign country to determine whether the government of that country has engaged in or tolerated particularly severe violations of religious freedom in that country during the preceding 12 months or since the date of the last review of that country under this subparagraph, whichever period is longer. The President shall designate each country the government of which has engaged in or tolerated violations described in this subparagraph as a country of particular concern for religious freedom.

(B) **BASIS OF REVIEW.**—Each review conducted under subparagraph (A) shall be based upon information contained in the latest Country Reports on Human Rights Practices, the Annual Report, and on any other evidence available and shall take into account any findings or recommendations by the Commission with respect to the foreign country.

(C) **IMPLEMENTATION.**—Any review under subparagraph (A) of a foreign country may take place singly or jointly with the review of one or more countries and may take place at any time prior to September 1 of the respective year.

(2) **DETERMINATIONS OF RESPONSIBLE PARTIES.**—For the government of each country designated as a country of particular concern for religious freedom under paragraph (1)(A), the President shall seek to determine the agency or instrumentality thereof and the specific officials thereof that are responsible for the particularly severe violations of religious freedom engaged in or tolerated by that government in order to appropriately target Presidential actions under this section in response.

(3) **CONGRESSIONAL NOTIFICATION.**—Whenever the President designates a country as a country of particular concern for religious freedom under paragraph (1)(A), the President shall, as soon as practicable after the designation is made, transmit to the appropriate congressional committees—

(A) the designation of the country, signed by the President; and

(B) the identification, if any, of responsible parties determined under paragraph (2).

(c) **PRESIDENTIAL ACTIONS WITH RESPECT TO COUNTRIES OF PARTICULAR CONCERN FOR RELIGIOUS FREEDOM.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Subject to paragraphs (2), (3), and (4) with respect to each country of particular concern for religious freedom designated under subsection (b)(1)(A), the President shall, after the requirements of sections 403 and 404

have been satisfied, but not later than 90 days (or 180 days in case of a delay under paragraph (3)) after the date of designation of the country under that subsection, carry out one or more of the following actions under subparagraph (A) or subparagraph (B):

(A) **PRESIDENTIAL ACTIONS.**—One or more of the Presidential actions described in paragraphs (9) through (15) of section 405(a), as determined by the President.

(B) **COMMENSURATE ACTIONS.**—Commensurate action in substitution to any action described in subparagraph (A).

(2) **SUBSTITUTION OF BINDING AGREEMENTS.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—In lieu of carrying out action under paragraph (1), the President may conclude a binding agreement with the respective foreign government as described in section 405(c). The existence of a binding agreement under this paragraph with a foreign government may be considered by the President prior to making any determination or taking any action under this title.

(B) **STATUTORY CONSTRUCTION.**—Nothing in this paragraph may be construed to authorize the entry of the United States into an agreement covering matters outside the scope of violations of religious freedom.

(3) **AUTHORITY FOR DELAY OF PRESIDENTIAL ACTIONS.**—If, on or before the date that the President is required (but for this paragraph) to take action under paragraph (1), the President determines and certifies to Congress that a single, additional period of time not to exceed 90 days is necessary—

(A) for a continuation of negotiations that have been commenced with the government of that country to bring about a cessation of the violations by the foreign country;

(B) for a continuation of multilateral negotiations into which the United States has entered to bring about a cessation of the violations by the foreign country;

(C)(i) for a review of corrective action taken by the foreign country after designation of such country as a country of particular concern; or

(ii) in anticipation that corrective action will be taken by the foreign country during the 90-day period, then the President shall not be required to take action until the expiration of that period of time.

(4) **EXCEPTION FOR ONGOING PRESIDENTIAL ACTION.**—The President shall not be required to take action pursuant to this subsection in the case of a country of particular concern for religious freedom, if with respect to such country—

(A) the President has taken action pursuant to this Act in a preceding year;

(B) such action is in effect at the time the country is designated as a country of particular concern for religious freedom under this section;

(C) the President reports to Congress the information described in section 404(a) (1), (2), (3), and (4) regarding the actions in effect with respect to the country; and

(D) at the time the President determines a country to be a country of particular concern, if that country is already subject to multiple, broad-based sanctions imposed in significant part in response to human rights abuses, and such sanctions are ongoing, the President may determine that one or more of these sanctions also satisfies the requirements of this subsection. In a report to Congress pursuant to section 404(a) (1), (2), (3), and (4), and, as applicable, to section 408, the President must designate the specific sanction or sanctions which he determines satisfy the requirements of this subsection. The sanctions so designated shall remain in effect subject to section 409 of this Act.

(d) **STATUTORY CONSTRUCTION.**—A determination under this Act, or any amendment made by this Act, that a foreign country has engaged in or tolerated particularly severe violations of religious freedom shall not be construed to require the termination of assistance or other activities with respect to that country under any other

provision of law, including section 116 or 502B of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2151n, 2304).

#### SEC. 403. CONSULTATIONS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—As soon as practicable after the President decides to take action under section 401 in response to violations of religious freedom and the President decides to take action under paragraphs (9) through (15) of section 405(a) (or commensurate action in substitution thereto) with respect to that country, or not later than 90 days after the President designates a country as a country of particular concern for religious freedom under section 402, as the case may be, the President shall carry out the consultations required in this section.

(b) **DUTY TO CONSULT WITH FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS PRIOR TO TAKING PRESIDENTIAL ACTIONS.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The President shall—

(A) request consultation with the government of such country regarding the violations giving rise to designation of that country as a country of particular concern for religious freedom or to Presidential action under section 401; and

(B) if agreed to, enter into such consultations, privately or publicly.

(2) **USE OF MULTILATERAL FORA.**—If the President determines it to be appropriate, such consultations may be sought and may occur in a multilateral forum, but, in any event, the President shall consult with appropriate foreign governments for the purposes of achieving a coordinated international policy on actions that may be taken with respect to a country described in subsection (a), prior to implementing any such action.

(3) **ELECTION OF NONDISCLOSURE OF NEGOTIATIONS TO PUBLIC.**—If negotiations are undertaken or an agreement is concluded with a foreign government regarding steps to cease the pattern of violations by that government, and if public disclosure of such negotiations or agreement would jeopardize the negotiations or the implementation of such agreement, as the case may be, the President may refrain from disclosing such negotiations and such agreement to the public, except that the President shall inform the appropriate congressional committees of the nature and extent of such negotiations and any agreement reached.

(c) **DUTY TO CONSULT WITH HUMANITARIAN ORGANIZATIONS.**—The President should consult with appropriate humanitarian and religious organizations concerning the potential impact of United States policies to promote freedom of religion in countries described in subsection (a).

(d) **DUTY TO CONSULT WITH UNITED STATES INTERESTED PARTIES.**—The President shall, as appropriate, consult with United States interested parties as to the potential impact of intended Presidential action or actions in countries described in subsection (a) on economic or other interests of the United States.

#### SEC. 404. REPORT TO CONGRESS.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Subject to subsection (b), not later than 90 days after the President decides to take action under section 401 in response to violations of religious freedom and the President decides to take action under paragraphs (9) through (15) of section 405(a) (or commensurate action in substitution thereto) with respect to that country, or not later than 90 days after the President designates a country as a country of particular concern for religious freedom under section 402, as the case may be, the President shall submit a report to Congress containing the following:

(1) **IDENTIFICATION OF PRESIDENTIAL ACTIONS.**—An identification of the Presidential action or actions described in paragraphs (9) through (15) of section 405(a) (or commensurate action in substitution thereto) to be taken with respect to the foreign country.

(2) **DESCRIPTION OF VIOLATIONS.**—A description of the violations giving rise to the Presidential action or actions to be taken.

(3) **PURPOSE OF PRESIDENTIAL ACTIONS.**—A description of the purpose of the Presidential action or actions.

(4) **EVALUATION.**—

(A) **DESCRIPTION.**—An evaluation, in consultation with the Secretary of State, the Ambassador at Large, the Commission, the Special Adviser, the parties described in section 403 (c) and (d), and whoever else the President deems appropriate, of—

(i) the impact upon the foreign government;

(ii) the impact upon the population of the country; and

(iii) the impact upon the United States economy and other interested parties.

(B) **AUTHORITY TO WITHHOLD DISCLOSURE.**—The President may withhold part or all of such evaluation from the public but shall provide the entire evaluation to Congress.

(5) **STATEMENT OF POLICY OPTIONS.**—A statement that noneconomic policy options designed to bring about cessation of the particularly severe violations of religious freedom have reasonably been exhausted, including the consultations required in section 403.

(6) **DESCRIPTION OF MULTILATERAL NEGOTIATIONS.**—A description of multilateral negotiations sought or carried out, if appropriate and applicable.

(b) **DELAY IN TRANSMITTAL OF REPORT.**—If, on or before the date that the President is required (but for this subsection) to submit a report under subsection (a) to Congress, the President determines and certifies to Congress that a single, additional period of time not to exceed 90 days is necessary pursuant to section 401(b)(3) or section 402(c)(3), then the President shall not be required to submit the report to Congress until the expiration of that period of time.

#### SEC. 405. DESCRIPTION OF PRESIDENTIAL ACTIONS.

(a) **DESCRIPTION OF PRESIDENTIAL ACTIONS.**—Except as provided in subsection (d), the Presidential actions referred to in this subsection are the following:

(1) A private demarche.

(2) An official public demarche.

(3) A public condemnation.

(4) A public condemnation within one or more multilateral fora.

(5) The delay or cancellation of one or more scientific exchanges.

(6) The delay or cancellation of one or more cultural exchanges.

(7) The denial of one or more working, official, or state visits.

(8) The delay or cancellation of one or more working, official, or state visits.

(9) The withdrawal, limitation, or suspension of United States development assistance in accordance with section 116 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961.

(10) Directing the Export-Import Bank of the United States, the Overseas Private Investment Corporation, or the Trade and Development Agency not to approve the issuance of any (or a specified number of) guarantees, insurance, extensions of credit, or participations in the extension of credit with respect to the specific government, agency, instrumentality, or official found or determined by the President to be responsible for violations under section 401 or 402.

(11) The withdrawal, limitation, or suspension of United States security assistance in accordance with section 502B of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961.

(12) Consistent with section 701 of the International Financial Institutions Act of 1977, directing the United States executive directors of international financial institutions to oppose and vote against loans primarily benefiting the specific foreign government, agency, instrumentality, or official found or determined by the President to be responsible for violations under section 401 or 402.

(13) Ordering the heads of the appropriate United States agencies not to issue any (or a specified number of) specific licenses, and not to



grant any other specific authority (or a specified number of authorities), to export any goods or technology to the specific foreign government, agency, instrumentality, or official found or determined by the President to be responsible for violations under section 401 or 402, under—

(A) the Export Administration Act of 1979;

(B) the Arms Export Control Act;

(C) the Atomic Energy Act of 1954; or

(D) any other statute that requires the prior review and approval of the United States Government as a condition for the export or reexport of goods or services.

(14) Prohibiting any United States financial institution from making loans or providing credits totaling more than \$10,000,000 in any 12-month period to the specific foreign government, agency, instrumentality, or official found or determined by the President to be responsible for violations under section 401 or 402.

(15) Prohibiting the United States Government from procuring, or entering into any contract for the procurement of, any goods or services from the foreign government, entities, or officials found or determined by the President to be responsible for violations under section 401 or 402.

(b) **COMMENSURATE ACTION.**—Except as provided in subsection (d), the President may substitute any other action authorized by law for any action described in paragraphs (1) through (15) of subsection (a) if such action is commensurate in effect to the action substituted and if the action would further the policy of the United States set forth in section 2(b) of this Act. The President shall seek to take all appropriate and feasible actions authorized by law to obtain the cessation of the violations. If commensurate action is taken, the President shall report such action, together with an explanation for taking such action, to the appropriate congressional committees.

(c) **BINDING AGREEMENTS.**—The President may negotiate and enter into a binding agreement with a foreign government that obligates such government to cease, or take substantial steps to address and phase out, the act, policy, or practice constituting the violation of religious freedom. The entry into force of a binding agreement for the cessation of the violations shall be a primary objective for the President in responding to a foreign government that has engaged in or tolerated particularly severe violations of religious freedom.

(d) **EXCEPTIONS.**—Any action taken pursuant to subsection (a) or (b) may not prohibit or restrict the provision of medicine, medical equipment or supplies, food, or other humanitarian assistance.

#### SEC. 406. EFFECTS ON EXISTING CONTRACTS.

The President shall not be required to apply or maintain any Presidential action under this subtitle—

(1) in the case of procurement of defense articles or defense services—

(A) under existing contracts or subcontracts, including the exercise of options for production quantities, to satisfy requirements essential to the national security of the United States;

(B) if the President determines in writing and so reports to Congress that the person or other entity to which the Presidential action would otherwise be applied is a sole source supplier of the defense articles or services, that the defense articles or services are essential, and that alternative sources are not readily or reasonably available; or

(C) if the President determines in writing and so reports to Congress that such articles or services are essential to the national security under defense coproduction agreements; or

(2) to products or services provided under contracts entered into before the date on which the President publishes his intention to take the Presidential action.

#### SEC. 407. PRESIDENTIAL WAIVER.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Subject to subsection (b), the President may waive the application of any

of the actions described in paragraphs (9) through (15) of section 405(a) (or commensurate action in substitution thereto) with respect to a country, if the President determines and so reports to the appropriate congressional committees that—

(1) the respective foreign government has ceased the violations giving rise to the Presidential action;

(2) the exercise of such waiver authority would further the purposes of this Act; or

(3) the important national interest of the United States requires the exercise of such waiver authority.

(b) **CONGRESSIONAL NOTIFICATION.**—Not later than the date of the exercise of a waiver under subsection (a), the President shall notify the appropriate congressional committees of the waiver or the intention to exercise the waiver, together with a detailed justification thereof.

#### SEC. 408. PUBLICATION IN FEDERAL REGISTER.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Subject to subsection (b), the President shall cause to be published in the Federal Register the following:

(1) **DETERMINATIONS OF GOVERNMENTS, OFFICIALS, AND ENTITIES OF PARTICULAR CONCERN.**—Any designation of a country of particular concern for religious freedom under section 402(b)(1), together with, when applicable and to the extent practicable, the identities of the officials or entities determined to be responsible for the violations under section 402(b)(2).

(2) **PRESIDENTIAL ACTIONS.**—A description of any Presidential action under paragraphs (9) through (15) of section 405(a) (or commensurate action in substitution thereto) and the effective date of the Presidential action.

(3) **DELAYS IN TRANSMITTAL OF PRESIDENTIAL ACTION REPORTS.**—Any delay in transmittal of a Presidential action report, as described in section 404(b).

(4) **WAIVERS.**—Any waiver under section 407.

(b) **LIMITED DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION.**—The President may limit publication of information under this section in the same manner and to the same extent as the President may limit the publication of findings and determinations described in section 654(c) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2414(c)), if the President determines that the publication of information under this section—

(1) would be harmful to the national security of the United States; or

(2) would not further the purposes of this Act.

#### SEC. 409. TERMINATION OF PRESIDENTIAL ACTIONS.

Any Presidential action taken under this Act with respect to a foreign country shall terminate on the earlier of the following dates:

(1) **TERMINATION DATE.**—Within 2 years of the effective date of the Presidential action unless expressly reauthorized by law.

(2) **FOREIGN GOVERNMENT ACTIONS.**—Upon the determination by the President, in consultation with the Commission, and certification to Congress that the foreign government has ceased or taken substantial and verifiable steps to cease the particularly severe violations of religious freedom.

#### SEC. 410. PRECLUSION OF JUDICIAL REVIEW.

No court shall have jurisdiction to review any Presidential determination or agency action under this Act or any amendment made by this Act.

#### Subtitle II—Strengthening Existing Law

#### SEC. 421. UNITED STATES ASSISTANCE.

(a) **IMPLEMENTATION OF PROHIBITION ON ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE.**—Section 116(c) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2151n(c)) is amended—

(1) in the text above paragraph (1), by inserting “and in consultation with the Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom” after “Labor”.

(2) by striking “and” at the end of paragraph (1);

(3) by striking the period at the end of paragraph (2) and inserting “; and”; and

(4) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(3) whether the government—

“(A) has engaged in or tolerated particularly severe violations of religious freedom, as defined in section 3 of the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998; or

“(B) has failed to undertake serious and sustained efforts to combat particularly severe violations of religious freedom (as defined in section 3 of the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998), when such efforts could have been reasonably undertaken.”.

(b) **IMPLEMENTATION OF PROHIBITION ON MILITARY ASSISTANCE.**—Section 502B(a) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2304(a)) is amended by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(4) In determining whether the government of a country engages in a consistent pattern of gross violations of internationally recognized human rights, the President shall give particular consideration to whether the government—

“(A) has engaged in or tolerated particularly severe violations of religious freedom, as defined in section 3 of the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998; or

“(B) has failed to undertake serious and sustained efforts to combat particularly severe violations of religious freedom when such efforts could have been reasonably undertaken.”.

#### SEC. 422. MULTILATERAL ASSISTANCE.

Section 701 of the International Financial Institutions Act (22 U.S.C. 262d) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(g) In determining whether the government of a country engages in a pattern of gross violations of internationally recognized human rights, as described in subsection (a), the President shall give particular consideration to whether a foreign government—

“(1) has engaged in or tolerated particularly severe violations of religious freedom, as defined in section 3 of the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998; or

“(2) has failed to undertake serious and sustained efforts to combat particularly severe violations of religious freedom when such efforts could have been reasonably undertaken.”.

#### SEC. 423. EXPORTS OF CERTAIN ITEMS USED IN PARTICULARLY SEVERE VIOLATIONS OF RELIGIOUS FREEDOM.

(a) **MANDATORY LICENSING.**—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary of Commerce, with the concurrence of the Secretary of State, shall include on the list of crime control and detection instruments or equipment controlled for export and reexport under section 6(n) of the Export Administration Act of 1979 (22 U.S.C. App. 2405(n)), or under any other provision of law, items being exported or reexported to countries of particular concern for religious freedom that the Secretary of Commerce, with the concurrence of the Secretary of State, and in consultation with appropriate officials including the Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights and Labor and the Ambassador at Large, determines are being used or are intended for use directly and in significant measure to carry out particularly severe violations of religious freedom.

(b) **LICENSING BAN.**—The prohibition on the issuance of a license for export of crime control and detection instruments or equipment under section 502B(a)(2) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2304(a)(2)) shall apply to the export and reexport of any item included pursuant to subsection (a) on the list of crime control instruments.

#### TITLE V—PROMOTION OF RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

#### SEC. 501. ASSISTANCE FOR PROMOTING RELIGIOUS FREEDOM.

(a) **FINDINGS.**—Congress makes the following findings:

(1) In many nations where severe violations of religious freedom occur, there is not sufficient statutory legal protection for religious minorities or there is not sufficient cultural and social understanding of international norms of religious freedom.

(2) Accordingly, in the provision of foreign assistance, the United States should make a priority of promoting and developing legal protections and cultural respect for religious freedom.

(b) ALLOCATION OF FUNDS FOR INCREASED PROMOTION OF RELIGIOUS FREEDOMS.—Section 116(e) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2151n(e)) is amended by inserting “, including the right to free religious belief and practice” after “adherence to civil and political rights”.

#### SEC. 502. INTERNATIONAL BROADCASTING.

Section 303(a) of the United States International Broadcasting Act of 1994 (22 U.S.C. 6202(a)) is amended—

(1) by striking “and” at the end of paragraph (6);

(2) by striking the period at the end of paragraph (7) and inserting “; and”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(8) promote respect for human rights, including freedom of religion.”.

#### SEC. 503. INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGES.

Section 102(b) of the Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2452(b)) is amended—

(1) by striking “and” after paragraph (10);

(2) by striking the period at the end of paragraph (11) and inserting “; and”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

“(12) promoting respect for and guarantees of religious freedom abroad by interchanges and visits between the United States and other nations of religious leaders, scholars, and religious and legal experts in the field of religious freedom.”.

#### SEC. 504. FOREIGN SERVICE AWARDS.

(a) PERFORMANCE PAY.—Section 405(d) of the Foreign Service Act of 1980 (22 U.S.C. 3965(d)) is amended by inserting after the first sentence the following: “Such service in the promotion of internationally recognized human rights, including the right to freedom of religion, shall serve as a basis for granting awards under this section.”.

(b) FOREIGN SERVICE AWARDS.—Section 614 of the Foreign Service Act of 1980 (22 U.S.C. 4013) is amended by adding at the end the following new sentence: “Distinguished, meritorious service in the promotion of internationally recognized human rights, including the right to freedom of religion, shall serve as a basis for granting awards under this section.”.

### TITLE VI—REFUGEE, ASYLUM, AND CONSULAR MATTERS

#### SEC. 601. USE OF ANNUAL REPORT.

The Annual Report, together with other relevant documentation, shall serve as a resource for immigration judges and consular, refugee, and asylum officers in cases involving claims of persecution on the grounds of religion. Absence of reference by the Annual Report to conditions described by the alien shall not constitute the sole grounds for a denial of the alien's claim.

#### SEC. 602. REFORM OF REFUGEE POLICY.

(a) TRAINING.—Section 207 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1157) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(f)(1) The Attorney General, in consultation with the Secretary of State, shall provide all United States officials adjudicating refugee cases under this section with the same training as that provided to officers adjudicating asylum cases under section 208.

“(2) Such training shall include country-specific conditions, instruction on the internationally recognized right to freedom of religion, instruction on methods of religious persecution practiced in foreign countries, and applicable

distinctions within a country between the nature of and treatment of various religious practices and believers.”.

(b) TRAINING FOR FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICERS.—Section 708 of the Foreign Service Act of 1980, as added by section 104 of this Act, is further amended—

(1) by inserting “(a)” before “The Secretary of State”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(b) The Secretary of State shall provide sessions on refugee law and adjudications and on religious persecution to each individual seeking a commission as a United States consular officer. The Secretary shall also ensure that any member of the Service who is assigned to a position that may be called upon to assess requests for consideration for refugee admissions, including any consular officer, has completed training on refugee law and refugee adjudications in addition to the training required in this section.”.

(c) GUIDELINES FOR REFUGEE-PROCESSING POSTS.—

(1) GUIDELINES FOR ADDRESSING HOSTILE BIASES.—The Attorney General and the Secretary of State shall develop and implement guidelines that address potential biases in personnel of the Immigration and Naturalization Service that are hired abroad and involved with duties which could constitute an effective barrier to a refugee claim if such personnel carries a bias against the claimant on the grounds of religion, race, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion. The subject matter of this training should be culturally sensitive and tailored to provide a nonbiased, non-adversarial atmosphere for the purpose of refugee adjudications.

(2) GUIDELINES FOR REFUGEE-PROCESSING POSTS IN ESTABLISHING AGREEMENTS WITH UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT-DESIGNATED REFUGEE PROCESSING ENTITIES.—The Attorney General and the Secretary of State shall develop and implement guidelines to ensure uniform procedures for establishing agreements with United States Government-designated refugee processing entities and personnel, and uniform procedures for such entities and personnel responsible for preparing refugee case files for use by the Immigration and Naturalization Service during refugee adjudications. These procedures should ensure, to the extent practicable, that case files prepared by such entities accurately reflect information provided by the refugee applicants and that genuine refugee applicants are not disadvantaged or denied refugee status due to faulty case file preparation.

(d) ANNUAL CONSULTATION.—The President shall include in each annual report on proposed refugee admissions under section 207(d) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1157(d)) information about religious persecution of refugee populations eligible for consideration for admission to the United States. The Secretary of State shall include information on religious persecution of refugee populations in the formal testimony presented to the Committees on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives and the Senate during the consultation process under section 207(e) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1157(e)).

#### SEC. 603. REFORM OF ASYLUM POLICY.

(a) GUIDELINES.—The Attorney General and the Secretary of State shall develop guidelines to ensure that persons with potential biases against individuals on the grounds of religion, race, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion, including interpreters and personnel of airlines owned by governments known to be involved in practices which would meet the definition of persecution under international refugee law, shall not in any manner be used to interpret conversations between aliens and inspection or asylum officers.

(b) TRAINING FOR ASYLUM AND IMMIGRATION OFFICERS.—The Attorney General, in consulta-

tion with the Secretary of State, the Ambassador at Large, and other relevant officials such as the Director of the National Foreign Affairs Training Center, shall provide training to all officers adjudicating asylum cases, and to immigration officers performing duties under section 235(b) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1225(b)), on the nature of religious persecution abroad, including country-specific conditions, instruction on the internationally recognized right to freedom of religion, instruction on methods of religious persecution practiced in foreign countries, and applicable distinctions within a country in the treatment of various religious practices and believers.

(c) TRAINING FOR IMMIGRATION JUDGES.—The Executive Office of Immigration Review of the Department of Justice shall incorporate into its initial and ongoing training of immigration judges training on the extent and nature of religious persecution internationally, including country-specific conditions, and including use of the Annual Report. Such training shall include governmental and nongovernmental methods of persecution employed, and differences in the treatment of religious groups by such persecuting entities.

#### SEC. 604. INADMISSIBILITY OF FOREIGN GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS WHO HAVE ENGAGED IN PARTICULARLY SEVERE VIOLATIONS OF RELIGIOUS FREEDOM.

(a) INELIGIBILITY FOR VISAS OR ADMISSION.—Section 212(a)(2) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1182(a)(2)) is amended by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

“(G) FOREIGN GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS WHO HAVE ENGAGED IN PARTICULARLY SEVERE VIOLATIONS OF RELIGIOUS FREEDOM.—Any alien who, while serving as a foreign government official, was responsible for or directly carried out, at any time during the preceding 24-month period, particularly severe violations of religious freedom, as defined in section 3 of the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998, and the spouse and children, if any, are inadmissible.”.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall apply to aliens seeking to enter the United States on or after the date of enactment of this Act.

#### SEC. 605. STUDIES ON THE EFFECT OF EXPEDITED REMOVAL PROVISIONS ON ASYLUM CLAIMS.

(a) STUDIES.—

(1) COMMISSION REQUEST FOR PARTICIPATION BY EXPERTS ON REFUGEE AND ASYLUM ISSUES.—If the Commission so requests, the Attorney General shall invite experts designated by the Commission, who are recognized for their expertise and knowledge of refugee and asylum issues, to conduct a study, in cooperation with the Comptroller General of the United States, to determine whether immigration officers described in paragraph (2) are engaging in any of the conduct described in such paragraph.

(2) DUTIES OF COMPTROLLER GENERAL.—The Comptroller General of the United States shall conduct a study alone or, upon request by the Commission, in cooperation with experts designated by the Commission, to determine whether immigration officers performing duties under section 235(b) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1225(b)) with respect to aliens who may be eligible to be granted asylum are engaging in any of the following conduct:

(A) Improperly encouraging such aliens to withdraw their applications for admission.

(B) Incorrectly failing to refer such aliens for an interview by an asylum officer for a determination of whether they have a credible fear of persecution (within the meaning of section 235(b)(1)(B)(v) of such Act).

(C) Incorrectly removing such aliens to a country where they may be persecuted.

(D) Detaining such aliens improperly or in inappropriate conditions.

(b) REPORTS.—



(1) *PARTICIPATION BY EXPERTS.*—In the case of a Commission request under subsection (a), the experts designated by the Commission under that subsection may submit a report to the committees described in paragraph (2). Such report may be submitted with the Comptroller General's report under subsection (a)(2) or independently.

(2) *DUTIES OF COMPTROLLER GENERAL.*—Not later than September 1, 2000, the Comptroller General of the United States shall submit to the Committees on the Judiciary of the House of Representatives and the Senate, the Committee on International Relations of the House of Representatives, and the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate a report containing the results of the study conducted under subsection (a)(2). If the Commission requests designated experts to participate with the Comptroller General in the preparation and submission of the report, the Comptroller General shall grant the request.

(c) *ACCESS TO PROCEEDINGS.*—

(1) *IN GENERAL.*—Except as provided in paragraph (2), to facilitate the studies and reports, the Attorney General shall permit the Comptroller General of the United States and, in the case of a Commission request under subsection (a), the experts designated under subsection (a) to have unrestricted access to all stages of all proceedings conducted under section 235(b) of the Immigration and Nationality Act.

(2) *EXCEPTIONS.*—Paragraph (1) shall not apply in cases in which the alien objects to such access, or the Attorney General determines that the security of a particular proceeding would be threatened by such access, so long as any restrictions on the access of experts designated by the Commission under subsection (a) do not contravene international law.

#### **TITLE VII—MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS**

##### **SEC. 701. BUSINESS CODES OF CONDUCT.**

(a) *CONGRESSIONAL FINDING.*—Congress recognizes the increasing importance of transnational corporations as global actors, and their potential for providing positive leadership in their host countries in the area of human rights.

(b) *SENSE OF CONGRESS.*—It is the sense of Congress that transnational corporations operating overseas, particularly those corporations operating in countries the governments of which have engaged in or tolerated violations of religious freedom, as identified in the Annual Report, should adopt codes of conduct—

(1) upholding the right to freedom of religion of their employees; and

(2) ensuring that a worker's religious views and peaceful practices of belief in no way affect, or be allowed to affect, the status or terms of his or her employment.

Mr. GILMAN (during the reading). Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate amendments be considered as read and printed in the RECORD.

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

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN) and the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. CLEMENT) each will be recognized for 20 minutes.

The chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN).

GENERAL LEAVE.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 days in which to revise and extend their remarks on this measure.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, the legislation before us, H.R. 2431, represents a culmination of years of work on behalf of many people who are persecuted around the world on account of their religion, work which has been carried on tirelessly by the distinguished gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WOLF), the principle House sponsor of this measure and by the distinguished chairman of our Subcommittee on International Operations and Human Rights, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH), as well as by many other Members of this body who cosponsored H.R. 2431.

Mr. Speaker, I was pleased to join with the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WOLF) and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) as an original cosponsor of this measure, worked closely with them as we moved this measure through the legislative process. Our Committee on International Relations approved the measure on March 25. It passed the House on March 14 by a vote of 374 in favor to 41 opposed. The bill then went over to the Senate where it received very careful consideration and was revised significantly. In most respects I prefer the House-approved version to what passed the Senate yesterday, but on balance I believe that we have before us a worthy measure that will contribute significantly to the struggle to eliminate religious oppression around the world.

Before concluding my remarks there are several technical points that I must know about the text before us.

First, section 405(c) urges the President to negotiate and enter into "binding agreements" with foreign governments that are engaged in religious persecution.

As stated in the text of 405(c), the purpose of that provision is to, quote, enter into a binding agreement with a foreign government that obligates such government to cease or take substantial steps to address and phase out the act, policy or practice constituting the violation of religious freedom, close quote. In other words, the agreement should be binding on the foreign governments in question. Nothing in that section suggests or is meant to suggest that these agreements may obligate the United States to do anything or otherwise bind our Nation in any way.

This provision most emphatically is not a grant of authority to the President to enter into agreements that would legally bind our Nation or supersede U.S. law. This section is not intended to open the door to committing the United States to extend benefits or make any other binding promise to a foreign country as a quid pro quo for them to stop persecuting their own people.

□ 1515

Second, section 407(a) authorizes the President to waive sanctions imposed on foreign countries under this legislation. Obviously this waiver authority

extends only to sanctions that have been imposed pursuant to this legislation.

This authority does not extend to the same or similar sanctions that have been imposed on foreign countries pursuant to other provisions of law. Particularly, it does not extend to ongoing sanctions under other laws that, pursuant to section 402(c)(4)(D), have been determined to satisfy the requirements of this law.

Third, section 409 calls for the termination of sanctions imposed under this legislation after 2 years unless they are expressly reauthorized by law. The legislation, however, requires the President to impose sanctions on individual countries each year if his yearly review finds that conditions there merit them.

In this regard, section 402(c)(4) provides that when a country was sanctioned during a prior year under this law and those sanctions are still in effect, the President need not reimpose those sanctions or impose additional sanctions.

It is not the purpose of this law, however, to turn sanctions on and off like a light switch. Sections 409 and 402(c)(4) in combination are not to be interpreted to provide for a temporary lapse in sanctions with respect to countries that have, over a period of 2 years or more, engaged in or tolerated particularly severe violations of religious freedom.

Rather, the structure of the legislation and common sense would require continuity of these sanctions with respect to such countries. The 2-year sunset provision of section 409 would not provide for a lapse in sanctions with respect to such countries because new action would be required in connection with the President's annual review, and that new action would be subject to a new 2-year clock.

I have reviewed each of these technical issues with the principal House sponsor of the measure, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WOLF), and he assures me that in each case he shares my understanding. If there were not a shared understanding among all of us about the meaning of these provisions, I would have insisted on referral of the Senate amendment to the Committee on International Relations, and I would have not have permitted the measure to come before the House in its current form.

With these understandings, Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the measure.

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

Mr. CLEMENT. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

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

Mr. CLEMENT. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 2431.

Mr. Speaker, I am glad that we were able to work through the process to

reach a compromise on the legislation before us today. It is a fully bipartisan bill. It does not target one group or one country. Rather, it seeks to promote and protect religious freedom of all peoples throughout the world. This is an objective that deserves all of our support, and it respects all religions and faiths in the world.

Mr. Speaker, we are poised on the brink of an historic vote to help millions of our persecuted brothers and sisters of faith around the world. The words of our first President, George Washington, ring out across the years as if written to us for this day: "I beg you will be persuaded that no one would be more zealous than myself to establish effectual barriers against the horrors of spiritual tyranny and every species of religious persecution."

This morning, with historic unity and courage, the Senate voted 98 to 0 to stand against the horrors of religious persecution. I rise now, after more than a year of work on this bill, in heartfelt support for the International Religious Freedom Act. Let us finish the job. With one voice, let us tell religious believers around the world that we have heard their cries and seen their suffering. Let us, with one voice, tell persecuting regimes around the world that we will not be silent and that we will not let their crimes go unchecked.

Even as we speak, there are those suffering torture, imprisonment, rape, murder, merely because they seek to peacefully practice their faith. As Senator NICKLES has said, this bill is not designed to punish but to change behavior. The International Religious Freedom Act is strong, but it is responsible. The only option it does not allow is silence.

I commend my Senate colleagues, DON NICKLES, who sponsored and provided such great leadership on the bill, and Senators JOE LIEBERMAN, CONNIE MACK, DAN COATS and others, as well as all the staff who worked so hard, including John Hanford, Steve Moffitt, Elaine Petty, Jim Jastras, Cecile Shea, Pam Sellars. I commend the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WOLF) and his staffer Ann Huiskes.

What is so remarkable about this bill is that it is bipartisan in nature. I know just how bipartisan the effort was, because my staffer, Laura Bryant, was one of the principal drafters of this bill together with my colleague on the other side, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY), and his fine staffer, Will Inboden. They worked together for over a year with the staff of other Senators and Congressmen, with grassroots groups, with the administration to have a bill we can all heartily support.

Let me mention some of the heroes from the grassroots of many faiths. From the Episcopal church, the first to support the bill, Tom Hart and Jere Skipper. From the American Jewish Committee, Rich Foltin. From the Christian Coalition, Jeff Taylor. From

the Southern Baptist Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission, Will Dodson. From the Anti-Defamation League, Stacy Burdett, and there were many others from many faiths, including Chuck Colson and Nagy Kheir.

This act establishes a high level Ambassador at Large who will forcefully advocate for religious freedom around the world, and a high-level, independent commission of experts to provide policy recommendations.

It also creates an annual report by the State Department to shed the light of exposure on violations of religious freedom around the world. It requires our government to take action every year in each country where violations occur, from a vast number of options ranging from diplomatic discussions to targeted economic sanctions for the worst of violators.

Before imposing a sanction, the President must renegotiate with the foreign government to end the persecution, and consult with religious groups and U.S. business interests about the potential impact of economic action against that country. The action may be waived if it would be harmful.

Finally, there is extensive long-term promotion of change, from broadcasting to human rights training for our foreign service and immigration officers.

Long ago, in times of terrible hardship for the people of God, the prophet Isaiah said that what is acceptable to God is to undo the bands of the yoke and to let the oppressed go free.

Mr. Speaker, this is not just a bill. This is a stand for the most precious freedom, the right dearest to every human heart. This is a historic stand for the freedom of the people of God in every country to worship Him in freedom and in truth.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to join with the Senate in saying to the world, with one voice, that the United States stands for freedom of religion in every country, for every people, for every man, for every woman. We cannot be silent.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. CLEMENT), for his supporting arguments on behalf of this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 7½ minutes to the distinguished gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH), the chairman of the Subcommittee on International Operations and Human Rights.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN), our chairman, for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, first of all, let me begin by expressing my deep gratitude to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WOLF) for his courage and persistence in pushing this important bill through the long and arduous road to final passage.

Frankly, I am disappointed, and I know many of my colleagues are, that

the Senate amendments have somewhat weakened our bill. For example, the House had given the President a great deal of flexibility in deciding whether to impose sanctions against governments that severely persecute religious believers, but the Senate stretches flexibility almost to the breaking point. I am informed that this was necessary in order to avoid a filibuster.

Even with the Senate amendments, let me say very clearly that the bill creates what I sincerely hope will be a strong and independent Commission on International Religious Freedom, which can be a voice on behalf of persecuted people around the world, and it provides modest but important safeguards for refugees and asylum seekers.

I just wanted to make it very clear that our Subcommittee on International Operations and Human Rights, which I chair, will work with the Commission and watch closely to ensure that it acts boldly and in an unfettered way to expose religious persecution wherever and whenever it exists, even when it is not politically expedient.

Mr. Speaker, recently the Subcommittee on International Operations and Human Rights held a hearing for the purpose of taking testimony from 5 witnesses to religious persecution: a Catholic from Pakistan, a Protestant from Cuba, a Muslim from East Turkestan, a Buddhist from Tibet, and a Ba'hai from Iran, each of whom had witnessed religious persecution firsthand.

Each of these people had seen close friends or relatives imprisoned, tortured, even executed for their faith, or had suffered such horrors themselves. Each presented compelling and recent evidence that religious persecution is not a problem that will go away if we just pretend that it does not exist.

This hearing was the latest in a series of hearings that our subcommittee has had, focusing in whole or in part on the persecution of religious believers. Other hearings focused on worldwide anti-Semitism; on the persecution of Christians around the world; on the 1995 massacre of Bosnian Muslims in Srebrenica; on the enslavement of black Christians in the Sudan; and on the use of torture against religious believers and other prisoners of conscience.

We have heard from Palden Gyatso, a Tibetan Buddhist monk who displayed—actually brought into the House, into our committee room—the instruments of torture that had been used against him by his communist jailers from the PRC.

We heard from Hasan Nuhanovic, a Muslim who unsuccessfully begged, begged the United Nations peacekeepers, UNPROFOR, not to turn his mother, father and brother over to the murderous Bosnian Serb militia.

We heard from a Russian Jewish member of parliament who observed,

and I quote, that "anti-Semitism was the first industry to be privatized in the post-Soviet Russia."

We heard from the Karen refugees whose villages in Thailand were burned by the Burmese military dictatorship, which openly used their Christian religion as an excuse to conduct cross-border raids against them; and from Christians and Buddhists subjected to imprisonment and torture by the communist governments of China and Vietnam.

Wherever we hear from victims themselves, and whenever we hear from those victims, they make it very clear that the United States should press hard for an end to religious persecution abroad. This is important because the Clinton administration and some business people who had opposed the Freedom From Religious Persecution Act have suggested that by publicly demanding an end to the mistreatment of these people, we are more likely to hurt them than help them.

Personally, I believe it may be true occasionally in the short run that a totalitarian dictatorship used to being coddled by the United States Government will react with anger when we suddenly insist that they behave in a responsible and civilized fashion. This is true whether the issue is religious persecution, nuclear proliferation, or anything else.

In the long run, however, as we learned from the apartheid fight, these governments will act in their own self-interest. If we send them a strong and consistent message that economic and other benefits of a close relationship with the U.S. can be expected to flow to a government if and only if that government treats its own people decently, we are likely to save lives and promote human rights and freedom in the long run.

□ 1530

Whatever we do to other governments that persecute religious believers, it is also important that the U.S. put its own house in order. One way we can do this is to monitor and improve our treatment of refugees, with special reference to religious refugees. Unfortunately, in recent years, the U.S. commitment to refugees, both in the amount we spend on protection overseas and the number of refugees we admit into the U.S., has declined sharply.

In the last 4 years, our State Department has asked for and gotten a raise for itself every single year. Yet, the only major account in the Department that has not asked for an increase is the refugee budget. The administration's fiscal year 1999 budget request for refugees was \$63 million lower than the amount we spent in fiscal year 1995. And this is when the world is absolutely awash in refugees.

The number of refugees admitted to the U.S. has gone down in this administration from 130,000 to 75,000 in only 4 years. These declining resettlement

rates encourage first-asylum countries to forcibly repatriate refugees to countries where they face serious danger.

For example, in recent years we have seen Tibetan Buddhists forced back from Nepal into the hands of the Chinese Communists, and Iranian Christians and Bahais forced back to Iran from Turkey. We need to reverse that trend and restore the American tradition of a safe haven for the oppressed. In the words of President Ronald Reagan, the United States can and must be "a shining city on a hill."

Finally, I want to address those critics who suggest that by paying special attention to religious persecution, we somehow diminish the importance of those who have suffered persecution for other reasons. Nothing could be further from the truth, and it is no accident that those in Congress who have been the strongest in their support of persecuted believers also have stood up for all the other human rights issues as we have tried to deal with them in this body.

Again, I want to just ask all of my colleagues to support this legislation. It is a compromise; it does not go nearly as far as I would like to see it, as far as the House passed it, but it is certainly a step in the right direction.

Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WOLF), has spent 18 years fighting against religious persecution and deserves the lion's share of credit. He is the one who made this a reality today, and I want to thank him for his great work.

Mr. CLEMENT. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. BLAGOJEVICH) whose brother, Rob, has lived in the Nashville, Tennessee, area for a number of years.

Mr. BLAGOJEVICH. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the gentleman from Tennessee and tell him that I have some good news and some bad news for him. My brother that he refers to, the bad news first, happens to be a Republican. The good news is he has since moved to Florida, and he is no longer in the gentleman's congressional district.

Mr. Speaker, before I speak about this issue, let me commend the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WOLF) who, I think, is truly a champion of human rights. That is certainly one of the legacies he will take with him when his career here in Congress is over.

I would also like to thank the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. CLEMENT) for allowing me the time and for his efforts on this particular bill. This is a very important bill, and it really is about all of the things that America is about.

Our country, Mr. Speaker, was founded on the concepts of religious freedom and settled by people who were seeking a land where they could worship free from persecution. The Freedom From Religious Persecution Act was written in that spirit.

Mr. Speaker, when we speak of the need to promote democracy in our

world, religious freedom should not be considered ancillary to this goal. In fact, freedom of conscience is a cornerstone of all democratic rights.

In our country, the concept of freedom of speech and freedom of association grew out of the efforts of the first European immigrants who came to this land to worship, to preach, and to form churches of their choice. One of the founding documents of our democracy is the Mayflower Compact, an agreement resting on the idea of the mutual consent of the governed, and written by people who voyaged halfway around the globe to find a place where they could worship according to their conscience.

Today, our freedoms serve as an inspiration for others around the world. That is why so many people seek to come to these shores, to live their lives in a manner they see fit, to raise their families with their values and their beliefs, and to search for truth and inspiration as they define it. The Freedom From Religious Persecution Act is our answer to those people who look to the United States as a beacon of religious liberty.

One of these is the Assyrian people. Our esteemed colleague, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. ESHOO) is of Assyrian descent.

In recent years the Assyrians have been subject to gross violations of their rights. Murder, rape, assault, and forced conversions to Islam have become commonplace, as armed death squads attempt to force Assyrians out of their ancestral home.

In Iraq, Assyrians suffer at the hands of both the government of Saddam Hussein and the Kurdish rebels who battle for northern control of that country. According to Amnesty International, the two main Kurdish factions in Iraq support assassination squads who hunt Assyrians and other minorities.

But much of the assault on the Assyrian culture is less overt. Last week, for example, in northern Iraq, Assyrian students were told that they could only attend Kurdish secondary schools. This oppressive move forces Assyrians to sacrifice their language, their culture, and their identity.

Just last week, the Members of this House voted to support opposition to Saddam Hussein's regime. But our support for an alternative to Hussein's dictatorship is hollow if we do not insist that the alternative also uphold democratic values and respect the rights of all people.

The Freedom From Religious Persecution Act will provide the United States Government with a powerful tool to ensure respect for religious diversity and freedom of conscience.

We often view America's role as a global leader in terms of economic wealth or military might. But as Henry Kissinger said, "Our Nation cannot rest its policy on power alone." America's leadership comes from our commitment to powerful ideals. I urge my

colleagues to support the Freedom From Religious Persecution Act and to further those ideals.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. MANZULLO), a member of our Committee on International Relations.

Mr. MANZULLO. Mr. Speaker, we are finally taking a much-needed step to advance the cause of religious freedom and liberty around the world. I am proud to support this legislation here before us today.

Initially, I had several reservations about the original version of this bill, but supported passage last May in order to help move along the process. I am glad to see that the other body has voted it out of theirs, 98-to-zero.

This legislation is very well crafted. It focuses on all aspects of religious persecution, not just threats to life and limb. The bill gives the executive branch a great deal of flexibility on how to implement this congressional mandate. What is appropriate for one situation may not apply in another context. Yet, for more severe violations of religious freedom, the President has a list from which to choose of the economic sanction options.

Most importantly, the legislation brings daylight to a problem that has long been ignored by our government officials. Thanks to the tenacity of my good friend from Virginia (Mr. WOLF), we are finally seeing religious freedom issues taking their rightful place in the fight for human rights around the world.

Mr. CLEMENT. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI).

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time and for his leadership on this important issue, not only on this bill, but the ongoing work of his office to protect people of faith throughout the world.

I want to commend the original author of this legislation, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WOLF), for his outstanding leadership on religious freedom, and indeed, human rights throughout the world. I would say to the gentleman, I think it is clear to all of us that he is the conscience of this Congress, and in the case of religious freedom he has fought against persecution throughout the world and seen it firsthand, whether it is nuns and monks, Buddhist nuns and monks in Tibet, the oppression of Christians in the Sudan, antisemitism throughout the world, other persecution that he has fought against.

I want to commend the chairman of the committee, the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN), for his leadership in bringing the original legislation, which I frankly prefer, but it clearly did not share the support that this final product has; and I thank the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) once again for his outstanding leadership on human rights.

The gentleman said in his statement the examples that he had seen come before his committee of religious oppression, and he too has traveled throughout the world to hear firsthand of those deprived of practicing the gift of faith that God has given them.

I want to also commend Senator SPECTER in the Senate who, along with the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WOLF), started this process going. It was the leadership of the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WOLF) and Senator ARLEN SPECTER of Pennsylvania that first shone the bright light of this Congress and of this country on religious persecution throughout the world.

Though it is not the original bill that we are passing today, I thank the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WOLF) for starting the process and at least giving us a bill that we can use as a standard to see, perhaps, if we can go further in the future, if that is necessary. Hopefully, it will not be, that this bill will be sufficient.

Others have talked about the provisions of the bill. I just want to mention a couple that I am particularly pleased are contained in it. The bill establishes a bipartisan independent commission to review the state of religious freedom and make policy recommendations to the President.

It establishes an ambassador for international religious freedom under the direction of the Secretary of State, and the ambassador will help the Secretary review and report on the state of religious freedom and to make recommendations to the President regarding U.S. action in support of religious freedom.

It strengthens our assistance, refugee and counselor laws and calls for a business code of conduct to promote religious freedom.

The bill requires the President to determine violators, and particularly severe violators, of religious freedom.

As was mentioned, the bill passed by 98-to-zero. I assume it has the support of the administration. It certainly gives the President a great deal of flexibility.

Mr. Speaker, as my colleagues know, faith is a gift. What people believe is so much a part of them, it is impossible for them to change that. How, and then why, does it require courage for people to practice their religion? It should not have to be that way. And in this enlightened world that we live in, because of the leadership of the likes of the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WOLF) and Senator SPECTER and so many others who worked on this, life will be easier for those who want to practice the gift of faith that God has given them.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. FOX).

Mr. FOX of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I thank the Chairman for yielding me this time.

I also rise to congratulate the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WOLF), the

gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN), and Senator SPECTER for all of their leadership in moving this important bill forward, the International Freedom Act. It will, for the first time, establish in the United States, Mr. Speaker, a structure for the U.S. Government to actively investigate oppression of religious belief and take real action against all religious persecution.

It will strengthen, for the first time, the State Department Country Reports and ensure that each country desk at the State Department provide accurate, accessible information to congressional executive branch officials concerning religious prisoners. It will create a special report on religious persecution so that the Congress and the President together may act.

Finally, it will require the President to take action against all countries that engage in violations of religious freedom, and this bill offers a list of options ranging from diplomatic protest to terminating diplomatic exchanges and a variety of economic sanctions.

It is certainly a bill whose time has arrived in our effort to take sanctions against the tragic scourge of religious persecution worldwide, and I thank again the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WOLF) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN) for all of their leadership in this regard. I ask unanimously we have votes on both sides of the aisle to support this worthy bill.

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

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SCARBOROUGH).

Mr. SCARBOROUGH. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the chairman, the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN) and the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WOLF), the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) and the gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI) and others for their work on this important bill.

I commend Abe Rosenthal of the New York Times who, for well over a year has been fighting to get the word out about religious persecution across the globe. And Michael Horowitz at the Hudson Institute who has also done just a wonderful job in making sure that Members like myself are educated on this very important issue.

This religious persecution act is an important first step toward protecting the freedom of all to worship as they choose. For too long, America has turned its eyes away from those who are suffering religious persecution across the globe. And for too long, America has kept silent when we should have said more.

We should have said more about Tibet where so many have been crushed under the oppressive hand of Chinese occupation. Where over 1 million citizens have been driven from their land, while their culture and monasteries have been destroyed.

In Sudan, over 2 million Christians may have been killed for simply pursuing the worship of God.

□ 1545

Sudanese children have been beaten, tortured and even crucified for being Christians. And as the Baltimore Sun reported last year, children in Sudan are being sold into slavery for less than \$50. Russell Kirk once said, regardless of a country's steel output, a society that forgets its values is vanquished.

I believe today's action is a positive first step towards our country recognizing that America has a responsibility to ensure religious freedom at home and across the globe.

I thank the gentleman from New York (Chairman GILMAN) the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WOLF), Abe Rosenthal, Michael Horowitz, and all those who have fought so long for religious freedom.

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

Mr. Speaker, I have someone who has been on the international affairs staff for 5 years, Elana Broitman, and she is leaving to go to New York City with her husband. She has worked with us on this issue, the International Religious Freedom Act, and many other issues and she has been an outstanding member of the staff. We are going to miss her very, very much. And I just wish her well in her new endeavors.

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

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I want to join the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. CLEMENT) in wishing our staff member, Elana Broitman, success in her future endeavors. We will miss her on our committee.

Mr. Speaker, I yield the balance of my time to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WOLF), author of this legislation and an outstanding leader.

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

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, in my prepared statement, I mention all of the people, many who are on the floor who have really done an outstanding job, and many names are there. I do want to cover some, and I hope if I run out of time, the gentleman may even yield me a minute or two:

The gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN) for being faithful and always there, always dependable, always willing, never saying no, and for his staff that worked and complied and tried and pushed and pulled.

To the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH), who was the same way, and his staff that were always there, always willing, setting the record, making the hearing.

To the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARMEY), the majority leader, who came to our gathering and put the prestige of the leadership on this to make sure that this would not fall through the cracks as we get to the end.

To the gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI), who was always there on

all of these issues. There was no center aisle dividing line. And Carolyn and her staff are always dependable, never saying, "Well, we may not" and "that may be," and "the administration says"; always, always, always there.

Senator NICKLES, Senator SPECTER, Senator COATS, my good, close friend DAN COATS, whom I hate to see leaving the Congress, former Senator Bill Armstrong and so many of the other groups. Michael Horowitz who is out of town with his daughter being married. The gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. CLEMENT), Laura, John Hanford and many others who all came together and worked on this.

Mr. Speaker, this really is an example of people sending a message. As Abe Rosenthal said in his column last Friday, and I will read it; and Abe Rosenthal, as the gentleman from Florida (Mr. SCARBOROUGH) said, was always there. I do not know how he got the ink from the New York Times, but always shaking things up to make sure that this would not be forgotten.

He said, Very soon, millions of people persecuted, arrested and tortured for their religion will find out whether America has finally confronted persecuting governments with a permanent government searchlight and the threat of penalty. . . . Mouth to ear they will find out in underground Protestant and Catholic churches in China and in prisons run by expert torturers for those refusing to pray in government-run churches. The persecuted will find out in Sudan wilds and deserts where Christians and animist refugees starve and die under attack. They will find out in Pakistani villages where Christian homes have been set afire. Or the village south of Cairo where Coptic Christian clergy are sending frantic word that 1,000 Copts were tortured by Egyptian police.

When we do this tonight, I will tell my colleagues that in Tibet, and when I was there last year they told me they listen to Radio Free Asia in Tibet. In Lhasa tomorrow morning, they will know that this Congress, the people's Congress, the people's body, cares about what happens in Drapchi Prison, cares about the Catholic priests who are being persecuted. The Catholic bishops, the Muslims who no one speaks out for in the northern part of the country, the Protestant house churches, all of those people will know.

Mr. Speaker, this is a good legislation. I think both sides have taken a lot of good steps. Obviously, perhaps better people, wiser than we, can make it better. If they are, I guess fine. But until that time, I think this is good. I hope it will pass with unanimous consent.

But again, on behalf of the voiceless, we have given them a voice, all of those I named and all who are in here on their behalf.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the measure before us, to concur in the Senate amendment to H.R. 2431, the Freedom from Religious Persecution Act. What is before us is not the measure the House passed. It is different. However, I believe it is critical that the Congress pass legislation this year to deal with the issue of religious persecution and I strongly support this measure. I hope you will, too.

In his column last Friday in the New York Times, A.M. Rosenthal wrote,

Very soon, millions of people persecuted, arrested and tortured for their religion will find out whether America has finally confronted persecuting governments with a permanent government searchlight and the threat of penalty. . . . Mouth to ear they will find out in underground Protestant and Catholic churches in China and in prisons run by expert torturers for those refusing to pray in government-run churches. The persecuted will find out in the Sudan wilds and deserts where Christian and animist refugees starve and die under government attack. They will find out in Pakistani villages where Christian homes have been set afire. Or in the village south of Cairo where Coptic Christian clergy are sending frantic word that 1,000 Copts were tortured by Egyptian police.

Rosenthal's words should be taken to heart. I would add my own comments. In Tibet, Tibetan Buddhist monks and nuns who are, at this moment, being tortured and beaten in Drapchi prison and the other Chinese-run prisons in Tibet will find out what we do today. In Iran, the families of the two Baha'i men sentenced to death last week and the 36 Baha'i faculty members arrested will know what we do today. In Pakistan, Ahmadi Muslims fearful of their lives will know what we do. And in China, the Muslims being persecuted in Xinjiang Province will hear the result of the vote in the House today.

Mr. Speaker, the other body passed this bill, now called the International Religious Freedom Act, by a unanimous vote of 98-0. I'm told the White House supports this measure. It also has the support of a broad coalition of religious and civic groups, including the Christian Coalition, the National Association of Evangelicals, the U.S. Catholic Bishops' Conference, the National Jewish Coalition, the Anti-Defamation League, the Christian Legal Society, the Traditional Values Coalition, the Episcopal Church, B'nai B'rith, Justice Fellowship, the American Jewish Committee, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America, the Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America, the United Methodist Church—Women's Division, and the American Coptic Association.

Passing this historic legislation will send a message of hope to millions of suffering people worldwide who are being persecuted for their religious beliefs. Passing this bill will help ensure that eliminating religious persecution becomes a prominent goal of our foreign policy and will help loosen the chains of government oppression endured by many today.

This bill meets the goals Senator SPECTER and I set out to achieve when we introduced the Freedom from Religious Persecution Act in May, 1997. First, we wanted to ensure that the State Department has a permanent mechanism for monitoring this issue and spotlighting it in U.S. foreign policy. Second, we wanted to establish a framework for taking action against countries that persecute people for their faith. Both of these goals are met in this legislation and I pleased that I can strongly support it today.

The International Religious Freedom Act contains a number of important provisions:

It establishes a 9-member Commission on International Religious Liberty to report annually on religious freedom violations abroad and recommend policy options to the administration. This provision, in my view, greatly enhances the legislation because it helps ensure

that this issue will get attention by an independent body of experts and puts pressure on the State Department and the White House to be accountable.

It creates an Ambassador-at-Large for Religious Liberty in the State Department to serve as a point person on religious freedom issues. This person would represent the U.S. abroad and help provide expertise and leadership within the Department on this fundamental human rights issue.

It provides the President with a list of options from which to choose when imposing sanctions on a country found to be violating religious freedom.

Like the House bill, it contains a number of provisions designed to promote religious freedom abroad, such as incentives for foreign service officers who show meritorious service in promoting religious freedom, requiring the creation of a State Department Internet site to promote religious freedom, recommending high-level contacts with religious non-governmental organizations, requiring the State Department to prepare prisoner lists and issue briefs on religious freedom and others.

It also includes a provision allowing equal access to U.S. missions abroad for conducting religious activities in places where religious activity is otherwise prohibited. This will help American citizens abroad who desire to worship, but cannot worship safely in local churches and would otherwise have nowhere to go. In places like Saudi Arabia, this is a real problem.

The International Religious Freedom Act is a good bill and I urge my colleagues to support it.

Many, many people have worked hard to get this bill where it is today. First, I want to thank my colleagues here in the House, particularly the distinguished Majority Leader DICK ARMEY, International Relations Committee Chairman BEN GILMAN and CHRIS SMITH, TONY HALL, NANCY PELOSI, and BOB CLEMENT for their tireless leadership on and support for this bill and many other human rights issues. I also want to thank members of their staff, Heidi Stirrup and Brian Gunderson in the Office of the Majority Leader; Steve Rademaker and Rich Garon with the House International Relations Committee; Joseph Rees of the Subcommittee on International Operations and Human Rights; Bob Zachritz with Representative HALL; and Carolyn Bartholomew with Representative PELOSI and Laura Bryant with Representative CLEMENT for their efforts. I also want to thank Anne Huiskes on my staff for pouring her heat and soul into this bill in the past two years and acknowledge the good work of John Hanford who over the years has committed his life to working on these issues and advocating on behalf of people being persecuted around the world.

Mr. Speaker, there are a number of Members of the other body who are to be commended for their leadership in moving this legislation through the Senate. First and foremost, I want to commend and applaud the leadership of Senator ARLEN SPECTER for being out front on this issue and introducing the Senate version of the Freedom from Religious Persecution Act. I also want to commend the distinguished Senate Majority Leader TRENT LOTT for his commitment to passing religious persecution legislation and Senator DON NICKLES and Senator JOE LIEBERMAN, the authors of the International Religious Freedom

Act, for their work and leadership. I applaud them for sticking with this issue when many would have given up. I am also extremely grateful for the faithful efforts of Senator DAN COATS who kept his shoulder to the wheel in shepherding this legislation through the U.S. Senate. This bill is a tribute to him.

I also want to acknowledge the important work of the staff involved with this measure in the Senate: Gretchen Birkle with Senator SPECTER, Elayne Petty with Senator MACK, Sharon Payt with Senator BROWNBACK, Steve Moffit with Senator NICKLES, Jim Jatras with the Senate Republican Policy Committee, Pam Sellars and Sharon Soderstrom with Senator COATS, Fred Downey with Senator LIEBERMAN, and Bill Gribbin in the Office of the Senate Majority Leader.

Finally, I want to thank all those groups who helped generate support for this legislation and who work tirelessly each and every day to bring attention to this issue. My sincere thanks goes out to Michael Horowitz with the Hudson Institute; Chuck Colson and Mariam Bell with Justice Fellowship; Gary Bauer of the Family Research Council; Dr. James Dobson with Focus on the Family; Senator Bill Armstrong; John Carr with the U.S. Catholic Bishops Conference; Ari Storch with the National Jewish Coalition; Steve McFarland with the Christian Legal Society; Jess Hordes [HORD-ES] and Stacy Burdett with the Anti-Defamation League; Rabbi David Saperstein with the Religious Action Center for Reformed Judaism; Nina Shea, Paul Marshall and Joseph Assad with the Center for Religious Freedom at Freedom House; Diane Knippers and Faith McDonnell with the Institute for Religion and Democracy; Mary Beth Markey with the International Campaign for Tibet; Steve Snyder with International Christian Concern; Rich Cizik with the National Association of Evangelicals; Don Hodel, Randy Tate and Jeff Taylor with the Christian Coalition; Dr. Richard Land and Will Dodson with the Southern Baptist Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission; Rev. Stan DeBoe with the International Fellowship of Christians and Jews; Nagi Kheir with the American Coptic Association; Neal Hogan with the Catholic Alliance; Father Keith Roderick with the Coalition for Human Rights Under Islamization and Dr. David Adams with the Lutheran Church, Missouri Synod. There were many, many others involved. I know I left some out, but I applaud all that has been done on behalf of this measure and this issue.

Today is truly a historic day in the Congress. I urge my colleagues to vote yes on the International Religious Freedom Act. It will help millions of people around the world.

Mr. HAMILTON. Mr. Speaker, I would like to fully endorse the statements made in support of H.R. 2431, the Freedom from Religious Persecution Act, by the distinguished gentleman from Tennessee, Mr. CLEMENT.

Mr. Speaker, I am glad that we were able to work through the process to reach a compromise on the legislation before us today. It is a fully bi-partisan bill. It does not target one group or one country. Rather, it seeks to promote and protect religious freedom of all peoples throughout the world. This is an objective that deserves all of our support.

Mr. CRANE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to support the Senate amendments to the International Religious Freedom Act, H.R. 2431.

I abhor the persecution of anyone because of their faith, whether they are Buddhists,

Muslims, Jews, fellow Christians, or people of other faiths. Unfortunately, I was forced to oppose this bill when the House last considered it because I did not believe that it would achieve the desired result of curbing religious oppression by governments around the world. Indeed, my concern was that the proposed sanctions in the bill would do nothing to influence countries who do not share our ideas of religious liberty and only put at risk the jobs of innocent American workers.

While the goal of the bill in seeking to use the influence of the United States to prevent or halt international religious persecution is commendable, the mechanisms of the House bill did not allow for enough flexibility for a U.S. response tailored to confront a particular foreign government engaged in religious persecution. Instead, a "one size fits all" approach including trade sanctions, denial of foreign aid and multinational assistance was mandated, leaving the President very narrow authority to craft appropriate responses.

Instead, I urged my colleagues to modify the bill to allow the executive branch more flexibility to change the behavior of governments in order to stop religious persecution. I feared that, in certain instances, some of the proposed sanctions would only anger foreign governments and could have the perverse effect of inciting more religious persecution instead of less.

I am grateful that my concerns and suggestions for improvements to this bill have been heeded and adopted by our colleagues in the other body. The Senate amendments give the Administration the flexibility it needs to appropriately respond to incidents of religious persecution. Furthermore, the sanctity of contracts is protected by the bill which will prevent incidents where, for example, American farmers are prevented from fulfilling binding agreements with targeted countries. In today's global economy, where there are a variety of sources for products and commodities, sanctions that do not allow existing contracts to be honored only injure American producers.

It is my hope that this bill, as it is now drafted, will allow the United States to respond appropriately to international religious persecution. I certainly believe that we have an obligation to promote our values of religious freedom and democracy. However, our foreign policy must be crafted to achieve these goals, not to be a visceral and important reaction to reprehensible persecution.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting the Senate changes to H.R. 2431.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN) the House suspend the rules and concur in the Senate amendments to the bill, H.R. 2431.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### TORTURE VICTIMS RELIEF ACT OF 1998

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and concur in the Senate amendment to the bill, (H.R. 4309) to provide a comprehensive program of support for victims of torture.