

AMENDED IN SENATE APRIL 24, 1997

AMENDED IN SENATE APRIL 9, 1997

Senate Concurrent Resolution

No. 33

Introduced by Senator Haynes

March 17, 1997

Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 33—Relative to religious freedom in China.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SCR 33, as amended, Haynes. Religious freedom in the People's Republic of China.

This measure would reaffirm the Legislature's commitment to California's historic devotion to principles of religious liberty, and would condemn human rights abuses and denials of religious liberty to Christians and others in Communist China, calling on China to end this persecution. This measure would call upon the President and Congress of the United States to make the cessation of persecution of religious believers in the People's Republic of China a priority objective of the United States' foreign policy, and to not renew the Most Favored Nation trading status of the People's Republic of China so long as persecution of religious believers continues in that country. It would demand the release of specified religious prisoners in China, and would commend the actions of the World Evangelical Fellowship in declaring an annual international day of prayer on behalf of persecuted Christians.

Fiscal committee: no.

1 WHEREAS, Religious liberty is a universal right; and
2 WHEREAS, Evangelical Protestants and Roman
3 Catholics have been named “a principal threat to political
4 stability” by the Central Committee of the Communist
5 Party of the People’s Republic of China; and

6 WHEREAS, There are more documented cases of
7 Christians being imprisoned or detained in Communist
8 China on the basis of their religious beliefs than in any
9 other country of the world; and

10 WHEREAS, The People’s Republic of China has
11 wrongfully arrested and imprisoned for religious
12 activities Bishop Su Zhimin, Bishop Thomas Zeng
13 Jingmu, Bishop Joannes Han Dingxiang, Bishop An
14 Shuxin, Reverend Cui ~~Xinggang~~ Singlang, Reverend Qin
15 Guoliang, and the Reverend Charles Guo, as well as Mr.
16 Pan Kunming, Miss Pao Yanping, Mr. Yu Qixiang, Mr. Yu
17 Shuishen, Miss Gao Shuping, Mr. Yin Guozhen, and about
18 120 other persons arrested in November 1996 in Jiangxi;
19 and

20 WHEREAS, Millions of California Christians pray in
21 their churches each week, oblivious to the fact that
22 Christians in Communist China suffer brutal torture,
23 arrest, imprisonment, and even death, their homes and
24 communities laid to waste, for no reason other than that
25 they are Christians; and

26 WHEREAS, In the past, pastors and rabbis throughout
27 California have forcefully taken up the cause of other
28 persecuted religious believers, and should continue to
29 intervene on behalf of persecuted religious believers; and

30 WHEREAS, Pope John Paul II recently sounded a call
31 against regimes that “practice discrimination against
32 Jews, Christians, and other religious groups, going even
33 so far as to refuse them the right to meet in private for
34 prayer,” declaring that “this is an intolerable and
35 unjustifiable violation, not only of all the norms of current
36 international law, but of the most fundamental human
37 freedom, that of practicing one’s faith openly”; and

38 WHEREAS, The National Association of Evangelicals,
39 in January 1996, issued a Statement of Conscience and
40 Call to Action, subsequently commended or endorsed by



1 the Southern Baptist Convention, the Executive Council
2 of the Episcopal Church, and the General Assembly of the
3 Presbyterian Church, United States of America, in which
4 they pledged to end their “silence in the face of the
5 suffering of all those persecuted for their religious faith,”
6 and called upon political leaders to do what is in their
7 power to “take appropriate action to combat the
8 intolerable religious persecution now victimizing fellow
9 believers and those of other faiths”; and

10 WHEREAS, Throughout the People’s Republic of
11 China, churches and religious texts are destroyed, and
12 Christians are regularly jailed; and

13 WHEREAS, At least 75 million Christians live in
14 Communist China, but cannot freely practice their
15 religion; and

16 WHEREAS, Chinese police have painted slogans on
17 public walls in town squares that read: “Catholics are not
18 allowed to engage in illegal propagation activities,”
19 “Catholics are not allowed to go to other areas and
20 establish networks,” and “Get rid of all illegal religious
21 gatherings and activities”; and

22 WHEREAS, In three separate incidents of abuse in the
23 People’s Republic of China, three Christian leaders were
24 beaten to death by the Chinese government; and

25 WHEREAS, The Chinese police are searching for 3,000
26 evangelical preachers; and

27 WHEREAS, In Zhejiang Province alone, 15,000
28 religious sites were destroyed in the first six months of
29 1996; and

30 WHEREAS, In Shaanxi Province, three Protestant
31 brothers were recently stripped and beaten in public
32 until they lapsed into bloody unconsciousness; and

33 WHEREAS, The new wave of religious repression in
34 Communist China seems in large measure the product of
35 Chinese President Jiang Zemin; and

36 WHEREAS, Last spring, thousands of paramilitary
37 police, supported by armored car units and helicopters,
38 swept into the tiny village of Donglu in Hebel Province
39 and destroyed a shrine to which more than 100,000
40 underground Catholics had made pilgrimages the



1 previous year, confiscated a statue of the Blessed Virgin
2 Mary, and arrested two bishops; and

3 WHEREAS, A great religious revival has swept
4 Communist China in the past two decades, during which
5 time more Chinese have joined Christian groups than the
6 Communist Party; and

7 WHEREAS, Imprisoned Catholics are released often
8 after having been forced to pay fines equal to half a year's
9 income; and

10 WHEREAS, A copy of an action plan to destroy the
11 organization of the Catholic's underground forces around
12 Yujia was obtained by local Catholics, smuggled out of
13 China, and published by the Cardinal Kung Foundation
14 in January 1997; and

15 WHEREAS, The Chinese police have arrested about
16 120 underground religious organizers in Yujia to prevent
17 them from holding a Christmas celebration, and
18 gathering four times a year to pray; and

19 WHEREAS, Literally millions of Chinese Christians
20 must attend religious services in underground "house
21 churches" to avoid detention and possible imprisonment
22 because of their faith; and

23 WHEREAS, Scores of Chinese Christian leaders,
24 including at least three Catholic bishops, languish in jail,
25 and many more are in hiding; and

26 WHEREAS, Neither the United States government nor
27 the press has paid sufficient attention to the persecution
28 of Christians in Communist China; and

29 WHEREAS, Senator Arlen Specter (R-PA) and
30 Representative Frank Wolf (R-VA) are drafting
31 legislation that would limit aid to and trade with
32 Communist China and other nations that systematically
33 persecute Christians; and

34 WHEREAS, Every year thousands of Chinese are
35 sentenced to Communist China's religious gulag; and

36 WHEREAS, Christianity is the world's most persecuted
37 religion, according to a new study by the Puebla Program
38 on Religious Freedom at Freedom House; and



1 WHEREAS, Catholic and Protestant church leaders in
2 Communist China, as well as ordinary believers, are
3 regularly being arrested, beaten, and fined; and

4 WHEREAS, Communist Party authorities have
5 cracked down on Yujia and dozens of other centers of
6 underground religious activity; and

7 *WHEREAS, Communist Party authorities in Shanghai*
8 *ransacked the homes and seized the religious articles of*
9 *Bishop Joseph Fan Zhongliang on March 4, 1997, and of*
10 *the Reverend Zen Caijun on March 29, 1997, and have*
11 *placed those individuals under heavy police surveillance;*
12 *and*

13 WHEREAS, Christians in Communist China are now
14 experiencing the worst persecution since the 1970's; and

15 WHEREAS, Both houses of Congress this year
16 unanimously passed resolutions memorializing President
17 Clinton to give higher priority to the issue of Christian
18 persecution abroad; and

19 WHEREAS, Secretary of State Madeleine Albright has
20 promised to "tell it like it is" on the subject of human
21 rights in Communist China; and

22 WHEREAS, The United States of America, since its
23 founding, has been a harbor of refuge and freedom to
24 worship for believers from John Winthrop to Roger
25 Williams to William Penn, has been a haven for the
26 oppressed, and has guaranteed freedom of worship in this
27 country for people of all faiths; now, therefore, be it

28 *Resolved by the Senate of the State of California, the*
29 *Assembly thereof concurring, That the Legislature*
30 *reaffirms its commitment to California's historic devotion*
31 *to the principles of religious liberty; and be it further*

32 *Resolved, That the Legislature unequivocally*
33 *condemns the egregious human rights abuses and denials*
34 *of religious liberty to Christians and other persecuted*
35 *religious believers in Communist China and calls upon*
36 *Communist China to end that persecution; and be it*
37 *further*

38 *Resolved, That the Legislature calls upon the President*
39 *and Congress of the United States to make the cessation*
40 *of persecution of religious believers in the People's*



1 Republic of China a priority objective of the United
2 States' foreign policy; and be it further

3 *Resolved*, That the Legislature calls upon the President
4 and Congress of the United States to not renew the Most
5 Favored Nation trading status of the People's Republic of
6 China so long as persecution of religious believers
7 continues in that country; and be it further

8 *Resolved*, That the Legislature demands the immediate
9 release from imprisonment in China of Bishop Su Zhimin,
10 Bishop Thomas Zeng Jingmu, Bishop Joannes Han
11 Dingxiang, Bishop An Shuxin, Reverend Cui ~~Xinggang~~
12 *Singlang*, Reverend Qin Guoliang, and the Reverend
13 Charles Guo, as well as Mr. Pan Kunming, Miss Pao
14 Yanping, Mr. Yu Qixiang, Mr. Yu Shuishen, Miss Gao
15 Shuping, Mr. Yin Guozhen, the approximately 120 other
16 persons arrested in November 1996 in Jiangxi, and all
17 other imprisoned religious prisoners of Conscience; and
18 be it further

19 *Resolved*, That the Legislature commends the actions
20 of the World Evangelical Fellowship in declaring an
21 annual international day of prayer on behalf of
22 persecuted Christians; and be it further

23 *Resolved*, That the Secretary of the Senate transmit
24 copies of this resolution to representatives of the
25 government of the People's Republic of China, the
26 President and Vice President of the United States, the
27 United States Congress, the United Nations Human
28 Rights Commission, the National Conference of Catholic
29 Bishops, the United States Catholic Conference, *the*
30 *Apostolic Pro-Nuncio to the United States*, the
31 Permanent Observer of the Holy See to the United
32 Nations, the Cardinal Kung Foundation, Secretary of
33 State Madeleine Albright, Freedom House, and the
34 World Evangelical Fellowship.

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