

labor camp internment for persisting in their faith, possessing religious books, making DVDs and writing articles to expose the truth of the persecution.

China has the highest death penalty rate in the world. Execution statistics are treated as "state secrets." However, experts estimate that 8,000–10,000 people are sentenced to death in China every year, among them not only criminals and economic convicts, but totally innocent citizens, such as Nie Shubin, Teng Xingshan, Cao Haixin and Hujieletu, whose innocence was proven only after they were already dead.

Another eight innocent farmers, Chen Guoqing, He Guoqing, Yang Shiliang, Zhu Yanqiang, Huang Zhixiang, Fang Chungping, Cheng Fagen and Cheng Lihe, who confessed their "crimes" after being cruelly tortured by the police, have been sentenced to death and are currently held in prisons in Hebei [province] and in Jingdezhen [in Jiangxi province].

Torture is very common in China's detention centers, labor camps and prisons. Torture methods include electric shock, burning, use of electric needles, beating and hanging, sleep deprivation, forced chemical injection causing nerve damage, and piercing the fingers with needles. Every year, there are reported cases of Chinese citizens being disabled or killed by police torture.

Labor camps are still retained as a convenient Chinese system which allows the police to lock up citizens without trial for up to four years. The detention system is another practice that the police favor, freeing them to detain citizens for six months to two years. Dissidents and human rights activists are particularly vulnerable targets and are often sent to labor camps, detention centers or even mental hospitals by authorities who want to simplify legal procedures and mislead the media.

China has the world's largest secret police system, the Ministry of National Security (guo an) and the Internal Security Bureau (guo bao) of the Ministry of Public Security, which exercise power beyond the law. They can easily tap telephones, follow citizens, place them under house arrest, detain them and impose torture. On June 3, 2004, the Chinese secret police planted drugs on Chongqing dissident Xu Wanping and later sentenced him to 12 years' imprisonment for "subversion of state power."

Chinese citizens have no right to elect state leaders, local government officials or representatives. In fact, there has never been free exercise of election rights in township-level elections. Wuhan resident Sun Bu'er, a member of the banned political party the Pan-Blue Alliance, was brutally beaten in September 2006 for participating as an independent candidate during an election of county-level people's congress representatives. Mr. Sun disappeared on March 23, 2007.

China continues to cruelly discriminate against its rural population. According to the Chinese election law, a farmer's right to vote is worth one quarter of that of an urban resident. In June 2007, the Shanxi kiln scandal was exposed by the media. Thousands of 8- [to-] 13[-]year-old trafficked children had been forced to labor in illegal kilns, almost all with local government connections. Many of the children were beaten, tortured and even buried alive.

The Chinese judiciary still illegally forbids any HIV/AIDS lawsuits against government officials responsible for the tragedy. AIDS sufferers and activists have been constantly harassed by the secret police.

The Chinese government has been selling arms and weapons to Darfur and other African regions to support ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. The Chinese authorities have forcibly repatriated North Ko-

rean refugees, knowing that they would be sent to labor camps or executed once back home. This significantly contravenes China's accession to the "Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees" and the "Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees."

Please be aware that the Olympic Games will be held in a country where there are no elections, no freedom of religion, no independent courts, no independent trade unions; where demonstrations and strikes are prohibited; where torture and discrimination are supported by a sophisticated system of secret police; where the government encourages the violation of human rights and dignity, and is not willing to undertake any of its international obligations.

Please consider whether the Olympic Games should coexist with religious persecution[,] labor camps, modern slavery, identity discrimination, secret police and crimes against humanity. As the Beijing Olympics slogan says, we live in "one world" with "one dream." We hope that one day the Chinese people will be able to share universal human rights, democracy and peace with people from all around the world. However, we can see that the Chinese government obviously is not yet prepared to honor its promise. As a matter of fact, the preparations for the Olympics have provided the perfect excuse for the Chinese government to restrict civil liberties and suppress human rights!

We do not want China to be contained or isolated from the rest of the world. We believe that only by adhering to the principles of human rights and through open dialogue can the world community pressure the Chinese government to change. Ignoring these realities and tolerating barbaric atrocities in [the] name of the Beijing Olympics will disgrace the Olympic Charter and shake the foundations of humanity. Human rights improvement requires time, but we should at least stop China's human rights situation from deteriorating. Having the Olympics hosted in a country where human dignity is trampled on will not honor its people or the Olympic Games. We sincerely hope that the Olympic Games will bring the values of peace, equality, freedom and justice to 1.3 billion Chinese citizens. We pray that the Olympics will be held in a free China.

We must push for the 2008 Olympics to live up to the Olympic Charter[,] and we must advocate for the realization of "one world" with "one human rights dream." We believe that only an Olympic Games true to the Olympic Charter can promote China's democratic progress, world peace and development.

We firmly hold to the belief that there can be no true Olympic Games without human rights and dignity. For China and for the Olympics, human rights must be upheld!

A PROCLAMATION HONORING MICHAEL HAMILTON FOR WINNING THE BOYS' DIVISION II STATE BASKETBALL CHAMPIONSHIP

HON. ZACHARY T. SPACE

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 8, 2008

Mr. SPACE. Madam Speaker: Whereas, Michael Hamilton showed hard work and dedication to the sport of basketball; and

Whereas, Michael Hamilton was a supportive team player; and

Whereas, Michael Hamilton always displayed sportsmanship on and off of the court; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, that along with his friends, family, and the residents of the 18th Congressional District, I congratulate Michael Hamilton on winning the Boys' Division II State Basketball Championship. We recognize the tremendous hard work and sportsmanship he has demonstrated during the 2007–2008 basketball season.

COMMEMORATING THE LIFE OF SERGEANT THOMAS C. RAY, III

HON. HEATH SHULER

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 8, 2008

Mr. SHULER. Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H. Res. 1020, which recognizes the service and sacrifices that the members of our Armed Forces and their families have made during this time of war. I rise with a heavy heart, because the citizens of western North Carolina were recently reminded of this sacrifice by the death of my constituent, National Guardsman Sergeant Thomas C. Ray, III from Weaverville, North Carolina.

Sgt. Ray joined the Navy in 1985 as a medical specialist and served 3 years of active duty. In 2006, Sgt. Ray joined the Army National Guard and shortly thereafter became a military police officer. Sgt. Ray was assigned to the 105th Military Police Battalion in Asheville, but volunteered to serve with 1132nd Military Police Company when it mobilized in June to go to Iraq. In January of this year, Sgt. Ray was awarded the Army Commendation Medal for his service as a gunner. Sgt. Ray was killed in Baghdad, Iraq on March 22, 2008 when a roadside bomb blew up near his vehicle.

Madam Speaker, Sgt. Ray exemplified the bravery and dedication of the men and women of the Armed Forces, and his life of service stands as a tribute to the members of the North Carolina National Guard who have answered the call since before the founding of our Nation. In the words of President Franklin D. Roosevelt, Sgt. Ray "stands in the unbroken line of patriots who have dared to die that freedom might live, and grow, and increase its blessings. Freedom lives, and through it, he lives—in a way that humbles the undertakings of most men."

I offer a prayer of comfort for the family of Sgt. Ray, including his wife, Linda, his daughter, Sydney, and his mother, Ozelle.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues today to vote for this important resolution that will give due honor and respect to the service that members of the Armed Services have dedicated to this country. I also ask my colleagues to join me in expressing sympathy for all our fallen soldiers and pray for the swift and safe return of those who continue to serve our Nation in harms way.

RECOGNIZING KARL SCHROEDER OF OSSIAN, IOWA

HON. TOM LATHAM

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 8, 2008

Mr. LATHAM. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Karl Schroeder of Ossian, Iowa