

being persecuted in China and killed because of their faith, and in Sudan, and in many of the other countries?

Thankfully, the International Religious Freedom Act has strong bipartisan support in both the House and Senate. This is not a Republican or Democratic issue. There are people of both sides, literally, when we look at it, equally in support of this effort. We had as much support from the Democratic side as from the Republican side.

Now the Congress has a chance to do the right thing and provide the funding for the Commission. I will be working with Senator NICKLES and others who sponsored the legislation in the Senate and my congressional colleagues on this side of the Capitol to be sure the money is appropriated for fiscal year 2000 and in the FY 1999 supplemental appropriations bill.

But the fact that the President did not see the commission as a priority and did not ask Congress to fund it is telling, because they did not ask for the money. But we wonder, if we give them the money, will they even put their efforts behind it and support it? It says that he is all talk and no action; big hat, no cattle; talk about it, get the credit, but do not follow through.

During that period of time, in November and December and January and this month, monasteries have been destroyed, monks and nuns arrested in Tibet, the Catholic Church continues to be persecuted in China, and conditions do not improve for the Coptic Christians in Egypt. Not only is this administration silent, but they do not put the money into the commission that they now claim.

I hope I am wrong. I hope it was an oversight. I hope the President and the Secretary of State will make implementing the provisions in the bill a priority. I hope they will work in good faith. There is still an opportunity to work in good faith with the commission, and name good people to the panel. That will show the American people that their commitment is genuine.

That will show the world thugs that the United States is watching, and will take action against countries that refuse to stop persecuting men and women of faith. The nameless, voiceless victims of China, in Vietnam, in Sudan, in Indonesia, in India and Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and many other places where faith is under attack are waiting, are waiting for a message to show that we care.

A woman I talked to in Tibet said she listened to Radio-Free Asia every day to hear, is the United States interested? They will wait to see if we act on this effort.

Pushing for funding of the Commission on International Religious Freedom and appointing good people will send that message that this administration cares.

Finally, I want to say a word about Dr. Bob Seiple, the person appointed to be the assistant to the Secretary of State for International Religious Freedom. I am pleased that President Clinton appointed him to the job. He is a good man, with a heart for those who are suffering from poverty and injustice.

As president of World Vision for over a decade, he gave his life to helping those in need and now he is seeking to make a difference for those suffering for their faith.

When he was offered the job, he called me on the telephone and asked me what I thought, should he take it. I said, take it. I encouraged him to go for it because I felt that he could make a difference. I felt he would have the opportunity to do things and to get some things moving, but now we see there is no funding for the commission to give them the ability to make that.

The President cannot just appoint Bob Seiple and take credit for having done something for the issue. That would be like Dietrich Bonhoeffer talking about cheap grace. It would be like appointing somebody and putting out a press release and coming to a gathering and speaking to religious leaders to tell them what you have done but there is no follow-through, there is no money, there is no effort because you personally appear to say one thing and do just the other.

The President cannot just appear before the gatherings of religious leaders and mention Bob Seiple's name in order to get the kudos with the audience and then walk away and do nothing. That would be, I believe, immoral, and I believe it would be an affront to those who are suffering and dying for their faith around the world. It would be a betrayal of American values and an example of political opportunism at its best.

I hope the President will instruct the Secretary of State to empower Bob Seiple to make a real difference for the State Department. I hope his office will receive the adequate resources. I hope the President will meet with Dr. Seiple and listen to what he has to say. I hope he will instruct our ambassadors around the world to do the same, and I hope he will do what he can to help this commission carry out its important duties, not to allow the commission of Mr. Seiple to be marginalized within the administration.

That is what will win him real kudos. That is what will help save lives, and that is what will help make the world a safer place for people of faith.

If the administration does not come to the Hill and actively seek funding for this commission, the honorable thing to do would be for Bob Seiple to resign, to step down and show that by standing up and speaking out, he was speaking out for those who do not have the voice. He would be the voice for the

voiceless. So if there is no funding for this commission and if President Clinton does not support this commission, and if Secretary Albright does not support this commission, then Bob Seiple should not serve and should do the honorable thing and should resign, so he is not being used by this administration.

SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

The following Member (at his own request) to revise and extend his remarks and include extraneous material:

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts, for 5 minutes, today.

The following Member (at his own request) to revise and extend his remarks and include extraneous material:

Mr. BOEHLERT, for 5 minutes, today.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to.

Accordingly, the House stands adjourned until 12:30 p.m. on Tuesday, February 23, 1999, for morning hour debate, pursuant to House Concurrent Resolution 27, or, under the previous order of the House until 2 p.m. on Tuesday, February 16, 1999, if not sooner in receipt of a message from the Senate transmitting its concurrence in House Concurrent Resolution 27.

Thereupon (at 11 o'clock and 35 minutes a.m.), pursuant to House Concurrent Resolution 27, the House adjourned under the previous order of the House until 2 p.m. on Tuesday, February 16, 1999, if not sooner in receipt of a message from the Senate transmitting its concurrence in House Concurrent Resolution 27.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 8 of rule XII, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

518. A letter from the Chairman of the Council, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting a copy of D.C. ACT 12-568, "Fiscal Year 1999 Disability Compensation Administrative Financing Temporary Amendment Act of 1998" received February 10, 1999, pursuant to D.C. Code section 1-233(c)(1); to the Committee on Government Reform.

519. A letter from the Chairman of the Council, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting a copy of D.C. ACT 12-563, "Lowell School, Inc., Real Property Tax Exemption and Equitable Real Property Tax Relief Temporary Act of 1998" received February 10, 1999, pursuant to D.C. Code section 1-233(c)(1); to the Committee on Government Reform.

520. A letter from the Chairman of the Council, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting a copy of D.C. ACT 12-561,