May 27, 1999

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD—SENATE

11531

Mr. MOYNIHAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Foreign Relations Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. Res. 103 and the Senate then proceed to its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. HUTCHINSON. Mr. President, I send an amendment to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Arkansas (Mr. Hutchinson) proposes and amendment numbered 537:

AMENDMENT NO. 537

(Purpose: To improve the resolution)

On page 3, strike line 15 and all that follows through page 4, line 6. On page 4, line 6, strike "(C)" and insert "(A)".

On page 4, line 14, strike "(D)" and insert "(B)".

On page 4, line 19, strike "(E)" and insert "(C)"

Mr. HUTCHINSON. Mr. President, I rise today in support of S. Res. 103, a resolution concerning the 10th anniversary of the Tiananmen Square massacre of June 4, 1989, in the People's Republic of China.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. President, we must never forget that heroic young man who stood in the path of a column of PLA tanks. We must never forget the brave men like Wang Dan who spent years in prison for daring to exercise his inalienable right to self-expression. We must never forget those students who were so inspired by our own experiment in self-government that they erected a 37 foot model of our statue of liberty.

We must never forget those who still languish in prison in China today for their democratic aspirations, for their religious convictions, for their desire to be free.

We must never forget men like Wang Weiying and Wang Zechen, members of the Chinese Democracy Party, detained for circulating a petition calling for a reassessment of the Tiananmen verdict. We must not forget prodemocracy activist, Yang Tao, who was arrested for planning a commemoration to mark the 10th anniversary of Tiananmen Square. We must not forget Jiang Qisheng, taken from his home in Beijing on May 18th for using Chinese to light candles in commemoration of those killed in Tiananmen Square.

According to the Wall Street Journal, over 50 dissidents have been detained in the days leading up to the 10th anniversary of the Tiananmen Square massacre, and at least fourteen are still being held.

The Chinese government knows what is has done and it is afraid—afrident of its own people. Otherwise, these series of arrests would not occur.

This resolution asks the Chinese government to face reality, to listen to its people, to release prisoners of conscience.

On June 3, 1989, police officers attacked students with tear gas, rubber
but, and electric truncheons. People's Liberation Army (PLA) officers armed with AK–47s opened fire on the innocent people who would dare stand in their way. They sent convoys of tanks to Tiananmen Square to absolutely crush the demonstrators. Their armored vehicles rammed the Goddess of Democracy, a 37-foot plaster likeness of the Statue of Liberty, knocking it down, flattening it beneath their steel treads. They killed a symbol of democracy and massacred their own people. On June 4, the PLA and security forces killed 1,500 and wounded tens of thousands. By June 7, the Chinese Red Cross reported 2,600 people aspiring to democracy dead. In the end, the Chinese government killed and wounded thousands of demonstrators. They imprisoned thousands more for their participation.

The simple fact is that the Chinese government is a totalitarian regime. President Clinton would do well to recognize this simple fact and recognize the failures of his engagement policy, rather than decrying any criticism as isolationism. If the hundreds of prisoners of conscience still languishing in prison today is not telling enough of the character of this regime, then perhaps the Chinese reaction to the embassy bombing is.

NATO's bombing of the Chinese embassy in Belgrade was a tragic accident. And the Chinese people had a reason to be upset. But there was no accident in the Chinese government's control of the media and manipulation of Chinese citizens to stir up anti-American sentiment. The Chinese government blocked reports of President Clinton's repeated apologies for the bombing. Student protesters were bussed out from universities to orchestrated protests, pelting rocks at the U.S. embassy in Beijing, holding Ambassador Sasser and his staff hostage in the embassy, burning the American consulate in Chengdu.

It was no accident that after several days, the Chinese government made sure that the protests came to an end when they were no longer useful for the government's purposes.

Ethan Gutmann, a television producer living in Beijing, witnessed the protests. "After a while, when the chanting lost its steam, the megaphone leader would strike up a short sing-along of the national anthem. This was the signal to leave, to shuffle along and give the next university its chance to demonstrate. The cycle continued, fresh waves of students, monotonous. Several British journalists discussed the numbers." They felt it was low, about 3,000; in a kind of Chinese scarf trick, the same student groups kept reappearing after an hour or so. The students, when isolated and interviewed, were very forthcoming; the university authorities had told them to come, told them to make banners, arranged the buses. The whole demonstration was canned . . ."

It was no accident that the Chinese government played the victim, trying to squeeze the Administration for concessions, to exclude Taiwan from any defense umbrella in Asia.

It was no accident that the Chinese government called off its human rights dialogue and nonproliferation talks.

Mr. President, the moral high ground that the Chinese regime attempted to seize from the accidental bombing has no equivalency to its own treatment of its citizens, to the massacre of the students in Beijing ten years ago. We must never forget the nature of the regime in China. The leaders may be different, but the treatment of Chinese citizens is the same.

Even this week, pro-democracy activist, Yang Tao, was arrested for planning a commemoration to mark the 10th anniversary of Tiananmen Square. This week it was reported that police took Jiang Qisheng (chee sheng) from his home in Beijing on May 18 for urging Chinese to light candles in commemoration of those killed in Tiananmen Square.

I urge all of my colleagues to join with me in supporting this bipartisan resolution—to recognize this regime for what it truly is and to never forget the tragedy that occurred ten years ago on June 3 and June 4, 1989.

Mr. FEINGOLD. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Arkansas again for his leadership on this critical issue.

S. Res. 103 marks the 10th anniversary of the Tiananmen Square massacre, when a still unknown number of Chinese—some say hundreds, others, thousands—died at the hands of the People's Liberation Army.

Despite the significance of this tragedy, China's leaders remain unwilling to re-examine the events of June 4, 1989. Indeed, they would like nothing more than to have Tiananmen fade from the world's memory. But today, the memory of Tiananmen remains vivid in our minds. In particular, we remember one man who defined the spirit of the day as he stood, with only freedom at his side, and faced down an army tank. We saw him then, and as we think of Tiananmen Square today, we see him still.

The memory of Tiananmen refuses to fade because the human rights situation in China remains abysmal. According to Amnesty International more than 200 individuals may remain in Beijing prisons for their role in the 1989 demonstrations. And hundreds, if not thousands, of individuals continue to be detained or imprisoned for their political or religious beliefs.

We face trying issues with China—the recent embassy bombing, accession to the WTO, charges of espionage—but we can not let these issues silence our voices on the subject of human rights.

China's human rights practices continue to be abhorrent, and we should not allow recent events to diminish our concern with China's human rights practices.

It is noteworthy that the recent demonstrations in China against the United States are perhaps the largest since the Tiananmen Square protests exactly 10 years ago. It is ironic that public protest is OK when it serves the government's interest, and not OK when it threatens the government's hold on power.

In fact, since the end of the bombing-related anti-U.S. demonstrations, China has resumed its crackdown on dissidents who could attempt to commemorate the anniversary of the Tiananmen Square massacre.

The failure to adopt a resolution condemning China's human rights practices at last month's Commission on Human Rights makes it all the more urgent that we continue to demand improvements in China's policies.

We cannot betray the sacrifices made by those who lost their lives in Tiananmen Square by tacitly condoning through our silence the abuses that continue to this day.

This resolution reminds the leaders in Beijing that we will not forget what was done 10 years ago and will not look the other way when they again deny the Chinese people their rights.

Until we see genuine progress on human rights, the memory of Tiananmen Square will continue to haunt us.

We must not forget. And we must never let the rulers in Beijing forget.

Mr. HUTCHINSON. Mr. President, I want to speak briefly in support of S. Res. 103, a resolution concerning the 10th anniversary of the Tiananmen Square massacre which occurred on June 4, 1989. This bipartisan resolution expresses sympathy for the families of those killed in the peaceful protests, calls on the Government of China to live up to international standards by releasing prisoners of conscience, ending the harassment of Chinese citizens, and calls upon the Chinese Government to ratify the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

We must never forget the heroic young man who stood in the path of a column of PLA tanks 10 years ago. We must never forget the brave men like Wang Dan, who spent years in prison for daring to exercise his inalienable rights to self-expression. We must never forget those students who were so inspired by our own experiment in self-government and freedom and democracy that they erected a 37-foot model of our Statue of Liberty. We must never forget those who still languish in prison in China today, simply because they have democratic aspirations, because they have religious convictions, because they have a desire to be free.
We must never forget men like Wang Wenjian and Wang Zechen, members of the Chinese Democracy Party, who were detained for circulating a petition calling for a reassessment of the Tiananmen verdict. We must never forget pro democracy activist Yang Tao arrested for planning a commemoration tomorrow of the tenth anniversary of the Tiananmen Square massacre. We must not forget Jiang Qisheng, who was taken from his home in Beijing on May 18 for urging the Chinese to light candles in commemoration of those killed in the massacre ten years ago. For asking for a peaceful memorial, the lighting of candles, he has been arrested.

According to the Wall Street Journal today, over 50 dissidents have been detained and recent days leading up to the tenth anniversary of the Tiananmen Square massacre, and at least 14 are currently being held. The Chinese government knows what it has done. It is afraid of its own people. Otherwise, these series of arrests would not have occurred. This resolution asks the Chinese government to face reality, listen to its people, and to release prisoners of conscience.

Mr. President, I am just afraid that in the midst of all of our talk of the espionage of the Chinese government— which well we should pay attention to—with all of the talk of the unfortunate, tragic bombing of the Chinese embassy, with all of the talk about the accession of China to the WTO and a permanent normal trading status for China, we will forget that there are tens of thousands today who are oppressed, and hundreds remain in prison, and there are multitudes who desire freedom and want a better political system for their country, who want democracy, and I am afraid they will be forgotten in all of the milieu concerning our relationship with China. So I call upon us to remember. And I will—if no one else does—offer this resolution year after year. It is a special anniversary. It is the tenth anniversary of the tragedy that occurred.

Mr. HUTCHINSON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the amendment be agreed to, the resolution, as amended, be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, the motions to reconsider be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motion to reconsider be agreed to, the motions to lay upon the table, and finally, that any additional statements appear at this point in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, is as follows:

Whereas the United States was founded on the democratic principle that all men and women are created equal and entitled to the exercise of human rights; and

Whereas freedom of expression and assembly are fundamental human rights that belong to all people and are recognized as such under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; and

Whereas the death of the former General Secretary of the Chinese Communist Party of the People's Republic of China, Hu Yaobang, on April 15, 1989, gave rise to peaceful protests throughout China calling for the establishment of a dialogue with government and party leaders on democratic reforms, including freedom of expression, freedom of assembly, and the elimination of corruption by government officials; and

Whereas after that date thousands of pro-democracy demonstrators continued to protest peacefully in and around Tiananmen Square in Beijing until June 3 and 4, 1989, when Chinese authorities ordered the People's Liberation Army and other security forces to use lethal force to disperse demonstrators in Beijing, especially around Tiananmen Square; and

Whereas nonofficial sources, a Chinese Red Cross report from June 7, 1989, and the State Department's Human Rights Practices for 1989, gave various estimates of the numbers of people killed and wounded in 1989 by the People's Liberation Army and other security forces; and

Whereas human rights organizations such as Human Rights Watch, Human Rights in China, and Amnesty International have documented that hundreds of those arrested remain in prison; and

Whereas the Government of the People's Republic of China continues to suppress dissent by imprisoning pro-democracy activists, journalists, labor union leaders, religious believers, and other individuals in China and Tibet who seek to express their political or religious views in a peaceful manner; and

Whereas June 5, 1999, is the tenth anniversary of the date of the Tiananmen Square massacre: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(A) condemns all Chinese citizens of the People's Republic of China who are peacefully advocating for democracy and human rights; and

(B) calls upon the Chinese government to release all prisoners of conscience, including those still in prison as a result of their participation in the peaceful democracy protests of 1989 in the People's Republic of China, as well as to the families of those who have been killed and to those who have suffered for their efforts to keep that struggle alive during the past decade;

(C) calls upon the Chinese government to—

(1) make reparation for the families of those killed as a result of their participation in the democracy protests of 1989 in the People's Republic of China, as well as to the families of those who have been killed and to those who have suffered for their efforts to keep that struggle alive during the past decade;

(2) permits the Chinese citizens of the People's Republic of China who are peacefully advocating for democracy and human rights; and

(3) relents the ongoing and egregious human rights abuses by the Government of the People's Republic of China and calls on that Government to—

That the Senate—

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report.