

Sudan, Vietnam, as well as the brutal and intolerant Taliban regime in Afghanistan are just a few of the transgressors. In China, Falun Gong has suffered severe repression and persecution. Despite the popular appeal of this movement and despite its peaceful means, the Chinese regime continues to see Falun Gong as a threat, and to treat them as such. At the same time, China has continuously pursued a policy towards Tibet that severely limits the spiritual freedom of the Tibetan people. In the House International Relations Committee, we have repeatedly condemned China's treatment of its minority groups. We will continue to do so.

Not long ago, Congress passed a bill on trade relations and human rights in Vietnam. Despite its advances in freedom and prosperity, Vietnam pursues a brutal and despicable policy of repression towards its religious minorities. The bill serves as an example for any government that tries to suppress religious freedom. It also presents a framework for further advances towards freedom, human rights, and the rule of law.

Together with the Office on International Religious Freedom and through my work on the International Relations Committee we have managed to bring the world's attention to these issues. I have a strong feeling that under the guidance of the International Religious Freedom Act and the universal declaration of human rights the world is becoming a less discriminating place. The Department of State's Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor's most recent reports on International Religious Freedom and on human rights reveals that allegations and acts of state sponsored discrimination perpetrated against religious minorities are rampant.

The road towards a world free from discrimination and religious persecution in our lifetime is attainable, but the challenges are great and the road a winding and difficult one. Regrettably, it is not just the anti-democracy, totalitarian regimes that engage in state sponsored discriminatory practices. While it is heartening to see the unified support that our European allies are showing for the United States in these trying times and like my colleagues, I am profoundly grateful for their friendship and assistance there is a disturbing pattern of discrimination against minority religions. Recently, France passed a law that severely limits the rights of minority religions. The law is designed to control "sects," and does so in a profoundly intolerant manner. As a colleague of mine stated, "this law—if allowed to stand—could spread an anti-religious contagion throughout Europe." In Austria, in Germany, and in Belgium, the governments use the same discriminatory methods of registration. Their practice of designating minority groups "sects" or "cults" is clearly a violation of universal human rights.

The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, recognizes the right of every human being to "have or to adopt a religion of his choice, and either individually or in community with others and in public and private, to manifest his religion or belief in worship, observance, practice and teaching. . . ." The signatories have pledged "not to discriminate on the basis of religion." With 144 signatories to the covenant, it is part of the body of law

that we commonly refer to as International Law, and it is incumbent upon the international community to enforce such laws.

The House International Relations Committee has held numerous hearings on religious intolerance throughout the world. The Ambassador for International Religious Freedom has testified before the International Committee a number of times. There's a growing awareness with U.S. officials of the need to add pressure to the governments around the world on this issue. The number of countries that the Secretary of State has deemed "countries of particular concern" under the International Religious Freedom Act is disheartening.

During our hearings, the members of the International Relations Committee stated that they will support legislative restrictions on the entry into the United States of foreign government officials associated with repression of religious rights; this legislation makes our assertions a reality, and further extends protected freedoms from discrimination to other categories.

Mr. Speaker, the question is, what can Americans do to help uphold values of tolerance, human rights and dignity in foreign countries—especially in nations which are our friends and allies. I believe, that the Freedom to Trade Act is a necessary safeguard to protect our people from religious intolerance and other forms of discrimination wherever it rears its ugly head. For these and many other reasons I urge my colleagues to support the Freedom to Trade Act, and together we can take the necessary steps to eradicate the evils that seek to destroy the free world.

8TH DISTRICT OF THE NEW JERSEY STATE FIRST AID COUNCILS CELEBRATES 50TH ANNIVERSARY

**HON. RODNEY P. FRELINGHUYSEN**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, October 17, 2001*

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to offer my sincerest congratulations to the 8th District of the New Jersey State First Aid Council on the occasion of its 50th anniversary.

I am sure that you will agree that in light of recent events, the importance of emergency medical services has never been more evident.

What makes this group all that more special is that they volunteer their time to provide this life-saving service to the communities in which they live.

I know personally many Emergency Medical Technician's who, without thought to their personal safety, left their homes and jobs to respond to the call for help in New York City following the attack on the World Trade Center. Many more of these wonderful volunteers were at the ready to respond when called.

The recent attacks on the World Trade Center highlight the work that these people do day in and day out without asking for any recognition. Every community in New Jersey is all that much more safer because of these people.

The New Jersey State First Aid Council is an organization designed to bring its members together for the purpose of discussing methods of improving ambulance services, the reduction of loss of life, the development of better service through educational programs, and to foster a spirit of harmony and friendship among the various non-profit volunteer squads.

Membership in the New Jersey State First Aid Council is open to all organizations that meet the New Jersey State definition of a volunteer first aid squad and are either specialized industrial squads, emergency squads operating ambulances and serving the general community, or are support organizations such as heavy rescue, water rescue, extrication, and search and rescue.

The New Jersey State First Aid Council serves the entire state of New Jersey and is broken down into districts to better serve its member organizations.

The 8th District of the New Jersey State First Aid Council was officially formed on October 16, 1951. The original volunteer emergency squads were from Basking Ridge, Chester, Millington, Peapack-Gladstone, Far Hills-Bedminister, and Bernardsville.

Over the past 50 years the membership has changed but the mission has been the same—to provide the best emergency medical care at no cost and to support the volunteers in providing this service.

Today the following organizations are proud to be part of the 8th District of the New Jersey State First Aid Council: Basking Ridge Fire Co. #1 First Aid & Rescue; Bernardsville Fire Co. #1 First Aid & Rescue; Chatham Emergency Squad; Chester First Aid Squad; Liberty Corner First Aid Squad; Long Valley First Aid Squad; Mendham First Aid & Rescue Squad; Mendham Township First Aid Squad; Morristown Ambulance Squad; New Vernon Volunteer Fire Department First Aid Squad; Peapack-Gladstone First Aid Squad; and Randolph Rescue Squad.

I would also like to acknowledge the officers of the 8th District of the New Jersey First Aid Council for the fine work that they do. In addition to the time they volunteer on their individual squads they serve the Emergency Medical Services Community as a whole as officers of this fine organization. They are: President: Karen Corica; Chairwoman: Jane McArthur; Vice-Chairman: Jim McConnell; Second Vice-Chairman: Fred Miller; Recording Secretary: Bob Molloy; Corresponding Secretary: Bob Molloy; Treasurer: Paula Oswald; and Chaplain: Debbie Smith.

Mr. Speaker, I am sure that you will join me in honoring the 8th District of the New Jersey State First Aid Council on this very special occasion. Events of the past month have shown us all what a valuable service these fine organizations and its members provide to the community. To all, I say congratulations.