

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise in honor of the special order hour titled “Bridging the Divide: A Call to Action by the Congressional Black Caucus to Eliminate Racial Health Disparities.” I would like to thank my colleagues Congressman HAKEEM JEFFRIES and Congresswoman JOYCE BEATTY for hosting this timely special order.

Historically, racial and ethnic minorities are likely to have the highest uninsured rates and are less likely to receive preventive and quality health care. While the Affordable Care Act has helped minorities afford health insurance and access quality care, there is still a need to eliminate existing disparities. For example, the Department of Health and Human Services is currently working to expand access, end racial and ethnic discrimination, perform outreach to underserved communities, improve workforce diversity, and expand data collection and reporting.

While this is an ambitious plan, it is one that is extremely necessary. Unfortunately, coverage, access, and outreach may not be the only keys to eliminating disparities. Demographic characteristics contribute heavily to racial and ethnic health status. For example, research shows that privately insured African American and Hispanic adults fare worse than privately insured white adults along measures to access and use of care. Unfortunately, African Americans and Hispanics are less likely to have a regular provider than their white counterparts. The same research also showed that privately insured African Americans and Hispanics had less confidence in their ability to pay for medical costs.

Since social determinants like economic stability, education, and environment play such a large role in how we each view and access health care, many of the changes necessary to eliminate racial and ethnic disparities require a much larger plan than just a focus on health-related programs. Reducing disparities in health truly entails addressing racial and ethnic social determinants such as availability of safe housing, affordable food, access to education, job opportunities, community-based resources, public safety, public transportation, and more.

Our society must make many changes before we can truly eliminate racial and ethnic health disparities because that also means eliminating disparities in many other sectors. I thank Congressman JEFFRIES and Congresswoman BEATTY for hosting this poignant special order.

□ 2045

TIBET

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. MCSALLY). Under the Speaker’s announced policy of January 6, 2015, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN) for 30 minutes.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to revise and extend my remarks and to enter additional materials into the RECORD.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Massachusetts?

There was no objection.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, this week, Washington, D.C., is blessed by the presence of His Holiness, the 14th Dalai Lama, Tenzin Gyatso, who is visiting the city from June 12 through June 16 for several events and meetings. This visit provides us not only the opportunity to listen to the Dalai Lama speak about the modern world and confronting conflict, but also to take a look at the crisis that faces Tibet and the Tibetan people and ask why the United States is not doing more to protect the rights and to support the autonomy of the Tibetan people.

As we seek to comprehend the senseless violence of yesterday’s massacre of at least 49 people in Orlando, Florida, and the wounding of more than 50 others—most members of the LGBT community and many of Hispanic descent, all just enjoying their lives on a Saturday night—I can think of no better source of words of wisdom, tolerance, and peace than of His Holiness, the Dalai Lama.

Madam Speaker, I include in the RECORD an opinion piece by the Dalai Lama, entitled: “The Dalai Lama: Why I’m hopeful about the world’s future.”

[From the Washington Post, June 13, 2016]

THE DALAI LAMA: WHY I’M HOPEFUL ABOUT THE WORLD’S FUTURE

(By the Dalai Lama)

The 14th Dalai Lama, Tenzin Gyatso, is the spiritual leader of Tibet. Since 1959, he has lived in exile in Dharamsala in northern India.

Almost six decades have passed since I left my homeland, Tibet, and became a refugee. Thanks to the kindness of the government and people of India, we Tibetans found a second home where we could live in dignity and freedom, able to keep our language, culture and Buddhist traditions alive.

My generation has witnessed so much violence—some historians estimate that more than 200 million people were killed in conflicts in the 20th century.

Today, there is no end in sight to the horrific violence in the Middle East, which in the case of Syria has led to the greatest refugee crisis in a generation. Appalling terrorist attacks—as we were sadly reminded this weekend—have created deep-seated fear. While it would be easy to feel a sense of hopelessness and despair, it is all the more necessary in the early years of the 21st century to be realistic and optimistic.

There are many reasons for us to be hopeful. Recognition of universal human rights, including the right to self-determination, has expanded beyond anything imagined a century ago. There is growing international consensus in support of gender equality and respect for women. Particularly among the younger generation, there is a widespread rejection of war as a means of solving problems. Across the world, many are doing valuable work to prevent terrorism, recognizing the depths of misunderstanding and the divisive idea of “us” and “them” that is so dangerous. Significant reductions in the world’s arsenal of nuclear weapons mean that setting a timetable for further reductions and ultimately the elimination of nuclear weapons—a sentiment President Obama recently reiterated in Hiroshima, Japan—no longer seem a mere dream.

The notion of absolute victory for one side and defeat of another is thoroughly outdated; in some situations, following conflict,

suffering arises from a state that cannot be described as either war or peace. Violence inevitably incurs further violence. Indeed, history has shown that nonviolent resistance ushers in more durable and peaceful democracies and is more successful in removing authoritarian regimes than violent struggle.

It is not enough simply to pray. There are solutions to many of the problems we face; new mechanisms for dialogue need to be created, along with systems of education to inculcate moral values. These must be grounded in the perspective that we all belong to one human family and that together we can take action to address global challenges.

It is encouraging that we have seen many ordinary people across the world displaying great compassion toward the plight of refugees, from those who have rescued them from the sea, to those who have taken them in and provided friendship and support. As a refugee myself, I feel a strong empathy for their situation and when we see their anguish, we should do all we can to help them. I can also understand the fears of people in host countries, who may feel overwhelmed. The combination of circumstances draws attention to the vital importance of collective action toward restoring genuine peace to the lands these refugees are fleeing.

Tibetan refugees have firsthand experience of living through such circumstances and, although we have not yet been able to return to our homeland, we are grateful for the humanitarian support we have received through the decades from friends, including the people of the United States.

A further source for hope is the genuine cooperation among the world’s nations toward a common goal evident in the Paris accord on climate change. When global warming threatens the health of this planet that is our only home, it is only by considering the larger global interest that local and national interests will be met.

I have a personal connection to this issue because Tibet is the world’s highest plateau and is an epicenter of global climate change, warming nearly three times as fast as the rest of the world. It is the largest repository of water outside the two poles and the source of the Earth’s most extensive river system, critical to the world’s 10 most densely populated nations.

To find solutions to the environmental crisis and violent conflicts that confront us in the 21st century, we need to seek new answers. Even though I am a Buddhist monk, I believe that these solutions lie beyond religion in the promotion of a concept I call secular ethics. This is an approach to educating ourselves based on scientific findings, common experience and common sense—a more universal approach to the promotion of our shared human values.

Over more than three decades, my discussions with scientists, educators and social workers from across the globe have revealed common concerns. As a result we have developed a system that incorporates an education of the heart, but one that is based on study of the workings of the mind and emotions through scholarship and scientific research rather than religious practice. Since we need moral principles—compassion, respect for others, kindness, taking responsibility—in every field of human activity, we are working to help schools and colleges create opportunities for young people to develop greater self-awareness, to learn how to manage destructive emotions and cultivate social skills. Such training is being incorporated into the curriculum of many schools in North America and Europe—I am involved with work at Emory University on a new curriculum on secular ethics that is being introduced in several schools in India and the United States.

It is our collective responsibility to ensure that the 21st century does not repeat the pain and bloodshed of the past. Because human nature is basically compassionate, I believe it is possible that decades from now we will see an era of peace—but we must work together as global citizens of a shared planet.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, by way of welcoming the Dalai Lama, I would like to say a few words about him and his leadership.

The Dalai Lama, the spiritual leader of Tibet, describes himself as a simple Buddhist monk. He was recognized as the reincarnation of the previous 13th Dalai Lama when he was only 2 years old, and he was only 6 when he began his monastic studies.

But years before he finished his education, when he was still a teenager, he was called upon to assume full political power after China's invasion of Tibet in 1950. When in 1954 he went to Beijing for peace talks with Mao Zedong and other Chinese leaders, he was not yet 20. Five years later, with the brutal suppression of the Tibetan national uprising in Lhasa by Chinese troops, the Dalai Lama was forced to escape into exile. Since 1959, he has been living in northern India. That is more than 60 years of exile.

I have had the opportunity to meet the Dalai Lama on a number of occasions. He is a warm, generous, compassionate man with a great sense of humor. He is also a man of peace. He has consistently advocated for policies of nonviolence even in the face of extreme aggression. In 1989, he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his nonviolent struggle for the liberation of Tibet. He has received over 150 awards, honorary doctorates, and prizes in recognition of his message of peace, nonviolence, interreligious understanding, universal responsibility, and compassion. His is a voice for tolerance.

Unfortunately, as we all know, Tibet has not been liberated. In the late 1990s, under the Dalai Lama's leadership, the Tibetan people formally put aside the goal of independence. Since then, they have been fighting, peacefully, for their autonomy within China; but that struggle is not going very well today. Part of the reason it is not going very well is that the international community seems to be more interested in not offending China than in vigorously supporting the human rights of the Tibetan people. It seems to me that my own government has fallen into that trap.

I am looking forward to the Dalai Lama's visit this week, and I know that the leadership of the House and my colleagues on both sides of the aisle will welcome him with the greatest appreciation; but it is easy to praise the Dalai Lama, to meet with him, and to benefit from his teachings, yet not lift a finger to help the people of Tibet. The Dalai Lama and the Tibetan people deserve better.

Madam Speaker, last November I had the honor of joining Democratic Leader

NANCY PELOSI and my colleagues JOYCE BEATTY, TED LIEU, ALAN LOWENTHAL, BETTY MCCOLLUM, and TIM WALZ on a historic congressional delegation to Tibet, Beijing, and Hong Kong.

I have long raised concerns about China's human rights record in Tibet. As the first congressional delegation to enter Tibet since the 2008 unrest, our trip was an important opportunity to raise the voices of the Tibetan people, and we did just that. Everywhere we went, in every meeting we had, we talked about Tibet. We talked about the Dalai Lama and his strong bipartisan support in Congress. We talked about the importance of respect for people's cultures and religions, and we talked about the need to strengthen and protect all of the human rights of the Tibetan people.

During the delegation visit, we felt we had a good exchange with Chinese officials and, especially, with university students both in Tibet and in Beijing. We saw our trip—and especially the delegation's visit to Tibet—as an important gesture by the Chinese Government; but it was also clear to us that our visit was only a first step and that much more needed to be done. Since our return, we have been looking for ways to build on our visit and to advance the reforms needed for meaningful change.

Here are some of the things we identified that need to happen specifically with regard to Tibet:

The United States needs to open a consulate in Lhasa, Tibet;

More Members of Congress, more journalists, more members of parliament from other nations, and more people in general, including members of the Tibetan community here in the United States, need to be allowed to travel freely to Tibet;

Tibetans in China need to be able to travel freely as well;

The dialogue between Beijing and the Dalai Lama to resolve longstanding issues of Tibetan autonomy, religious practice, culture, language, and heritage needs to be renewed.

I came away from our visit believing even more strongly that the Dalai Lama is part of the solution to resolving Tibetan grievances.

Too often during our trip, we heard from some Chinese officials—not all, but some—expressions and characterizations of Tibet and the Dalai Lama that showed that some people's minds and imaginations are stuck in the past, in old prejudices. This concerned me greatly. The issue is not the past. The issue is the future of Tibet and its people.

Renewing dialogue must be genuine and productive, and it cannot be just another guise for wasting time or going through the motions. We need to see a dialogue based on good faith and on the mutual need to resolve outstanding issues in a way that is acceptable to all parties.

Undertaking such an initiative would be a positive reflection on the capacity

of Chinese authorities to engage in constructive dialogue, and it would increase confidence the world over that the government is committed to reconciliation and ending abuses in Tibet.

The Chinese Government has invested a great deal in Tibet, and that was very clear to us, but that investment must not come at the price of an entire culture. You cannot confine a people's culture and heritage—their very sense of identity—to a museum or to a market of handicrafts.

The human rights of the Tibetan people must be strengthened and protected, and I returned from the delegation visit with a renewed commitment to continue to work with my colleagues in Congress, with Leader PELOSI, to push for the reforms that are needed to achieve this, and this is the reason we are here today.

Madam Speaker, I yield to our distinguished Democratic leader, who led this historic visit to Tibet, Leader PELOSI.

Ms. PELOSI. I thank the gentleman for yielding and for calling this Special Order this evening.

Special it is, indeed, as we welcome His Holiness, the Dalai Lama, to Washington, D.C. Tomorrow, in a bipartisan way, House and Senate Democrats and Republicans will join in welcoming His Holiness. He is among one of the things we all agree on—his greatness and the honor he brings us with his visit.

Madam Speaker, I completely associate myself with every word of Mr. MCGOVERN's comments. He talked about our visit to Lhasa, to Tibet, and to other places in China. We called him Mr. MCGOVERN's spiritual leader of our visit. As the co-chair of the Lantos Human Rights Commission of the House of Representatives, he truly believes, as His Holiness says and as I heard him say today, that we are all God's children, and that is how we have to treat each other.

In listening to our colleagues of the previous Special Order, who were members of the Congressional Black Caucus, who discussed various issues of justice—social justice, health justice, and the rest—and who talked about Orlando, it focuses on how special His Holiness' visit is. In coming the day after the terrible massacre of many in the LGBT community, it is really something that should be a comfort to all of us. His Holiness' message of peace, of compassion, of respect for every person is a message of hope that is needed today, tomorrow, and the next day, which are the days His Holiness will be here, but it is needed as we go forward as well. He is a truly great man. When I awoke this morning so sad about what happened yesterday, I was full of hope about hearing what His Holiness would have to say about our responsibilities to each other.

Our colleague mentioned our November CODEL. It was something that many of us had been hoping to do for many years. We had been trying for 25 years to get a visa to visit Tibet, and

the President of China gave us that opportunity. We went there to see, to learn, to observe, and to make judgments. We did not go there to burn bridges; we went there to build bridges. As Congressman MCGOVERN said, we saw some areas in which we could work together, and we came back with some resolve, hopefully, to get other bridge building done.

I have seen His Holiness on many occasions. When he first came to Congress, I was brand new in Congress. He came under the auspices of Mr. Lantos, for whom the Human Rights Commission is named, and he brought us together in a group to listen to His Holiness' plan of action. It included respect for the environment and autonomy for Tibet but not independence. That was over 25 years ago that he had been talking about autonomy. While sometimes the Chinese Government doesn't accept that characterization, it is why many of us support His Holiness. As I mentioned earlier, he has friends on both sides of the aisle on both sides of the Capitol and also down Pennsylvania Avenue.

I remember with great pride when we presented His Holiness with a Congressional Gold Medal—again, with great bipartisan support. President Bush came. Not only that—and a bigger honor yet—Mrs. Laura Bush came as well. What an honor for His Holiness and what an honor for our country that our President showed that respect.

On that day when we talked about it, we had so many good things to say about His Holiness. One of the things was his unstinting support for peace as a positive example of how to make the world a better place—peace in the world, peace in our country, peace in our communities, peace in our families, peace in ourselves. That inner peace is what he has been preaching.

On this trip, we can see His Holiness as he embodies the wisdom and the courage to maintain what he calls a peaceful mind in a modern world, and we look forward to hearing what he has to say about that. In addition to saying we are all God's children and of the respect we need to have for each other and of the compassion that he advocates, His Holiness says that great changes start with individuals.

I will tell this story, which, I think, some may find amusing.

His Holiness is a gentle man. While he has big challenges and while he is the leader and the champion in the advocacy—I wouldn't use the word "fight" as he doesn't like words like that—for respecting the culture, the language, and the religion of the Tibetan people and the autonomy for them as a people, he does so in a very gentle way.

I met him here in the Capitol for the first time, and I saw him in Rio at the time of the Earth Summit in 1992, where he spoke as a religious leader. We also acknowledged that he was the first winner of the Nobel Prize—it was part of his proclamation and why he

won—for his contribution in protecting the environment. It was the first environmental consideration in a Nobel Prize. How beautiful that was. I have seen him here many times, in California, in New York—you name it—and in Dharamsala, which is where he lives in India. Anyway, we were taking a delegation there to visit—a bipartisan, large delegation to visit him there.

□ 2100

And we saw some of the people right after the crackdown in Tibet—coincidentally, we had our trip planned for a long time, but it happened to occur right after that crackdown. So many people were coming in from Tibet telling us what they saw there. It was pretty brutal, the reports that they gave us, and it was so sad.

So later in the day, when we had lunch with the couple hundred lamas from all over India, that part of India, many of them Tibetan Buddhist lamas, I explained what I had seen that morning and how transformative it was to see people get firsthand knowledge of the humanity of man and that we had to do something about it.

We had our Members there. One was going to help with this, and one was going to help with that. You know, there were all these things that we were going to do to help these people.

And then I said what I always said: if freedom-loving people do not speak out against oppression in Tibet because of our commercial interests with China, then we surrender all moral authority to speak on behalf of human rights anywhere in the world. Tibet remains a challenge to the conscience of the world, and we must respond to that.

When I was finished, His Holiness spoke to the lamas there, and he said to the lamas: Now, let us all pray so that we could rid Nancy of her negative attitudes.

Well, I thought I was making the fight, but I am not going to be holier than His Holiness. A gentle approach is what he thinks is best and respectful. I take some level of pride in telling our Chinese friends—and they are our friends. He is your friend, too, in terms of damping down any, shall we say, exuberance when we learn what we consider to be grave injustices and human rights violations.

In honor of His Holiness' 80th birthday last summer—Richard Gere is the chairman of the International Campaign for Tibet and has really been a champion for His Holiness and the Tibetan people—Richard Gere and I wrote a Wall Street Journal op-ed, and in it we said there is no better way to honor the Dalai Lama than by standing with him and the Tibetan people vowing to keep their cause alive. It is a beautiful culture, indeed.

To hear His Holiness, as I did today, speak in Tibetan, which I didn't understand except through translation, and have him explain that the Tibetan language is a beautiful language in specifics, in terms of explaining Buddhism

and matters of faith and philosophy because of its intricacies. It enhances your appreciation and understanding of Buddhism to hear it in the words of the Tibetan language, and translated from Tibetan in terms of the intricacies of the language that you would need to translate it into English or another language.

So this language is important to the faith of Buddhism. It is important to the culture. It is important to the families. It is important, again, to the education of the children. And the attempts on the part of the Chinese to resettle Han Chinese, dilute the population of Tibetans in Tibet, is something that would be just really wrong, just plain and simple wrong. Again, it is a challenge to the conscience.

This morning, His Holiness spoke at the United States Institute of Peace, and he said real change comes through action. He said: You all ask me for my blessing, and people say nice things, but real change comes through action.

If I understood it correctly in the translation, he said that karma is not necessarily just about fate. It is about acting, action, taking action. So we all need to take action in what we believe in.

Again, every opportunity I get—and I thank the distinguished gentleman, the conscience of our codel and chair of the Tom Lantos Commission on Human Rights. Every opportunity I get, and this is one of them that I treasure on the floor of the House, to say what an honor it is to even be in the same room, the same place with His Holiness, the Dalai Lama, a revered figure throughout the world.

The Dalai Lama's name is synonymous with everything that is good, and that is what we emphasized to our Chinese host. We had to move, as Mr. MCGOVERN said, beyond their outmoded thinking into another place.

In terms of His Holiness, tomorrow when he comes to the Capitol, I will look forward to thanking him for his tremendous, inspiring leadership. "Inspiration" is such an inadequate word when it comes to what he is. We thank him for sharing the strength of his determination in pursuit of peace.

He was speaking about it today in terms of something that might take some years. We may not see it, some of us—you might, Mr. MCGOVERN; I might not—a time when the world was completely at peace.

When he laughs, it is something very special. We hear the joyousness that transcends despair. In his words, we receive a message of hope and humanity when he is with us. In his presence, we feel inspired to make a difference, to make a difference in ourselves and in our world.

I talked earlier about President Bush coming to the Congressional Gold Medal ceremony, and I know that the President will be receiving His Holiness this week. Presidents have done that over time, which is a source of great pride for us in our country and in

the relationship between His Holiness and our President. But it goes a long way back.

I will just close by saying, when His Holiness was a very little boy and he became the Dalai Lama, he received a gift from the President of the United States, Franklin Delano Roosevelt; and he loved it because it was a watch, and the watch had the phases of the Moon.

Actually, my Apple watch has the phases of the Sun.

The watch had the phases of the Moon, and how prescient President Franklin Roosevelt was to send this little boy this watch, who would become so interested in science and thinking and the brain and faith and what the connection was among all of those factors.

But again, the relationship between an American President and His Holiness, the Dalai Lama, goes back to when he was a little boy, and it persists into his eighties now. That is something that, again, brings luster to us in our country that we have such a beautiful relationship with such a spiritual figure in the world.

So I look forward to welcoming him here tomorrow. Again, as I said to him today: You could not have come at a better time when we are so in mourning about what happened in Orlando to our LGBT loved ones, to their families, to the community in Orlando. We are grateful to the response of our first responders there and our law enforcement officials and local officials there.

Again, it is the spirituality that we need to recover and draw strength to go forward to make sure that we minimize any such actions that hopefully they never happen again. How wonderful that His Holiness is here to bring us that comfort.

With that, I am pleased and with great gratitude to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN) for being such a champion of human rights throughout the world. He and Mr. PITTS, his Republican counterpart, as co-chairs of the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission, do a great service to our Congress and to our country. They honor our values, the respect for the dignity and worth of every person, recognizing that we are all God's children. We all have a spark of divinity in us, and they always are speaking truth to power. I thank them for their commitment and for their courage, and to you, Mr. MCGOVERN, for calling this Special Order today.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, I thank the distinguished leader for being here, and I appreciate her leadership on this issue and her leadership on human rights issues.

One of the things that compels us to be here today is our continued concern about the human rights situation for the Tibetan people. And whether it is the latest annual report from the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom or whether it is the U.S. State Department's most recent human rights report, or almost any

other report, quite frankly, by any major world respected human rights organization, we see that the conditions for the Tibetan people really are quite dire.

The Human Rights Watch report, entitled, "Relentless" talks about the detention and prosecution of Tibetans from 2013 to 2015 under China's "stability maintenance" campaign. The report is based on 479 cases of Tibetans detained or tried for political expression or criticism of government policy.

Human Rights Watch only included cases on which its staff was able to obtain credible information. One important source was the terrific database on political prisoners in China that was maintained by the Congressional Executive Commission on China. Without going into a lot of details, let me just highlight a couple of takeaways.

Tibetans are now being detained for activities that used to be considered minor offences or not politically sensitive. Many of those detained and prosecuted come from parts of society not previously known for dissent: local community leaders, environmental activists, and villagers involved in social and cultural activities, as well as local writers and singers. I can go on and on and on.

I include into the RECORD the Human Rights Watch report, entitled, "Relentless," Madam Speaker.

RELENTLESS: DETENTION AND PROSECUTION OF TIBETANS UNDER CHINA'S "STABILITY MAINTENANCE" CAMPAIGN

SUMMARY

We have followed the law in striking out and relentlessly pounding at illegal organizations and key figures, and resolutely followed the law in striking at the illegal organizations and key figures who follow the 14th Dalai Lama clique in carrying out separatist, infiltration, and sabotage activities, knocking out the hidden dangers and soil for undermining Tibet's stability, and effectively safeguarding the state's utmost interests [and] society's overall interests.—Statement by Chen Quanguo, Tibet Autonomous Region Party Secretary, December 2013

This report documents the Chinese government's detention, prosecution, and conviction of Tibetans for largely peaceful activities from 2013 to 2015. Our research shows diminishing tolerance by authorities for forms of expression and assembly protected under international law. This has been marked by an increase in state control over daily life, increasing criminalization of nonviolent forms of protest, and at times disproportionate responses to local protests. These measures, part of a policy known as *weiwen* or "stability maintenance," have led authorities to expand the range of activities and issues targeted for repression in Tibetan areas, particularly in the countryside.

The analysis presented here is based on our assessment of 479 cases for which we were able to obtain credible information. All cases are of Tibetans detained or tried from 2013 to 2015 for political expression or criticism of government policy—"political offenses."

Our cases paint a detailed picture not available elsewhere. Stringent limitations on access to Tibet and on information flows out of Tibet mean we cannot conclude definitively that our cases are representative of the unknown overall number of political detentions of Tibetans during this period. But

they are indicative of the profound impact "stability maintenance" policies have had in those areas, and of shifts in the types of protest and protester Chinese authorities are targeting there.

Information on the cases comes from the Chinese government, exile organizations, and foreign media. Of the 479 detainees, 153 were reported to have been sent for trial, convicted, and sentenced to imprisonment. The average sentence they received was 5.7 years in prison. As explained in the methodology section below, the actual number of Tibetans detained and prosecuted during this period for political offenses was likely significantly higher.

Many detentions documented here were for activities that the Chinese authorities previously considered to be minor offenses or not politically sensitive. Many of those detained came from segments of society not previously associated with dissent. In addition, many of the detentions took place in rural areas where political activity had not previously been reported. From 2008 to 2012, the Tibetan parts of Sichuan province had posted the highest numbers of protests and detentions on the Tibetan plateau, but in 2013 the epicenter of detentions shifted to the central and western areas of the Tibetan plateau, called the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) since 1965, which until 1950 had been under the government of the Dalai Lama.

Our research found that many of those detained and prosecuted were local community leaders, environmental activists, and villagers involved in social and cultural activities, as well as local writers and singers. In the previous three decades, the authorities had rarely accused people from these sectors of Tibetan society of involvement in political unrest. Buddhist monks and nuns, who constituted over 90 percent of political detainees in Tibet in the 1980s, represent less than 40 percent of the 479 cases documented here.

Almost all the protests and detentions identified in this report occurred in small towns or rural townships and villages rather than in cities, where most protests and detentions in prior years were reported to have taken place. This suggests that dissent has increased in rural Tibetan areas, where nearly 80 percent of Tibetans live.

Our data also shows an overall decline in the total number of Tibetans detained for political offenses between 2013 and 2015, though this may be an artifact of the limitations on information, detailed in the methodology section below. Notably, however, the totals for these three years are significantly higher than for the 10 years before 2008 when stability maintenance policies were expanded following major protests centered in Lhasa (Ch.: Lasa), the capital of the TAR.

The changing nature of unrest and politicized detention in Tibet correlates with new phases in the stability maintenance campaign in the TAR and other Tibetan areas. Since 2011, authorities have intensified social control and surveillance at the grassroots level, particularly in the rural areas of the TAR. This has included the transfer of some 21,000 officials to villages and monasteries in the TAR, where they are tasked with implementing new management, security, and propaganda operations, and, more recently, the deployment of nearly 10,000 police in Tibetan villages in Qinghai. This has led to a surge in the creation of local Communist Party organizations, government offices, police posts, security patrols, and political organizations in Tibetan villages and towns, particularly in the TAR.

The implementation of these measures appears to explain many of the new patterns of detention, prosecution, and sentencing documented in this report. It was only after the

rural phase of the stability maintenance policy in the TAR was implemented from late 2011 that the number of protests and resulting detentions and convictions increased dramatically in that region.

These detentions, occurring primarily in rural areas, indicate that the stability maintenance policy in the TAR has entered a third phase. The first phase entailed paramilitary operations in the immediate wake of the 2008 protests in Lhasa, when the authorities detained several thousand people suspected of involvement in those protests or associated rioting. The second phase, which began in late 2011 and is ongoing, involved the transfer of officials to run security and propaganda operations in villages, as described above. The third phase, which dates to early 2013, has involved increasing use of the surveillance and security mechanisms established during the second phase in rural villages of the TAR to single out activities deemed to be precursors of unrest. This has meant that formerly anodyne activities have become the focus of state attention and punishment, including social activities by villagers that had not previously been put under sustained scrutiny by the security forces.

In the eastern Tibetan areas—comprising parts of Qinghai, Sichuan, Gansu, and Yunnan provinces—politicized detentions also appear to correlate with stability maintenance measures. But in these areas, the government's measures have been aimed primarily at stopping self-immolations by Tibetans protesting Chinese rule, most of which have taken place in the eastern areas. Beginning in December 2012 the authorities there conducted an intensified drive to end self-immolations among Tibetans that resulted in a sharp increase in detentions and prosecutions of Tibetans for alleged connections to self-immolations, often with tenuous legal basis.

The government's introduction of grassroots stability maintenance mechanisms in the TAR and of measures against self-immolation in the eastern areas, including in many previously quiet rural areas, has resulted in certain Tibetan localities becoming sites of repeated protests and detentions, producing what could be called protest "cluster sites," previously unseen in Tibetan areas. These localities saw greater numbers of politicized detentions, recurrent cycles of protest and detention, higher average sentencing rates compared to other areas, and longer sentences for relatively minor offenses.

During 2013–2015, lay and religious leaders of rural communities often received unusually heavy sentences for expressions of dissent, especially if they were from a protest cluster site. Having a sensitive image or text on one's cellphone or computer could also lead to a long prison sentence, especially though not only if it had been sent to other people. Among those who received the longest sentences were people who tried to assist victims of self-immolations, leaders of protests against mining or government construction projects, and organizers of village opposition to unpopular decisions by local officials. Such activities, most of which were not explicitly political and did not directly challenge the legitimacy of the state, received markedly longer sentences than people shouting slogans or distributing leaflets in support of Tibetan independence.

The incidents described in this report indicate that outbursts of unrest and waves of politicized detentions occurred in specific localities at certain times rather than being evenly dispersed across the Tibetan areas. But the range of locations and the different social levels of protesters involved suggest that political, environmental, and cultural

discontent is widespread among Tibetans in many parts of the plateau.

Deaths and ill-health of detainees also continued to be a serious problem in the period covered by this study. Fourteen of those detained, 2.9 percent of the total, were reported to have died in custody or shortly after release, allegedly as a result of mistreatment.

The cases also involve the detention of children, including a 14 and a 15-year-old, both monks, and at least one 11-year-old child detained after his father self-immolated.

The detentions, prosecutions, and convictions documented here reflect the impact of intensive new efforts by officials in Tibetan areas to prevent any repeat of the Tibet-wide protests that occurred in the spring of 2008. Yet the new policies have led to apparently unprecedented cycles of discontent in certain rural areas, and an overall increase in the types of activities that are treated as criminal challenges to the authority of the Communist Party or the Chinese state. The failure of the central government and local authorities to end these abusive policies and roll back intrusive security and surveillance measures raises the prospect of an intensified cycle of repression and resistance in a region already enduring extraordinary restrictions on basic human rights.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To the Government of China

Unconditionally release from custody all persons detained without charge or convicted for peacefully exercising their rights to freedom of expression and belief, or for other conduct protected by international human rights law.

Allow independent observers—including journalists, human rights monitors, and United Nations special procedures—unimpeded access to all areas covered by the "stability maintenance" campaign to verify the extent of human rights violations stemming from the campaign's implementation.

Ensure that all persons taken into custody have immediate access to lawyers and family members. Those taken into custody should be released unless promptly brought before a court and charged with an offense.

End the collective punishment of community members for the actions, criminal or not, of local leaders or other members of their community.

Conduct credible, transparent, and impartial investigations into all incidents from 2013 to 2015 that resulted in alleged extrajudicial killings, or alleged torture or other ill-treatment in custody. Make the findings of those investigations public and fairly prosecute anyone responsible for such abuses.

Conduct credible, transparent, and impartial investigations into arbitrary detentions and deaths stemming from the March 2008 protests in Lhasa and across Tibetan areas.

End interference by officials, party representatives, and the security forces in monasteries and other religious institutions.

To the United Nations

The UN secretary-general should urge China to honor the offer it made before the Human Rights Council in March 2009 to invite the UN high commissioner for human rights "at a time mutually convenient to both sides."

The UN high commissioner for human rights should specifically request to visit the Tibetan Autonomous Region and Tibetan Autonomous Areas in Qinghai and Sichuan provinces.

The UN high commissioner for human rights, as well as the special rapporteurs and working groups on torture, enforced disappearances, and independence of judges and

lawyers, should reiterate their requests to visit the region to assess the human rights situation.

To Concerned Governments

Urge the Chinese government to implement the following measures in Tibetan areas: provide information on all persons detained in connection with protests; end arbitrary detention and torture and other ill-treatment in detention; impartially investigate the use of excessive or lethal force by the security forces; and discipline or prosecute as appropriate members of the security forces implicated in serious abuses.

Extend full and active support to the international investigation into the Tibetan protests led by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

Urge the Chinese government to review the official policies and practices in Tibetan areas that have contributed to unrest.

Speak out, when cooperating with China on law enforcement or counterterrorism efforts, against the use of trumped-up public order and terrorism allegations to persecute or curtail the human rights of ethnic groups.

Mr. McGOVERN. Madam Speaker, this Congress has weighed in many times and in many ways on United States policy concerning Tibet. One of the most significant things we did was to approve the Tibetan Policy Act of 2002, which is supposed to guide U.S. Government policy. It encourages dialogue between the Chinese Government and representatives of the Dalai Lama, and it created the post of Special Coordinator for Tibetan Issues within the Department of State.

Last July, in recognition of His Holiness, the Dalai Lama's 80th birthday, the House approved H. Res. 337, which cited the Tibetan Policy Act. In that resolution, Congress strongly encouraged the Government of the People's Republic of China and His Holiness to hold substantive dialogue, without preconditions, in order to address Tibetan grievances and secure a negotiated agreement for the Tibetan people.

We also called for the establishment of a U.S. consulate in Lhasa.

We urged the immediate and unconditional release of Tibetan political prisoners, including the 11th Panchen Lama, and Tenzin Delek Rinpoche, a Tibetan monk who tragically and unnecessarily died in Chinese custody shortly after.

We called on the United States Government to underscore that any government's interference in the Tibetan reincarnation process is a violation of the internationally recognized right to religious freedom.

We called upon the Government of China to allow U.S. officials and journalists and other citizens unrestricted access to Tibetan areas of China, as we allow Chinese officials and citizens access to the United States' territory.

We asked that the United States and international governments, organizations, and civil society renew and reinforce initiatives to promote the preservation of the distinct religious, cultural, linguistic, and national identity of the Tibetan people.

We urged the United States to use its voice and vote to encourage development organizations and agencies to design and implement development

projects that fully comply with the Tibet Project principles. These principles are meant to ensure that the needs of the Tibetan people guide all development in Tibetan areas; that their projects respect Tibetan culture, traditions, knowledge, and wisdom; and that the development initiatives neither provide incentives for nor facilitate the migration and settlement of non-Tibetans into Tibet, nor the transfer of ownership of Tibetan land or natural resources to non-Tibetans.

All of these recommendations for what the United States Government should be doing are just as valid today as they were last year because very little progress has been made in the last year. I say "very little" because we have acknowledged the important gesture China made in allowing last fall's codetrip to travel to Tibet, but that is about all that has happened, and the Dalai Lama is about to be a year older.

If we are not going to get moving on those longstanding recommendations, let me suggest some other things we could try. We could start a campaign to get China to allow the Dalai Lama to return to Tibet. Article 13 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights says that everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each state and, two, everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country. It is time to let the Dalai Lama return to his country.

This House could pass a bill that I introduced, the Reciprocal Access to Tibet Act, basically saying that, if the Chinese Government restricts U.S. officials and U.S. citizens access to Tibet, then we should consider limiting the access of Chinese officials when they visit the United States.

We could make sure that the U.S. Government invites the Dalai Lama to every event on every occasion where his decades of knowledge, experience, and reflections would be helpful for addressing the world's problems. The Dalai Lama is a world spiritual and philosophical leader who should be contributing to global debates on countering violent extremism and on fostering peace in war-torn countries. These are just a couple of topics on which I am convinced we could all benefit from his wisdom.

We could insist that Tibet be part of our climate change discussions with China. Climate change is one of the few topics on which the U.S. and China have found common ground. It is a critically important topic for Tibet, given its fragile environment and its critically important reserves of freshwater. Tibet is warming three times as fast as the rest of the world, but it is absent from the global climate change debate.

□ 2115

The Chinese leadership has acknowledged at the highest levels the scale of the environmental crisis it faces. Conserving the Tibetan Plateau is surely a

shared interest, and it can only be achieved with the full participation of the Tibetan people.

It is time to rally around some of these ideas or to find others. It is time to do something different on Tibet. It is time for us to think differently and to think out of the box on ways that we can advance dialogue with China, not in a confrontational way, but in ways to get China to understand the importance of recognizing the human rights of the Tibetan people and recognizing the importance of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and allowing him to return to his homeland.

Madam Speaker, many of my colleagues wanted to be here today to speak on this. I include the statements of the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. CAPUANO) and the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. WALZ) in the RECORD.

Last week the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH), the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. POCAN), and the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. SENBRENNER) submitted their statements to the RECORD.

In closing, again, I would urge all of my colleagues to join with the leader and myself in welcoming His Holiness the Dalai Lama to Washington, D.C., to the United States, wishing him good health and praying that reconciliation between the Tibetan people and the Chinese Government happens very, very soon.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WALZ. Madam Speaker, I believe that the U.S. must remain committed to defending human rights and personal freedoms both within the U.S. and abroad. As our country continues to advance U.S.-China relations, we must never forget the people of Tibet. Restrictions on human rights and religious freedom in Tibet have been a growing concern to many. As a member of the Congressional Executive Committee on China, I share this concern. While Chinese investments have undoubtedly helped to modernize Tibet, these investments must not come at the expense of the rich cultural, linguistic, and religious heritage of the Tibetan people. We must continue to support the protection of traditional Tibetan culture.

As you may know, I had the opportunity to be one of the first groups of Americans to travel to China and teach Chinese high school students in 1989. During that trip, I also traveled to Tibet in 1990 and, most recently, I have returned as a member of the Congressional Delegation visiting China and Tibet. The boosted economic growth, higher household incomes, and constructed railway projects have facilitated the rapid modernization of the Tibet Autonomous Region. However, we need to continue to have constructive dialogues with China to ensure the preservation of traditional Tibetan culture and Tibet's fragile ecology.

The Congressional Delegation trip to Tibet provided an opportunity to have a healthy dialogue, and I want to thank our Chinese friends for engaging with us in a discussion over the most sensitive issues concerning Tibet. As a southern Minnesotan, I understand the importance of spurring economic growth while simultaneously protecting natural wonders and culture. With this in mind, I believe that Tibet-

ans must receive the necessary rights that will allow them to protect their culture, language, religion, and environment.

The U.S. was founded on the ideas of universal freedom, and I believe that we must continue to urge the Chinese government to provide less regulated religious freedom to the Tibetans. I strongly believe that a critical step to achieving religious freedom in Tibet is including the Dalai Lama in future dialogues. I have had the pleasure of meeting His Holiness on three occasions, and I share his desire to preserve Tibetan culture and resolve other issues concerning Tibet. Lastly, I encourage the Chinese government to agree to establish a U.S. Consulate in the Tibetan city of Lhasa because I believe diplomacy and talking through our concerns and partnerships under the lens of transparency can only strengthen the relationship between our two countries.

I will continue to support attempts to have productive dialogues with the Chinese government concerning the future of Tibet. Improvements in the quality of life, access to clean water, and access to health care services in Tibet must also include efforts to preserve the Tibetan way of life.

Mr. CAPUANO. Madam Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to His Holiness the Dalai Lama. He has come to Washington to be present when the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) awards its Democracy Service Medal posthumously to another heroic spiritual leader, Tenzin Delek Rinpoche, who died in captivity in China in July of last year. The NED will also honor the Central Tibetan Administration, based in Dharamshala, India, for its commitment to freedom and democracy. It is fitting, too, as Prime Minister Narendra Modi concludes his visit, to recognize the generosity India has shown to exiles seeking political and religious liberty within its borders.

With His Holiness and with all Tibetans, we grieve for all they have endured since the Chinese invasion, the sorrows of those who live in exile and the sufferings of those who remain. I am outraged that oppression and murder continue unabated. With His Holiness and with Tenzin Delek Rinpoche's cousin Geshe Nyima, representing his bereaved family, we mourn the shameful persecution and tragic death of a man committed to nonviolence. I urge the House to approve H. Res 584, urging President Obama to seek an independent investigation of his death and to call publicly for an end to the repressive policies of the People's Republic of China in Tibet. It has been in committee for many months.

Elie Wiesel, like His Holiness awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, exhorts us: There may be times when we are powerless to prevent injustice, but there must never be a time when we fail to protest. Indeed, we do protest, and further we should never cease to hold oppressors accountable. The people of Tibet, inspired by the Dalai Lama, continue to cherish their culture and traditions. I wish them all his faith and courage, today, tomorrow and every day until Tibet is free.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. GRIFFITH (at the request of Mr. MCCARTHY) for today on account of family obligations.