

109TH CONGRESS
2^D SESSION

H. RES. 804

Condemning the unauthorized, inappropriate, and coerced ordination of
Catholic bishops by the People's Republic of China.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 9, 2006

Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania (for himself, Mr. SULLIVAN, Mr. LIPINSKI, Mr. ROHRABACHER, Mr. KENNEDY of Minnesota, Mr. MCCOTTER, Mr. WOLF, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. SOUDER, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. HYDE, and Mr. RADANOVICH) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on International Relations

RESOLUTION

Condemning the unauthorized, inappropriate, and coerced ordination of Catholic bishops by the People's Republic of China.

Whereas the Catholic Patriotic Association of China is a Chinese Government-sanctioned organization that does not represent the vast majority of Chinese Catholics and has no ecclesiastical authority to choose spiritual leaders for Catholics in the People's Republic of China;

Whereas on April 30, 2006, the Chinese Government-sanctioned Catholic Patriotic Association of China conducted an unauthorized episcopal ordination of the priest Joseph Ma Yinglin, elevating him to the office of bishop without

the approval and against the wishes of the Holy Father Pope Benedict XVI;

Whereas on May 3, 2006, the Chinese Government-sanctioned Catholic Patriotic Association of China conducted an unauthorized episcopal ordination of the priest Joseph Liu Xinhong, elevating him to the office of bishop without the approval and against the wishes of the Holy Father Pope Benedict XVI;

Whereas, according to information reported by the Vatican, bishops and priests in the People's Republic of China have been subjected to strong pressures and threats to take part in the episcopal ordinations which, being without pontifical mandate, are illegitimate and, besides, contrary to their conscience;

Whereas the entire world follows with attention the progress of religious freedom in China and had hoped that such deplorable episodes by now would belong to the past;

Whereas, following a trip to China in August 2005, the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom reported that the Chinese Government continues to systematically violate the right to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion or belief, contravening both the Chinese Constitution and international human rights norms;

Whereas on May 3, 2006, the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom announced its 2006 recommendations to Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and continued to identify China as one of ten "Countries of Particular Concern";

Whereas Chinese law and policy restrict religious activities to those activities associated with the five officially-sanctioned “patriotic” religious organizations;

Whereas all other collective religious activities in China are illegal, and individuals from “unregistered” religious groups are subject to harassment, detention, and arrest;

Whereas freedom of religious expression is a fundamental right enshrined in the United States Constitution and recognized by all civilized nations;

Whereas China, like all members of the United Nations, is bound by Article 18 of the Uniform Declaration of Human Rights which states: “Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance”; and

Whereas a senior official of the Catholic Patriotic Association of China has told the AFP news agency that China is planning to ordain a third bishop later in May 2006: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

2 (1) condemns, in the strongest possible terms,
3 the actions of the Catholic Patriotic Association of
4 China in their coerced ordination of priests Joseph
5 Ma Yinglin and Joseph Liu Xinhong;

6 (2) extends its deepest sympathy and con-
7 dences to the Catholic population of China and the

1 Catholic Church for this insult to their beliefs and
2 religious practices;

3 (3) reaffirms the right of all religious organiza-
4 tions to choose their leaders in a manner that is free
5 of intimidation, terror, or coercion in accordance
6 with Article 18 of the Uniform Declaration of
7 Human Rights;

8 (4) urges the Government of China to end its
9 repression of religious organizations, recognize the
10 ecclesiastical authority of religious leaders to provide
11 spiritual leadership to their followers, and end the
12 practice of only allowing religious worship through
13 state-sanctioned patriotic religious associations; and

14 (5) insists that China refrain from additional
15 ordinations of Catholic bishops until and unless their
16 elevation is approved by the proper ecclesiastical au-
17 thorities.

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