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DEAN, **NEW JERSEY DELEGATION**

Remarks by:
U.S. Rep. Chris Smith (R-NJ)
Beijing
July 1, 2008

Liu Jingmin, vice president of the Beijing Olympic bid committee famously asserted that "by allowing Beijing to host the games, you will help the development of human rights."

Oh, if that were only so.

At the time, the argument certainly appeared plausible, if not compelling, but in the years—now months—run-up to the Olympics, the reality has been numbingly disappointing.

The crackdown on political dissidents and religious believers and the crushing of cyber dissidents is now going full throttle. And shows no signs of abating.

Brave and noble Chinese men and women are today suffering jail and torture simply because they sought to exercise their fundamental freedoms guaranteed not only by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights but by the Chinese Constitution itself.

Tragically, the Olympics has triggered a massive crackdown designed to silence and put beyond reach all those whose views differ from the official "harmonious" government line.

On Sunday night, three human rights lawyers with whom we had scheduled to have dinner, were threatened, then taken away or placed under house arrest by the police. Our meeting never occurred.

We did meet with one senior house church pastor, and for that he has been placed under house arrest. Amazingly, when Pastor Zhang Mingxuan led us in prayer, he prayed for the government, and it was clear from his comments throughout the evening that he

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harbored absolutely no malice or hate towards those who have mistreated him on several occasions.

Earlier yesterday, we met with Ambassador Li Zhaoxing, Chairman of the NPC's Foreign Affairs Committee. Our exchange was candid and frank, and focused primarily on human rights, including the genocide in Darfur. We presented him with a list of 734 political prisoners, and respectfully appealed to him and his government to work for their release.

We respectfully make that request again today.

Many on the list are sick and in desperate need of medical care. One prominent pastor, Zhang Rongliang, has diabetes, high blood pressure, and a heart condition, and grows more ill by the day. On a humanitarian basis, set him free.

It's shocking—but not necessarily surprising—that the three human rights advocates were barred from meeting us on Sunday. Last week, on behalf of the National Endowment for Democracy (NED), I had the privilege of presenting NED's coveted Democracy Award for Human Rights and rule of law—to a representative of Teng Biao, who was unable to travel and to Chen Guangcheng, in absentia. Teng remains under house arrest and we call on the government to release him and the others. Chen is in prison in Linyi for bringing a class-action lawsuit against the government on behalf of several women who had been severely and irreparably harmed by the one-child-per-couple policy.

The one-child policy makes brothers and sisters illegal in China—relies on forced abortion, ruinous fines and other forms of coercion to achieve its goals. For standing up for the mothers, Chen now languishes in prison.

Our visit to China is an appeal.

Release the prisoners of conscience. Ease up on the underground Christian church, the Uighurs—Christian and Muslim—Tibetan Buddhists, and the Falun Gong.

The one-child-per-couple policy has not only killed tens of millions of children and wounded their mothers, but has led to a serious disparity between the number of boys and girls. The missing girls is not only a heartbreaking consequence of the one-child policy, but is catastrophic for China. Protect your mothers and children from this abuse and abandonment.

This month can be historic for China and the world. We join our voice to those of millions of Chinese and appeal to the Chinese Government to free its prisoners of conscience, and respect fundamental human rights.