

**"212. Criminal Offenses Committed
Outside the United States 3621".**

**CONDEMNING ACTS OF ARSON AT
SACRAMENTO, CA, SYNAGOGUES**

Mr. GORTON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Res. 136, introduced earlier today by Senators BOXER and FEINSTEIN.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 136) condemning the acts of arson at three Sacramento, CA, synagogues on June 18, 1999, and calling on all Americans to categorically reject crimes of hate and intolerance.

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

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I rise today to join my friend and colleague, Senator BARBARA BOXER, to introduce a Sense of the Senate Resolution condemning the acts of arson at three Sacramento, California synagogues on June 18, 1999. The resolution also calls on all Americans to categorically reject crimes of hate and intolerance.

I believe this measure is important not only to the Sacramento community but also to all Americans who abhor intolerance.

I was shocked and saddened when I first heard the news that three synagogues in Sacramento had been targeted by arsonists. Committed just a few hours before dawn, this heinous attack was carried out over a 45 minute time span signaling to us that this was deliberate and premeditated act.

In that time, \$1.2 million in damage was done to the Congregation B'nai Israel, Congregation Beth Shalom and the Kenesett Israel Torah Center. While the damage to the property was severe, no dollar amount can reflect the true damage done when hateful crimes such as these strike at the heart of a community.

Mr. President, I believe it is tragic that even though we have made significant progress to increase tolerance in this nation that such vicious hate crimes continue to be committed.

This resolution expresses our resolve to ensure that such acts of ignorance and bigotry will not be tolerated in this nation and those who commit them will face swift justice. While the resolution condemns these specific acts of arson in the Sacramento area, it also declares our collective abhorrence to all crimes of intolerance.

The resolution also says that the Senate is committed to using Federal law enforcement personnel and resources to identify the persons who committed these heinous acts and brings them to justice in a swift and deliberate manner. It also recognizes and applauds the residents of Sacramento area who have so quickly joined together to lend support and assistance to the victims of these des-

picable crimes, and remains committed to preserving the freedom of religion of all members of the community.

I believe that one of the most sacred rights we have as Americans is the freedom of religion. This country came to be because people wanted to be able to choose how they worshiped. I hope that in the wake of this sorrowful event, we are all reminded of the importance of this freedom.

Whatever the motive in these arsons, all people of faith in the Sacramento community and this nation must stand together to fight such hatred. The bottom line is that hatred, bigotry and racism all come from the same place—ignorance.

California's modern heritage is one in which diversity is to be respected, not scorned. As long as hate crimes continue to counter that heritage, we must work together to denounce intolerance and the protect the rights of all.

Mr. President, while we have made progress to increase tolerance in this nation, tragic events like these in Sacramento prove that we still need to do more. Together, we must send the strongest possible message that hate crimes will not be tolerated.

Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. President, I join today with my colleagues, Senators BOXER and FEINSTEIN to introduce a resolution condemning the acts of arson against the three Jewish synagogues in Sacramento, California.

Our history is blessed with courageous acts of men and women who have refused to accept, and united against, ignorance, oppression and discrimination. It was their selflessness which, in large part, secured and protected the same freedoms and liberties so many Americans take for granted today.

On June 18th, 1999, in Sacramento, California, the Congregation B'nai Israel, Congregation Beth Shalom and Knesset Israel Torah Center were victims of malicious and cowardly acts of arson. Mr. President, these acts of intolerance and malice are a direct attack against all Americans and the ideals which are integral to a free and democratic society. The very liberties that allow America to prosper are directly undermined by such acts of blatant hatred and intolerance.

Mr. President, the United States owes much of its strength and greatness to the special uniqueness and diversity of its people. It is imperative that we unite, upholding our responsibility to honor and protect the basic, inalienable right to live without fear and violence. We must send a message to those individuals who would undermine our free and democratic society, that their acts, and any similar actions, will not be tolerated.

Mr. President, I would also like to take this time to commend the residents of Sacramento, and the larger California community, who have joined in solidarity with the Jewish congregations, demonstrating their continued commitment to preserving the freedom of all members of the community.

Mr. GORTON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution and preamble be agreed to, en bloc, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table and any statements be printed in the RECORD.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 136) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 136

Whereas on the evening of June 18, 1999, in Sacramento, California, the Congregation B'nai Israel, Congregation Beth Shalom, and Keneset Israel Torah Center were victims of malicious and cowardly acts of arson;

Whereas such crimes against our institutions of faith are crimes against us all;

Whereas we have celebrated since our Nation's birth the rich and colorful diversity of its people, and the sanctity of a free and democratic society;

Whereas the liberties Americans enjoy are attributed in large part to the courage and determination of visionaries who made great strides in overcoming the barriers of oppression, intolerance, and discrimination in order to ensure fair and equal treatment for every American by every American;

Whereas this type of unacceptable behavior is a direct assault upon the fundamental rights of all Americans who cherish their freedom of religion; and

Whereas every Member of Congress serves in part as a role model and bears a responsibility to protect and honor the multitude of cultural institutions and traditions we enjoy in the United States of America: Now, therefore, be it *Resolved*, That the Senate—

(1) condemns the crimes that occurred in Sacramento, California, at Congregation B'nai Israel, Congregation Beth Shalom, and Keneset Israel Torah Center on the evening of June 18, 1999;

(2) rejects such acts of intolerance and malice in our society and interprets such attacks on cultural and religious institutions as an attack on all Americans;

(3) in the strongest terms possible, is committed to using Federal law enforcement personnel and resources pursuant to existing federal authority to identify the persons who committed these heinous acts and bring them to justice in a swift and deliberate manner;

(4) recognizes and applauds the residents of the Sacramento, California, area who have so quickly joined together to lend support and assistance to the victims of these despicable crimes, and remain committed to preserving the freedom of religion of all members of the community; and

(5) calls upon all Americans to categorically reject similar acts of hate and intolerance.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. GORTON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate immediately proceed to executive session to consider the following nominations en bloc on the Executive Calendar: Nos. 15, 35, 70, 75, 97, 100 through 103, 131, 132, 134, 138, 139, 141 through 156, and all nominations on the Secretary's desk in the Foreign Service.

I finally ask unanimous consent that the nominations be confirmed, en bloc,