

San Juan de los Caballeros, NM. By about 1605 the capitol had been moved to the location it has occupied continuously for almost four hundred years—Santa Fe, New Mexico. This makes Santa Fe the oldest State capital in the United States, pre-dating the landing at Plymouth Rock by more than ten years. While its founding has been attributed to Don Pedro de Peralta in 1610, more recent evidence indicates that it was actually settled at an earlier date.

Hispanic influence now permeates New Mexico. From the dawn of the 16th century, supplies and communications came into the area along the Camino Real del Tierra Adentro—the Royal Road of the Interior—that still stretches 2,000 miles from Mexico City to Santa Fe. For the next two centuries and better, caravans periodically made the six-month trek northward. They brought new crops and agricultural techniques, which were combined with those of New Mexico's pre-historic Native American Pueblo communities. They brought cattle and sheep and taught the Native Americans how to raise them. They introduced horses and the wheel, opening the door to the worlds of transportation, commerce and technology. They brought mining and metal-working techniques that were used to produce weapons, tools and jewelry. They brought their cuisine, which over the ensuing centuries has been synthesized into the unique cooking tradition that is so quintessentially New Mexican.

Over the two centuries that followed this original settlement effort, New Mexico found itself increasingly on the fringe of the portion of the Spanish empire administered from Mexico City—the portion referred to as "New Spain." New Mexico's early economic promise failed to develop. It was a frontier long before the pioneers on our Atlantic seaboard began their westward venturing, then trekking. And while that frontier was not an economic engine for New Spain, it became a marketplace for inter-cultural exchange and the formulation of the most unique blend of cultures in our country.

The descendants of those original "Spanish" settlers of multi-national origin were joined by a second wave of settlers following the Native American uprising of 1680 and the resettlement of New Mexico by the forces of the Spanish Crown led by Diego de Vargas in 1692. At annual trade fairs in Taos, Santa Fe or other locations, the Spanish settlers joined with members of the Native American Pueblos to trade with the nomadic Comanche, Navajo, Apache, Kiowa, Ute and other tribes. Members of those tribes left their tribal communities to settle among the Spanish settlers—sometimes willingly, and sometimes because they were captured and forcibly kept as servants. Spanish settlers also were forcibly patriated to nomadic tribes. And in the process, New Mexican culture gained many unique characteristics. And to the degree inter-marriage occurred between the Native Americans in the Pueblo communities and the Spanish settlers there also occurred an exchange of cultures. By the middle of the 18th century a new culture was added to the general mix as French traders began to enter New Mexico and to marry into New Mexico's families.

In the 19th Century, New Mexico took, for a time, a more prominent place in the stream of

our national commerce when the Santa Fe Trail opened. Hispanic New Mexicans quickly took advantage of this play of fortune, and by the time that the United States incorporated the Southwest into our national territory, Hispanics dominated trade on the Santa Fe Trail. This created the longest continuous trade route in North America, extending from East Coast factories and import houses all the way to Mexico City and beyond. However, as patterns of commerce began to shift around the time of the Civil War, Hispanic New Mexican traders found difficulty in shifting to the larger-scale operations necessary to survive in an increasingly competitive world of national commerce. The place of New Mexico as an important juncture for national and international commerce also began to lose ground as the Santa Fe Trail began to be displaced by the Oregon Trail and then the trans-national railroads. By the late 19th Century, New Mexico had, once again, been relegated to a "frontier."

Nonetheless, New Mexico has thrived in spite of its struggle to recapture its former place in our national framework. It has slowly begun to turn the tide at the same time that it has hung onto a treasured way of life steeped in cultural tradition. To this day, many—if not most—of the Hispanic communities in my district still hold their annual fiestas celebrating nearly a half-millennium of New Mexican religious traditions and beliefs. The Santa Fe Fiesta—the oldest continuing festival in our country—draws thousands of visitors every year. Family and community life and values sustain our communities. And cultural traditions and institutions are everywhere.

This blending of cultures that occurred in New Mexico has followed the general pattern of what occurred throughout New Spain—and, indeed, throughout the sphere of Spanish influence in the New World. While there were many hostile conflicts during that process, what cannot be disputed is that the accommodation of "Old World" ideas and culture to the "New World" was nowhere as complete as within the limits of the Spanish Empire. Almost nowhere else in our country did so many Native American communities manage to survive their contact with the settlers of European heritage. Throughout the Hispanic world the pervasiveness of the Spanish-flavored outlook of this new blending of cultures led to the application of the term "la Raza." While this term has often been translated as "the Race," this literalist translation misses the meaning—because the term is a predominantly cultural, not racial or ethnic reference. And it is a term—like its contemporary English twin "Hispanic"—that expresses pride in those whose cultural tradition incorporates this blending of cultures under the auspices of the world view inherited from not only the first Spanish settlers of the New World, but also of the peoples who joined them in expanding and broadening that world view.

So while New Mexico has its own unique place in the history and culture of Hispanics, it also shares so much in common with those other parts of the Western Hemisphere that evolved and developed under the same process. We celebrate that richness during Hispanic Heritage Month every year. It is only fitting. We must recognize and embrace the part

of our national heritage that not only represents a coming together of so many cultures, but that continues to embrace and welcome those who want to enlarge their world. And so New Mexico, as one stirring example of the history and culture of Hispanics—a mosaic where various cultural ingredients intermingle and complement each other, while often retaining a basic identity—serves as a model for the highest ideals of our society.

Let us then look toward the future during this time of celebration and recognition of Hispanics. As opportunities begin to multiply in new and advanced fields, we must assure that Hispanics are afforded the education and training that will allow them to continue to contribute in much-needed ways to our society. And in New Mexico, let us share our pride in our Hispanic heritage. We are living proof that people from different backgrounds can work together for common goals. I join all my colleagues in celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month from September 15 to October 15.

REACTION TO INDIAN PRIME MINISTER

HON. DAN BURTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 19, 2000

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, last week the Indian Prime Minister spoke in this very chamber to a joint session of Congress. In addition, he will meet with several American leaders, including President Clinton and perhaps both major-party Presidential candidates. When he meets with these leaders, they must bring up the issue of human rights and self-determination.

India claims to be a democracy, but in truth there is no democracy in India. It is a militant Hindu fundamentalist state. Christians, Sikhs, Muslims, Dalits, and other minorities suffer severe oppression and atrocities at the hands of Hindu fundamentalists.

Just last month, a priest in India was kidnapped, tortured, and paraded through town naked by militant Hindu nationalists. The Indian government has refused to register a complaint against the kidnapers. This is the latest act in a campaign of terror against Christians that has been going on since Christmas of 1998. This campaign has seen the murders of priests, 5 of which were beheaded; rape of nuns, Hindu militants burning a missionary and his two sons to death in their van, the destruction of schools and prayer halls, and other anti-Christian atrocities. Most of these activities have been carried out by allies of the government or people affiliated with organizations under the umbrella of the RSS, the parent organization of the ruling BJP, which was founded in support of Fascism.

And its not just Christians, where more than 200,000 have been murdered in Nagaland since 1947, who are in danger in India. Over 250,000 Sikhs have been murdered since 1984, and well over 70,000 Kashmiri Muslims since 1988, as well as tens of thousands of other minorities by Indian security forces. We cannot accept this kind of brutality and tyranny from a government that claims to be democratic.

Last year, India denied the U.N. Special Rapporteurs on torture and extrajudicial killings permission to visit the country. And since the 1970's, Amnesty International & other human rights groups have been barred from areas in India. Even Cuba allows Amnesty in! In 1999 Human Rights Watch issued their annual report that noted, "Despite government claims that 'normalcy' has returned to Kashmir, Indian troops in the state continue to carry out summary executions, disappearances, rape and torture". (Human Rights Watch Report; India: Human Rights Abuses Fuel Conflict, July 1, 1999.)

And, while the Prime Minister talks today about a strong relationship with the U.S., just last year his Defense Minister led a meeting with Cuba, China, Iraq, Serbia, Russia, and Libya to construct a security alliance. The Indian Express quoted the Defense Minister in explaining that this security alliance was intended "to stop the U.S."

India is not a country to be trusted. India introduced the nuclear arms race to South Asia, it supported the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and it votes against us in the United Nations. Its time that India clean up its human rights violations and ends its anti-Americanism. And, let Kashmir determine its own fate as it was promised nearly 50 years ago to by offering a referendum for self-determination. If it is a democracy, it should let its own people vote on their future.

Mr. Speaker, a bipartisan group of 17 Members of Congress, including myself, have written a letter to President Clinton urging him to press the Prime Minister on issues of self-determination for Khalistan, human rights, and release of political prisoners. I'd like to submit a copy of the letter into the RECORD, as well as a press release from the Council of Khalistan that sheds more light on the issue.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
Washington, DC, September 12, 2000.

Hon. BILL CLINTON,
President of the United States,
The White House, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee will be visiting you from September 13 to September 17. It is important that you press him on the issue of the persecution of Christians, Sikhs, Muslims, and other minorities by the Indian government.

Press Trust of India reported on August 25 that a Christian priest in Gujarat was kidnapped, tortured, and paraded through town naked. This attack was not an isolated incident. Since Christmas 1998, priests have been murdered, nuns have been raped, a missionary and his two sons were burned to death in their van by members of the RSS, which is the parent organization of the ruling BJP, schools and prayer halls have been attacked and destroyed. Yet the Indian government refuses to take any action against the people who perpetrate these atrocities.

During your trip to India, 35 Sikhs were murdered in the village of Chithi Singhpora, Kashmir. The Ludhiana-based International Human Rights Organization investigated this and separately the Movement Against State Repression and the Punjab Human Rights Organization conducted an investigation. Both of these investigations have proven that the Indian government carried out this massacre. The Indian government has admitted that the five Muslims they killed on the claim that they were responsible for

the massacre were innocent. Now they have arrested two more people, claiming that they were responsible for this massacre. Yet despite the fact that so-called "militant" groups almost always claim responsibility for incidents they are responsible for, nobody has emerged to claim responsibility for the killings in Chithi Singhpora.

The Politics of Genocide by Indejit Singh Jaijee reports that the Indian government has murdered more than 250,000 Sikhs since 1984. These figures were derived from figures put out by the Punjab State Magistracy. India has also killed more than 200,000 Christians in Nagaland since 1947, over 70,000 Kashmiri Muslims since 1988, and tens of thousands of Dalits, Assamese, Tamils, Manipuris, and others. According to Amnesty International, there are thousands of political prisoners being held in illegal detention without charge or trial in "the world's largest democracy."

India is a hostile country. Last year the Indian Defense Minister led a meeting with Cuba, China, Iraq, Serbia, Russia, and Libya to construct a security alliance "to stop the U.S." India openly supported the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. It tested five nuclear warheads, beginning the nuclear arms race to South Asia. And it refuses to allow the Sikhs, Kashmiris, Christians, and other minority nations and peoples decide their own political future in a free and fair vote, as democratic countries do. America has repeatedly granted this opportunity to Puerto Rico and Canada has permitted Quebec to do so. Why can't the "world's largest democracy" settle these issues the democratic way?

America is the bastion of freedom for the world. We cannot accept this kind of brutality and tyranny from a government that claims to be democratic. We call on you to press Prime Minister Vajpayee on the issues of human rights and self-determination for Khanistan, Christian Nagalim, Kashmir, and all the minority nations and peoples living under Indian rule.

Sincerely,

Edolphus Towns, Donald M. Payne,
Wally Herger, Lincoln Diaz-Balart,
Cynthia McKinney, Dan Burton, James Traficant, John T. Doolittle, James Rogan, James Oberstar, Peter King, Roscoe Bartlett, Randy "Duke" Cunningham, Eni F.H. Faleomavaega, Philip M. Crane, Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, George P. Radanovich.

[Press Release Council of Khalistan]
U.S. CONGRESS: INDIA IS A "HOSTILE
COUNTRY"

LETTER URGES PRESIDENT TO PRESS INDIAN
PRIME MINISTER ON SELF-DETERMINATION
FOR KHALISTAN, HUMAN RIGHTS, RELEASE OF
POLITICAL PRISONERS

Washington, D.C., September 13, 2000—A bipartisan group of 17 Members of the U.S. Congress have written a letter to President Clinton urging him to press Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, who arrives for a state visit today, on issues of self-determination for Khalistan, human rights, and release of political prisoners. The letter called India "a hostile country."

"We call on you to press Prime Minister Vajpayee on the issues of human rights and self-determination for Khalistan, Christian Nagalim, Kashmir, and all the minority nations and peoples living under Indian rule," the Members of Congress wrote. The Members noted the recent incident in which a priest in Gujarat was kidnapped, tortured,

and dragged naked through the streets. This incident is part of a pattern of repression against Christians that has been going on since Christmas 1998, they noted. They also took note of the massacre of 35 Sikhs in Chithi Singhpora during the President's visit to India in March, which two independent investigations have proven was carried out by the Indian government. They wrote about the murders of over 250,000 Sikhs since 1984, over 70,000 Muslims since 1988, more than 200,000 Christians in Nagaland since 1947, and tens of thousands of other minorities by the Indian government. "We cannot accept this kind of brutality and tyranny from a government that claims to be democratic," they wrote.

They also wrote, "India is a hostile country. Last year the Indian Defense Minister led a meeting with Cuba, China, Iraq, Serbia, Russia, and Libya to construct a security alliance, 'to stop the U.S.,'" they noted. They also wrote that India introduced the nuclear arms race to South Asia and that it supported the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.

The lead sponsor of the letter was Representative Edolphus Towns (D-NY). Other co-signers include Representative Wally Herger (R-Cal.); Representative Donald M. Payne (D-NJ); Representative Lincoln Diaz-Balart (R-Fla.); Representative Cynthia McKinney (D-Ga.); Representative Roscoe Bartlett (R-Md.); Representative Dan Burton (R-Ind.), chairman of the Government Reform and Oversight Committee; Representative Randy (Duke) Cunningham (R-Cal.); Representative James Traficant (D-Ohio); Representative Eni F.H. Faleomavaega (D-American Samoa); Representative John T. Doolittle (R-Cal.); Representative Philip M. Crane (R-Ill.); Representative James Rogan (R-Cal.); Representative Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-Fla.); Representative James Oberstar (D-Minn.); Representative George P. Radanovich (R-Cal.); and Representative Peter King (R-NY).

Indian security forces have murdered over 250,000 Sikhs since 1984, according to figures compiled by the Punjab State Magistracy and human-rights organizations. These figures were published in *The Politics of Genocide* by Inderjit Singh Jaijee. About 50,000 Sikh political prisoners are rotting in Indian jails without charge or trial. Many have been in illegal custody since 1984. India is in gross violation of international law. Since 1984, India has engaged in a campaign of ethnic cleansing in which about 50,000 Sikhs were murdered by the police and secretly cremated, according to Justice Ajit Singh Bains, chairman of the Punjab Human Rights Organization, in an interview broadcast on "Ankhila Punjab" radio in Toronto, Canada. The Indian Supreme Court described this campaign as "worse than a genocide."

"On behalf of half a million Sikhs in the United States, I would like to thank Congressman Towns and every Member who signed this letter," said Dr. Gurmit Singh Aulakh, President of the Council of Khalistan, the government pro tempore of Khalistan, the Sikh homeland that declared its independence from India on October 7, 1987. "We thank our friends in both parties for their support for freedom in South Asia. This letter can help focus the attention of the United States and India on the important democratic values of self-determination and human rights," he said. "The willingness of these Members of Congress to call India a hostile country also advances freedom in South Asia by helping to frustrate India's drive for hegemony in the region," he said. He predicted that "the breakup of India