

or freedom for Sikhs or other minority nations. The record of Indian rule in our homeland, Punjab, Khalistan, is one of genocide and tyranny by the country that presumes to call itself "the world's largest democracy."

The Associated Press recently reported on the suit filed in India's Supreme Court by Harpreet Singh, a Sikh man who was illegally detained four years ago and listed as having been killed in an "encounter" with the police. While we are glad that his case came to light, it is not unusual. Sikhs continue to be oppressed and butchered in supposedly free India. India is a country which tortures, murders, abducts, and rapes people. In India, "disappearances" are routine.

Recently, the Indian press reported that since 1990 over 25,000 young Sikh men had been abducted, tortured, and murdered by the Indian regime. Then their bodies were listed as unclaimed and cremated. The person who issued this report, Jaswant Singh Khalsa, general secretary of the Human Rights Wing (Shiromani Akali Dal), was abducted by the Amritsar police on September 6 and has not been seen since. The next day, Amnesty International issued an "Urgent Action" bulletin calling for his release. They expressed the fear that Mr. Khalsa is being tortured. Indeed, according to Asia Watch, "virtually everyone detained in Punjab [Khalistan] is tortured."

A mass grave which held the remains of 400 Cambodians shook the world, as it should have. Why is the mass cremation of more than 25,000 innocent Sikhs in Punjab, Khalistan, ignored?

On October 19, 65 members of the U.S. House of Representatives from both parties and across the political spectrum wrote to Mr. Rao demanding Mr. Khalsa's release. So far there has been no response. Mr. Khalsa remains in illegal detention.

According to a report issued by Human Rights Watch and Physicians for Human Rights, one police officer told HRW/PHR that "over a five-year period, 500 people were killed by police station alone." Another police officer is quoted as saying, "During my five years with the Punjab Police, I estimate 4,000 to 5,000 were tortured at my police station alone." There are over 200 such police stations in Punjab, Khalistan.

A policy of summary executions in Punjab, Khalistan has the blessings of some key officials at the Centre, as borne out by a series of secret communications from Delhi. The pattern of "encounter killings" is that "the victim would be detained during police raids on villages or city neighborhoods and tortured for several days before being killed. One police officer said: 'During my career with the Punjab police, I participated in approximately five raids per day.'" Three types of Sikhs are targeted for torture and death by the police: (1) Amritdari Sikhs, (2) young Sikh men and (3) political asylum returnees.

The U.S. State Department reports that from 1991 through 1993, the Indian regime paid more than 41,000 cash bounties to police officers for killing Sikhs. In November 1994, the Indian newspaper Hitavada reported that the late governor of Punjab, Surendra Nath, was paid \$1.5 billion to organize and support covert state terrorism in Punjab, Khalistan, and in neighboring Kashmir. Seventy-five percent of Punjab's water has been diverted to nonriparian states. India is a police state, not a democracy at all.

It takes more than elections to make a democracy. I would remind you that Adolf Hitler was democratically elected. For Sikhs, Kashmiri Muslims, Christians in Nagaland, Assamese, and the tribal people of Manipur, no matter who wins the elections, the bloody repression continues. The Indian regime has killed over 120,000 Sikhs since 1984, over 43,000 Kashmiris since 1988 and over 200,000

Christians in Nagaland since 1947. Tens of thousands of people have been killed in Assam, Manipur, and other tribal areas since independence. Dalits ("black untouchables") have died by the thousands.

Recently a Dalit girl was blinded by her teacher for the sin of drinking from the water pitcher. A few years ago, a Dalit constable was stoned to death when he sought shelter in a temple on a rainy day. In the state of Madhya Pradesh in late February, a 40-year-old nun was pulled from a bus in the town of Indore and stabbed 36 times by a Hindu militant. These are not the acts of a democratic nation. The U.N. Charter, to which India is a party, calls on nations "to practice tolerance and live together in peace with one another as good neighbors." Where is the tolerance in these Indian policies?

The historical record shows that 85 percent of those hanged in the cause of India's independence were Sikhs. Eighty (80) percent of those exiled and 75 percent of those jailed were Sikhs as well, despite the fact that the Sikhs at that time constituted less than 2 percent of India's population.

In 1947, when India achieved independence, three nations were to receive power. The Hindus got India, the Muslims got Pakistan, and the Sikh nation was to receive a state of our own. But the Sikh leadership at the time made the critical mistake of taking our share with India on the solemn promises of Gandhi and Nehru that Sikhs would enjoy "the glow of freedom" in Punjab and that no law affecting Sikh rights would be passed without Sikh consent. As soon as the constitution was adopted, those promises were broken and the repression of our people began. As a result, no Sikh has ever signed the Indian constitution.

Nine times the Indian regime has imposed Presidential rule—direct rule by the central government—on the Sikhs of Punjab. Kashmir and Nagaland currently suffer under Presidential rule. Many other states have suffered the same fate. Rule from the Center is imposed in utter disregard of democratic principles.

Perhaps the greatest offense of all, however, was the Indian regime's brutal terrorist attack on the most holy Sikh shrine, the Golden Temple in Amritsar and 38 other Sikh temples throughout Punjab, in June 1984. This is the equivalent of attacking the Vatican or Mecca. These brutal attacks ultimately resulted in the murder of 20,000 Sikhs by the government, including important Sikh leaders like Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale, a major spokesman for Sikh freedom. The attack took place from June 3 through 6, 1984. 15,000 troops of the Indian army took part in this surprise attack, called Operation Bluestar. These attacks were timed to fall on a holy day for the Sikh nation. Many innocent, unarmed men, and women and children, who had come only to pray on the anniversary of the martyrdom of Guru Arjan Dev Ji, were instead gunned down in the very temples in which they sought peace and solace.

In the face of this repression, the Sikh nation declared its independence on October 7, 1987, forming the separate country of Khalistan. Although our movement to liberate Khalistan is peaceful, democratic, and nonviolent, the brutal Indian regime insists upon treating all Sikhs as "terrorists." The cases of Harpreet Singh and Jaswant Singh Khalsa clearly emanate from that policy. This past September 19, U.S. Representative Philip M. Crane, one of the senior Members of Congress, called upon the Indian regime to recognize the independence of Khalistan. It is time for the United Nations to do the same.

The Sikh nation showed its support for independence in February 1992, when only

four (4) percent of the Sikh population in Punjab, Khalistan, voted in the elections there, held under the Indian constitution, a constitution which no Sikh has ever signed.

In December, Sikh leader Simranjit Singh Mann spoke to a crowd of 50,000 Sikhs and called for a peaceful, democratic, nonviolent movement to liberate Khalistan. He asked his audience to raise their hands if they agreed. All 50,000 hands were raised. For this blatant act of free speech, he was arrested in January and kept in illegal detention for six months. He continues to face charges under the repressive "Terrorist and Disruptive Activities Act" (TADA), which has expired. Old charges against Mr. Mann which has been dismissed were reinstated in order to frighten him into silence. Our demand for freedom is irrevocable, irreversible, and non-negotiable.

India is not one nation. It is a conglomeration of many nations thrown together for administrative purposes by the British. With 18 official languages, India is doomed to disintegrate just as the former Soviet Union did.

Freedom for Khalistan and all the nations living under Indian occupation is inevitable. It is time for India to recognize the inevitable and end its illegal occupation of Khalistan and the other minority nations it occupies. India must recognize Khalistan's independence, as Congressman Crane said. It is time for the United Nations to stop dignifying bloodthirsty tyrants like Mr. Rao. It is time for the U.N. to speak out for the ideals of its charter by working to liberate Khalistan and all the nations of the Indian subcontinent.

Freedom is the universal birthright of all people and nations. It is this universal right that the Sikh nation claims for itself. The only way that right can be preserved is in a sovereign, independent Khalistan. India must recognize reality and free Khalistan now. The Sikh nation will be free. KHALISTAN ZINDABAD.

FEDERAL EMPLOYEE SEPARATION INCENTIVE AND REEMPLOYMENT ACT

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 7, 1995

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, today I introduced the Federal Employee Separation Incentive and Reemployment Act because of my concern about Federal Government downsizing and its impact on Federal employees. The Federal Government has a responsibility to its employees to make the transition to the private sector as easy as possible. Federal employees separated from employment should have a soft landing.

Members should know that Federal employees are some of the most dedicated and hard working people around. The Federal employees I have had the pleasure of knowing and working with over the years have a unique sense of community and that is why they have chosen jobs in public service. Serving the needs of the American people is honorable and indispensable. However, as obsolete Government functions are phased out or new technology reduces the need for some positions, Federal employees will be displaced.

Vice President Gore took the lead in 1993 in the downsizing and streamlining effort when he began his "Reinventing Government" initiative. As a result of the reinvention, the administration has reduced Federal employment by

about 160,000 jobs. This puts the administration on track to reach its goal of 272,900 job cuts by the year 1999. Furthermore, congressional efforts to eliminate, streamline, or reform outdated programs could accelerate or increase the numbers of Federal jobs lost. Reductions in the number of full time equivalents [FTE's] will displace a number of workers and reductions-in-force [RIF's] most likely will follow. All of the job cuts cannot be absorbed by retirements or attrition. Therefore, as the nation's largest employer, the Federal Government should be sensitive to its displaced employees and do what it can to ease their transition into the private sector—in other words, give them a soft landing.

The Federal Employee Separation Incentive and Reemployment Act will provide temporary authority for the payment of retirement and separation incentives which will assist agencies reduce their workforce through attrition rather than RIF's. Buyouts, private sector reemployment training and relocation incentives, a job bank, and extension of health care and life insurance benefits will ease the Federal employee's transition out the Federal work force. This legislation will save the Government money because buyouts are less expensive than RIF's. A reduction in the number of RIF's will protect dwindling morale which adversely impacts on productivity. Finally and most importantly, this legislation will help the separated Federal employee make a smooth transition into the private sector.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation is a combination of some new and old ideas. This legislation should serve as a starting point for more good ideas which I encourage Federal employee unions, groups, and associations to share with the Civil Service Subcommittee. Also, I call on the administration to put forth some suggestions about how to ease Federal employees' transition into the private sector. For instance, perhaps OPM should conduct job fairs around the country whereby OPM helps match experience and qualified separated Federal employees with private sector jobs.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage our colleagues to cosponsor this important legislation, and I urge the chairman of the Government Reform and Oversight Subcommittee on Civil Service to hold hearings on this important legislation. This bill is a good government measure intended to help displaced Federal employees. While we may not be able to guarantee lifetime jobs to our dedicated Federal employees, we can help give them a soft landing.

Mr. Speaker, the following is a brief description of the incentives and transition assistance included in the bill:

(1) Incentive Payments for Employees Eligible for Immediate Retirement.—This program would provide for incentive payments to employees who voluntarily separate but who are not eligible for an immediate annuity. These Voluntary Separation Incentive Programs (VSIPs) are generally referred to as buyouts. VSIPs may be paid only if they are necessary to avoid or minimize the need for involuntary separations due to a RIF, reorganization, transfer of function, or other similar action.

(2) Payments and Other Incentives for Employees Not Eligible For Immediate Retirement.—This program gives an incentive to Federal employees who are not eligible for immediate retirement to find private sector employment by providing an incentive payment to a Federal employee who obtains pri-

vate sector employment within six months after the employee's voluntary separation. The incentive payment is based on the amount of severance pay the employee would have been entitled to in the case of an involuntary separation. The sooner a former employee obtains reemployment, the greater the amount of the reemployment incentive. Specifically, the employee would receive 100 percent of his/her salary if he or she obtains private sector employment within the first two months of separation. He/she would receive 80 percent if the new employment commences within three months, 60 percent in four months, 40 percent in five months and 20 percent in six months.

(3) Reemployment Incentives—Priority Placement Programs for Federal Employees Affected by a Reduction-in-Force.—This program codifies a Presidential order establishing a government wide priority placement program. This program is modeled after the successful Department of Defense priority placement program. In essence, the program would provide a system under which agencies will be required to fill positions with displaced employees referred through the program if the employee is qualified for the position. Agencies would obtain employee names from a central inventory of employees who have been RIFed or given notice that they will be RIFed.

(4) Non-Federal Employment Incentives—Retraining Incentives.—Under this program, agencies may pay a retraining incentive to non-Federal employers upon the employee's completion of 12 months of continuous employment by the non-Federal employer. This gives private sector employers an incentive to hire displaced federal employees by paying for a portion of the employee's retraining. Retraining incentives shall not exceed \$20,000.

(5) Non-Federal Employment Incentives—Relocation Incentives.—Under this program, agencies may pay a relocation incentive to an eligible employee if it is necessary for the employee to relocate in order to commence employment with a non-Federal employer. Relocation incentives shall not exceed \$20,000.

(6) Job Placement and Counseling Services.—Under this program, agencies may establish a program to provide job placement and counseling services to current and former employees and their families. Services may include career and personal counseling, training in job search skills, and job placement assistance.

(7) Extension of Life Insurance Benefits.—A federal employee who is separated involuntarily or takes early retirement may elect to continue his/her life insurance coverage and pay both the employee's and agency contribution share. Under current law he/she can not.

(8) Extension of Health Insurance Benefits.—Current law generally requires that retiring employees must have participated in the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHBP) for the five years preceding retirement in order to continue their coverage as retirees. This new program directs the Office of Personnel Management to waive the five-year requirement for a federal employee who retires before October 1, 1999, and is eligible for an immediate annuity, provided the individual is enrolled in the FEHBP on the date of retirement.

TRIBUTE TO EL RANCHO HIGH SCHOOL ACADEMIC DECATHLON TEAM

HON. ESTEBAN EDWARD TORRES

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 7, 1995

Mr. TORRES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the students, coaches, and parents who make up the El Rancho High School Academic Decathlon Team.

On November 18, 1995, El Rancho High School competed in and hosted the 1995 Los Angeles County Academic Decathlon. More than 60 schools from Los Angeles County participated. For the third year in a row, the El Rancho High School Academic Decathlon Team won the Southeast Divisional Region and placed 11th in the entire county.

Sergio Aguilar, Charles Cazares, David Enevoldsen, Leslie Gonzales, Giraldo Goyenaga, Scott Moore, Jozelyn Pablo, Sherry Panganiban, and David Zaragoza are the nine students who make up this year's winning team. With the guidance and support of their families and coaches Doug Anderson—head coach—Jim Dyson—assistant coach—Gary Barton, Della Bruhn, Julie Ellis, Karen Mainer, Tim McMullen, Ben Meza, Cheryl Milas, Ben Rich, Eva Rosa, Chris Whalen, Stan Wlasick, the decathletes proved that the El Rancho High School Academic Decathlon Team is a formidable competitor.

The team has a long and successful tradition of winning the Southeast Divisional Region, never placing lower than third and placing first in 1988, 1990, 1993, 1994, and 1995. For 3 consecutive years, El Rancho has been the Southeast Regional Champion.

The dedication and commitment demonstrated by these students is commendable and noteworthy. Studying for the competition required many early mornings and afterschool hours, and spending summers and weekends at school in preparation for the competition. These young people serve as promising role models for their peers and future academic decathletes.

Mr. Speaker, it is with pride that I rise to recognize these exceptional students, coaches, and parents. I ask my colleagues to join me in saluting these accomplished individuals and in extending our congratulations and best wishes for their continued success.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BARBARA B. KENNELLY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 7, 1995

Mrs. KENNELLY. Mr. Speaker, on November 30, I was absent from the House of Representatives on official business and missed rollcall votes 830, 831, 832, and 833.

Had I been present I would have voted "aye" on rollcall No. 830, "aye" on rollcall 831, "aye" on rollcall 832, and "nay" on rollcall 833.

I ask unanimous consent that this be reflected in the RECORD.