

# EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

## TRIBUTE TO THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF RETIRED FEDERAL EMPLOYEES

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 25, 1996

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, today I am pleased to rise to pay tribute to the National Association of Retired Federal Employees. We are happy to celebrate the 75th anniversary of this vital national organization which has been so integral to the rights of this Nation's retired Federal employees.

The National Association of Retired Federal Employees [NARFE] was formed on February 19, 1921, with 14 founding members. It now boasts a membership of nearly half a million with 1,740 chapters in every State as well as overseas. Their mission is to protect the earned benefits of retired Federal workers and their families. I am proud to say that they have continually accomplished this noble mission, with remarkable success, for over 75 years.

On this date, I am also proud to celebrate the 14th anniversary of Chapter 1871 of the National Association of Retired Federal Employees. Chapter 1871 serves retired Federal workers in the 14th Congressional District of New York. This local chapter of NARFE has been a tremendous help and an influential voice to countless retired Federal employees in that district. In this Chamber today, I am very pleased to give Chapter 1871 special recognition for all their dedicated work.

NARFE remains as important today as it was 75 years ago. It is the only national organization that is solely dedicated to protecting the interests of Federal retirees and their dependents. There is an ongoing need to educate the Government, the media, and the public on the true needs of Federal workers and their benefits. NARFE has successfully accomplished each and every one of these essential tasks.

Today, Mr. Speaker, in the year of its 75th anniversary and on the date of the 14th anniversary of Chapter 1871, I am very pleased to recognize the National Association of Retired Federal Employees for its many contributions to retired Federal workers and thereby to the Nation. I ask that my colleagues join with me in this celebration by paying tribute to its many years of accomplishments and dedication to serving retired Federal employees.

## HONORING NORTH MIAMI CLEAN CITY WEEK

HON. CARRIE P. MEEK

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 25, 1996

Mrs. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, from April 27 to May 3, 1996, the city of North Miami, under the leadership of Councilwoman

Jeanette Carr, will observe its sixth annual Clean City Week. Clean City Week offers the opportunity for community organizations to join forces to clean neighborhood eyesores while reinforcing community pride. Groups participating include the police department and its Explorers unit, area Boy Scouts, school leaders, and several charitable organizations.

This year's planned projects include collecting trash along a bayside shoreline, painting the houses of elderly residents, cleaning alleys, and painting over graffiti.

Clean City Week is an example of neighbors working together toward a positive end. All participants are to be commended for their efforts. I am proud that so many in my district care so deeply about their environment. My thanks to everyone working to make North Miami sparkle and shine.

## HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES IN SIKH NATION

HON. PHILIP M. CRANE

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 25, 1996

Mr. CRANE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recommend to my colleagues the video "Disappearances in Punjab," which was provided to my office by Dr. Gurmit Singh Aulakh, president of the Council of Khalistan. Produced by Hindu human rights activist Ram Narayan Kumar and ethnologist Lorenz Skerjanz, "Disappearances in Punjab" tells the story of Jaswant Singh Khaira, general secretary of the human rights wing, who has disappeared and has apparently been abducted by the Indian Government.

Khaira reported the abduction, torture, and murder of as many as 25,000 young Sikh men whose bodies were then cremated and listed as unidentified. Other human rights activists have claimed that as many as 100,000 Sikhs have been designated as "disappeared" by the Indian regime. The Indian Government has faced many similar charges before—including a February 25 article in the New York Times which described the Government as "rotten, corrupt, repressive, an anti-people"—but this video provides documented evidence of the brutal violence that Sikhs must face every day.

I hope my colleagues will take the time to review the video, and I am inserting a transcript for the RECORD. The Sikhs have struggled for independence and have been repressed by a central government. I support independence for Khalistan, and I believe that after reviewing this video, my colleagues will as well.

## INTRODUCTION

On 31 August 1995, Punjab's Chief Minister Beant Singh was assassinated in a suicide mission of bombing carried out by a Sikh militant organization at the State government's Secretariat in Chandigarh. Beant Singh of the Congress party has taken office in early 1992 after winning the elections to the State Legislative Assembly, which the

main Sikh political groups had boycotted to pursue their decade long agitation for a radical measure of autonomy for Punjab. As the Sikh electorate, constituting the majority of Punjab's population stayed away from the polling, the Congress party won the elections, without a real contest. But the government formed by the Congress party under Beant Singh's leadership projected the election results as the democratic mandate to stamp out the Sikh agitation, promising to implement the mandate by all possible means. Reports of human rights violations became widespread.

The leaders of Hindu public opinion in Punjab argued that the due process of law was a luxury, which India could not afford while fighting the secessionist terrorism:

[Interview with Vijay Chopra, publisher and editor of Hind Samachar group of newspapers, who brings out the three most popular language dailies in northern India.]

Only the human rights groups and the individuals, with little influence on the working of the government, expressed indignation against the reports of police atrocities.

[Interview with Satish Jain, Professor of Economics at Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi.]

Many inside observers of Indian politics, including the former President of India Zail Singh, admitted that the highhanded methods of the security forces, instigated the separatist terrorism.

[Interview with Zail Singh.]

## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE SIKH SEPARATIST UNREST

Approximately twenty million Sikhs of India form less than 2 percent of the country's population, but constitute majority in the agriculturally prosperous Northwestern province of Punjab, which had been divided between India and Pakistan in 1947. Prosperous Jat Sikh farmers dominated the Akali Dal, the main political party of the orthodox Sikhs, that launched the agitation for the radical measure of autonomy for the State in early 1982. Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale, a charismatic religious preacher, who had already emerged on the scene as the messiah of "true Sikhs", rallied the discontented sections of the Sikhs, particularly the unemployed youth, to the Akali agitation. The Union government projected the agitation as a secessionist movement, and refused to negotiate decentralization of political power. The next two years of virulent violence, which also witnessed the rise of Sikh terrorism in the real sense, came to a head in June 1984 when Prime Minister Indira Gandhi ordered the military to flush out Bhindranwale and his armed followers from the Golden Temple of Amritsar in which they had taken shelter. When the operation was over, hundreds of Sikh militants, including Bhindranwale, and a larger number of Sikh pilgrims, were dead. The Akal Takht, an important shrine inside the temple complex regarded as the seat of political authority within the Sikh historical tradition, was rubble. For devout Sikhs, Bhindranwale and his followers, who had died fighting the Indian military, became the martyrs of the faith. A section of Bhindranwale's followers now began to talk of an independent Sikh state.

The Parliamentary elections held at the end of 1989, returned many extremist candidates under the leadership of Simranjit

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

Singh Mann, former police officer turned separatist politician. The results showed that the separatist cause now possessed a measure of popular support. Alienation of the Sikhs of Punjab from India's political system again became manifest when the overwhelming majority of them stayed away from the polling in early 1992, keeping with the call given by the main Akali groups to boycott the elections. The boycott helped the Congress party, under Beant Singh, to form its government in the State, and to embark on a highhanded policy to suppress the Sikh agitation without caring for the limits of the law. Many officials involved in the security operations privately admit that excesses, including custodial killings, do take place. But they argue that they have no other way to demoralize a secessionist movement, which enjoys a measure of sympathy in Punjab's countryside.

#### EVIDENCE OF STATE ATROCITIES

Interviews with Inderjit Singh Jaijee, Chairman, Movement Against State Repression, and Jaspal Singh Dhillon, Chairman, Shiromani Akali Dal's Human Rights Wing. [Photographic evidence of custodial torture and killings.]

[Interview with Ranjan Lakhanpal, a lawyer who fights generally losing legal battles to enforce the rule of law, against the working of the Punjab police.—Lakhanpal introduces two women victims of custodial rape.]

Our own investigations in the Amritsar region reveal that the dealings of the security forces with the relatives of separatist militants, themselves unconnected with crime, are not only routinely illegal but also brutal. Apparently, the idea is to set an example of harshness that would discourage the rural folk from sympathizing with the extremist cause.

[Interview with Arjun Singh, grandfather of a known militant Paramjit Singh Panjwad, tortured in the police custody. Panjwad's mother was killed in custody.]

Many Sikh officers of the Punjab police privately corroborate these reports of police atrocities.

[Interview with one woman police officer, on the condition of anonymity: She told us about her experience of custodial torture, rape and murders at an interrogation center she was attached to.—Photographic evidence of custodial torture and murders.]

Champions of human rights in Punjab are themselves vulnerable to persecution. Many have suffered long periods of illegal detention, torture in custody and even elimination. Sometimes their relatives become victims of police wrath. On 29 March 1995, lawyer Ranjan Lakhanpal's ten year old son Ashish was run over by a police vehicle. The vehicle belonged to an officer whom Ranjan has accused of murdering a detainee in custody.

#### THE CASE OF JASWANT SINGH KHALRA

The more recent example comes from the case of Jaswant Singh Khalra, General Secretary of the Shiromani Akali Dal's Human Rights Wing, who got picked up by uniformed commandos of Punjab police from the porch of his house in Amritsar on 6 September 1995, six days after Beant Singh's assassination. Human Rights Wing has been focussing attention on unravelling the mystery of what happens to the large number of people the security forces illegally pick-up for interrogation. Jaswant Singh Khalra was associated with the investigations that led to the discovery that Punjab police have been cremating thousands of dead Sikhs illegally, by mentioning them in the registers at the cremation grounds as "unclaimed" and "unidentified." The investigations also established that these "cremated" Sikhs were largely those who had earlier been picked up for interrogation.

[Interview with the attendant of the cremation ground at Patti, a subdivisional town in Amritsar district.]

Equally incriminating evidence against the police comes from the hospitals where the police sent some bodies so cremated for postmortem.

[Interview with the Chief Medical Officer of the hospital at Patti: This doctor told us that Sarabjit Singh was still alive when the police first brought him for the postmortem. On being discovered alive, Sarabjit Singh was taken away by the police and brought back to the hospital the second time when he was actually dead. The hospital gave the postmortem report the police wanted. The Chief Medical Officer of the hospital at Patti also offered us some astonishing information on how he helped the police to get the post-mortem reports they legally needed in all circumstances before cremating the dead bodies.]

Investigation carried out by the Human Rights Wing forms the basis of a petition that the Committee for Information and Initiative on Punjab has filed before the Supreme Court of India. The issue of illegal cremations by the Punjab police is now being investigated by the Central Bureau of Investigation, on the orders from the Supreme Court. However, the order of the probe did not come before Jaswant Singh Khalra himself "disappeared."

[Interview with Jaspal Singh Dhillon: "Khalra was quite clearly told that he can also become an unidentified body. And today Khalra is not there."]

The guilty officials of Punjab police knew that, without Khalra's investigative resourcefulness in the Amritsar district, the Human Rights Wing could not have so conclusively exposed their ways of handling the Sikh unrest in Punjab. Khalra had also been providing legal counselling to victims of police atrocities, particularly the relatives of the "disappeared", which encouraged them to approach the courts to redress their grievances.

Khalra's whereabouts remains unknown. The chief of the Punjab police has categorically denied Khalra's abduction by the officers of his force. The Supreme Court of India has ordered the Central Bureau of Investigation to probe the "disappearance" along with the issue of illegal cremations by the Punjab police. In ordering the probe, the court has neither extended protection to witness who might lead to evidence to establish the truth, nor has asked the CBI to associate the human rights groups, directly involved in exposing the police atrocities, with the inquiry. It is evident that the Central Bureau of Investigation, as an investigating agency under the Union Home Ministry, lacks the necessary power and independence to determine the truth of allegations of serious human rights crimes, made against India's security forces.

Human right groups worldwide are seriously concerned about the disappearance of Jaswant Singh Khalra, which is seen as a warning to all those who are engaged in exposing police atrocities in the State. The Sikh groups in Punjab are agitating the Khalra's release. Many leaders of the Western countries, including the President of the United States of America, have conveyed their concern about the case to the government of India. However, the information percolating from the police sources suggests that Khalra might already have been eliminated. Despair dominates the mood of the Sikh leaders in Punjab.

[Interview with Sukhjinder Singh, former Akali Minister: "All Sikhs cannot get one constable or one police officer transferred from one place. That is the situation."]

[Interview with Jaspal Singh Dhillon: "There is no way any Sikh today can look

for justice from any organ of the Indian state."]

[Interview with Professor Satish Jain: "There is a large section of this country which approves of State atrocities. And, I think, the weakness of the Indian nation, the weakness of the Indian society, really lies in this attitude."]

Will India society rectify this weakness? Will State atrocities in Punjab cease? These are the mute questions before the people of India, even as they prepare themselves for the next elections.

#### CONGRATULATIONS TO PRESIDENT LEE TENG-HUI AND THE PEOPLE OF TAIWAN ON THE FIRST DEMOCRATIC ELECTIONS

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 25, 1996

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I wish to extend my heartiest congratulations to President Lee Teng-hui who was chosen the first popularly elected President of Taiwan in direct, democratic elections, which were held over the past weekend. President Lee received 54 percent of the vote in a field of four candidates. The results of this election are a tribute to President Lee, who has played the leading role in completing the democratic transformation of Taiwan, a transformation which led to these first-ever democratic elections. I also wish to extend congratulations to Lien Chan, the democratically elected Vice President.

Mr. Speaker, President Lee has served as the President of the Republic of China on Taiwan since 1988. He has long and close ties with the United States and with the American people. It is highly significant, Mr. Speaker, that President Lee was born on Taiwan in 1923. He attended Kyoto Imperial University, and received a bachelors degree from National Taiwan University in 1949. His studies in the United States include an M.A. from Iowa State University and a Ph.D. from Cornell University. Between 1949 and 1965 he was a member of the faculty of National Taiwan University, and he served many years as a professor there. His political experience includes service as the mayor of Taipei City, Governor of Taiwan Province, and Vice President of the Republic of China on Taiwan.

Mr. Speaker, just 1 year ago, President Lee was invited by his alma mater, Cornell University, to visit the campus as a distinguished alumnus. The administration opposed granting him a visa for that visit. As my colleagues know, legislation that I introduced and which passed the House unanimously, put the Congress on record favoring granting him a visa. I am delighted that he was able to visit Cornell as President of Taiwan, and it is my sincere hope that he will have the opportunity to visit the United States as its democratically elected President.

The real winners in Saturday's Taiwanese elections, Mr. Speaker, are not the candidates who won reelection—though I do not want to diminish the great victory which this election is for President Lee and Vice President Lien. The real winners in the elections are the people of Taiwan. They have made a democratic choice, they have conducted an exemplary campaign, and they have participated in the