

POLICE OFFICIAL STRIPS AND
TORTURES WIDOW, SON IN
FRONT OF EACH OTHER

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 9, 1997

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, another disturbing violation of human rights has occurred in Punjab, Khalistan. On August 21, according to several reports, a police subinspector in Bathinda forced a local widow and her adult son to strip naked, then tortured them in front of each other. Apparently, the widow's other son eloped a few months before that and for some reason, the police were seeking information about his elopement. In their unwarranted pursuit of this private information, they took the extreme measure of torturing two people. Unfortunately, this is not unusual in India. Torture, rape, and even murder are common, everyday occurrences in Punjab, Kalistan, in Kashmir, in Nagaland, in so many parts of India's brutal and corrupt empire.

An elected mayor was tortured in front of the people merely for being an Amritdhari Sikh. In Bombay, 33 Dalits—"Black untouchables"—the aboriginal people of South Asia were killed during a peaceful protest. In Kashmir, at least 20 reporters were beaten during a protest at the Chief Minister's office. They were protesting the police beating of a fellow reporter from Agence France Presse who had instructed his photographer to take a picture of a woman being beaten by the police. These are recent incidents, not old information. Sadly, these are just a few of many recent incidents of torture, brutality, and murder by the Government of India. This is completely unacceptable.

We must stop taxing our own people to support these brutal rulers. The time has come to impose stringent economic sanctions on this regime until basic human liberties are observed. Finally, this Congress must put itself on record in support of freedom for all the nations of South Asia. This is what our principles demand of us. We must do our duty to the people of the world.

HONORING CHARLOTTE AUSTIN
JORDAN

HON. HOWARD P. "BUCK" McKEON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 9, 1997

Mr. McKEON. Mr. Speaker, the National Crime Prevention Council and Ameritech have honored a constituent of mine, Charlotte Austin Jordan of Winnetka, CA, with the Ameritech Award of Excellence in Crime Prevention. Ms. Jordan is 1 of 8 winners selected from 140 nominations. Her work and perseverance deserves to be recognized.

Charlotte Austin Jordan is not a stranger to adversity. In May 1988, her 13-year-old daughter was brutally murdered by gang members in a case of mistaken identity. Further, in 1996, her 24-year-old son was also murdered by gang members. The death of her first child prompted Ms. Jordan to volunteer at the California Youth Authority in impact of crime on victim's classes. This program pro-

vided a meeting place for victims of crime to confront juvenile offenders and to verbalize what effects crime had on their lives.

Next, Ms. Jordan formed Save Our Future, a community-based nonprofit organization dedicated to educating, protecting, and empowering our youth. SOF provides many programs such as parenting, substance abuse, tutoring conflict resolution, and college and career development.

As an innovator, she recognized the need for housing for paroled youth who are unable to return to their homes. She consequently developed Ja'mee's house to provide a structured environment for formerly incarcerated young men who have exhibited a willingness to change. She also became involved with Partnership for Change, a mentoring program for at-risk children ages 8 to 19 who have been paroled or are on probation.

I would like to thank the National Crime Prevention Council and Ameritech for honoring Charlotte Austin Jordan with this award and applaud her dedication to helping individuals fight crime and build communities. Ms. Jordan knows all too well the firsthand experiences, her faith in the ability to reform offenders has never been shaken. I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating this brave woman and hard-working individuals like her who make a difference in their communities.

YOM KIPPUR HOLOCAUST OBSERVANCE AT TEMPLE BETH DAVID

HON. GARY L. ACKERMAN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 9, 1997

Mr. ACKERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today full of joy and fulfillment as my constituents and the other members of Temple Beth David of Commack, Suffolk County, prepare to join together to observe a most special Yom Kippur service.

This Saturday, on Yom Kippur 5758, the most sacred of all days in the Jewish calendar, Rabbi Leonard Troupp of Temple Beth David and his congregants will reunite a sacred Holocaust Torah scroll from the town of Dobris, in what was then Czechoslovakia, with Petr Herrmann, a resident of that village prior to the Holocaust. Thus, the congregation will, in the words of Rabbi Troupp, "witness the victory over evil and glimpse the possibility of God's promise for all mankind."

Mr. Herrmann's biography is one from which great novels can be written. It is full of adventure, good and evil and is filled with the indomitable human spirit to survive and maintain justice, love and freedom.

The Herrmann family lived in Dobris from 1793 until the tragedy of the Holocaust. Uncles, cousins, friends, neighbors and even Mr. Herrmann's father, Alois, became B'nai Mitzvah as they stood before the Torah scroll that now has found a home at Temple Beth David. That Torah was a part of their lives that was viciously torn from them in 1939 as the Holocaust descended upon Europe. Mr. Herrmann, his parents, relatives and friends were taken from Dobris and sent to locations whose names evoke the most unbelievable horrors and cruelty that have yet been devised: Theresienstadt, Auschwitz, Birkenau. Sadly, many of the Dobris Jews perished at these death camps.

On this Yom Kippur, 55 years since he and the Jewish community of Dobris were deported, Petr Herrmann will show that he has done more than just survive. He and his wife, Jarmilla, will stand once more before the Dobris Torah and recite the traditional Jewish blessing that gives thanks for having been able to observe and participate in this event. He will proudly recite the family names from Dobris—Arnstein, Bloch, Bohm, Fleischmann, Frankl, Gluck, Katz, Kosiner, Lederer, Lion, Oppenheimer, Pollack and Porges—families that were proud members of the Dobris Jewish community; families who are now but memories.

Mr. Speaker, as we observe this solemn and moving occasion, it is fitting that we pay tribute to those self-effacing people who in the times of greatest adversity still reflect the compassion and courage of our society. I ask all my colleagues in the House of Representatives to join me now in commending the efforts of Pamela Gershowitz, head of the Dobris Committee at Temple Beth David; Werner Reich, who led the search that brought Mr. Herrmann to Commack, Rabbi Leonard Troupp, and other members of the Temple Beth David congregation, in recognizing the heroic tale of Petr Herrmann, and in welcoming the Herrmann family back to the Dobris Torah in Commack.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 2158,
DEPARTMENTS OF VETERANS
AFFAIRS AND HOUSING AND
URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND
INDEPENDENT AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1998

SPEECH OF

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 8, 1997

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise to comment on the VA-HUD appropriations bill, H.R. 2158 that has emerged from a conference committee between the House and the Senate. This legislation provides resources for a wide variety of programs, two of the most notable concern section 8 housing subsidies and the service coordinators that are supported through the Department of Housing and Urban Development [HUD].

In the State of Ohio, there are more than 50,000 apartment units in which citizens receive rent subsidies from the HUD section 8 program. My congressional district on the west side of Cleveland has a substantial concentration of section 8 projects and eligible persons, many of whom are elderly and disabled. Our Nation has made a compact with these residents to help them maintain a decent place to live. As we know, many of the section 8 contracts will be expiring in the next few years. Fortunately, this appropriations bill provides a total of \$9.4 billion in fiscal year 1998 for the renewal of section 8 rental housing contracts. This is more than twice the amount that was provided last year for similar activities. This money will be available for HUD to work with apartment owners at section 8 properties to ensure that rent subsidies will continue for elderly, disabled, low income and other persons who depend on rent subsidies. Although this

amount is less than what was originally requested by the President for section 8 renewals, I am confident that HUD can meet the challenge of using this money in a cost-effective and sensitive manner.

The other good news concerns service coordinators. These staff persons work in section 8 projects to assess the daily living activities of residents and tailor a package of services that gives residents access to community services. Every day service coordinators help to save the lives of elderly and disabled persons who need help. When I learned that the money for this program had expired, and that service coordinators at the Westerly Apartments in Cleveland and other locations would soon be dismissed, I wrote to members of the Appropriations Committee asking that money be made available to keep this important program operating. I was very pleased to see that this appropriations bill states that "at least \$7,000,000 shall be used for grants for service coordinator and congregate services for the elderly and disabled." This money will allow HUD to renew all of the service coordinator grants that are expiring in the near future. The bill states that it is the intention of the U.S. Congress that the service coordinator program extend into the future. I commend the House and Senate conference committee for their willingness to maintain this vital assistance to elderly and disabled citizens.

During an era in which all government agencies are called upon to make hard decisions about how our tax dollars are used, this appropriations bill makes a number of wise choices. I therefore urge my colleagues to support this measure.

CONGRATULATIONS TO GAIL A.
HOFFMAN FOR HELPING TO
BUILD A BETTER ATLANTA

HON. JOHN LEWIS

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 9, 1997

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to announce that Gail A. Hoffman, a resident of Georgia's Fifth Congressional District, once again has been recognized for her work to improve communities in Atlanta. The National Crime Prevention Council and Ameritech have selected Ms. Hoffman to receive the Ameritech Award of Excellence in Crime Prevention. Ms. Hoffman's efforts to work with troubled communities and to bring individuals from all walks of life together makes her worthy of this acknowledgment.

Ms. Hoffman is the president and executive director of the Bridging the Gaps project. BTG is a nonprofit organization with a mission to empower ethnically diverse communities, public and private organizations, and law enforcement with the ability to improve the quality of life for Georgia's refugee and immigrant communities.

BTG was created in 1987, after Ms. Hoffman and then Detective M.C. Cox began convening meetings with the Multicultural Crime Task Force to help confront increasing gang activity in the Asian community. Through these meetings, Ms. Hoffman recognized that, because of cultural differences and communication barriers, non-English speaking people feared the police and felt unsafe because they

believe that they are not protected from crime. As a result, Ms. Hoffman developed BTG and several related projects.

To help bridge the cultural divide, BTG created a computerized language bank that contains the names of bilingual officers and civilians interested in translating for public safety officers and the courts. Law enforcement training courses, including language specific classes and community education programs, have helped eliminate communication barriers and cultural stereotypes among non-English speaking people and public safety officers. BTG has published a "Personal and Home Safety Orientation Manual for Refugees and Immigrants" manual in 11 different languages.

BTG also has convened approximately 120 meetings between public safety officials and ethnic communities. The project provides homework assistance, peer counseling, and English as a second language assistance to Southeast Asian youth who are vulnerable to gang recruitment activities. BTG provides youth support groups in five counties to assist over 150 refugees make positive life choices.

States throughout the country are interested in creating similar programs like BTG. Thanks to Ms. Hoffman's problem solving and leadership, better communication and understanding exist among Atlanta's diverse ethnic groups.

I thank Ms. Hoffman for the hard work and dedication that allowed her to earn the Ameritech Awards of Excellence in Crime Prevention. I applaud the National Crime Prevention Council's dedication to helping individuals fight crime and build community. I appreciate Ameritech's commitment to supporting crime prevention initiatives. I ask my Colleagues to join me in congratulating Gail Hoffman and other hard-working individuals who make a difference in their communities.

THE CLOCK IS TICKING ON THE
PANAMA CANAL'S TRANSFER

HON. PHILIP M. CRANE

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 9, 1997

Mr. CRANE. Mr. Speaker, in just over 2 years, the United States will transfer control of the Panama Canal and our adjacent bases to Panama under the terms of the 1977 Panama Canal Treaties. Already, preparations for this transition are underway. At this moment, U.S. military forces are scheduled to be drawn down in the region from the 5,600 that remain, out of the traditional 10,500 U.S. troops stationed there, to 4,400. The significance of this process, its imminent completion, and the impact it could have on the U.S. economy and the security of the region cannot be understated. For this reason, I am reintroducing a resolution today calling for the negotiation of a base rights, canal operation and security agreement with Panama that provides for a continued U.S. military presence in the region after December 31, 1999.

More than 80 years ago, the United States completed construction of the 51-mile-long interoceanic ship canal across the Isthmus of Panama, one of the great engineering marvels of its or any age. Since then, this man-made waterway has served the maritime nations of the world almost without interruption, enabling ships to travel from the Atlantic to the Pacific

and vice versa much faster and cheaper than would have been otherwise possible. For more than 80 years, the U.S. military has stood watch over the canal from a series of bases located in a 10-mile-wide strip of territory adjacent to the canal. From that position, the United States has been prepared to respond effectively not only to immediate threats to the canal itself, but also to other problems that could have eroded hemispheric peace and security. By December 31, 1999, however, the United States forces on these bases must be withdrawn and control over them and the canal will be transferred to Panama. In preparation for this date, the U.S. Southern Command recently moved to its new headquarters just west of Miami.

The great importance of the Panama Canal to our country cannot be overlooked when you consider that 15 percent of U.S. seaborne trade, and 5 percent of the world's, passes through its locks. These figures become even more significant when you take into account that trade comprises nearly 30 percent of our gross domestic product [GDP], and that roughly 25 percent of U.S. economic growth in the last 4 years has come from increased exports. As a mature economy, it is clear that the United States must seek to open new markets to our products for our economy to continue to grow and create high paying jobs. For this reason, as chairman of the Ways and Means Trade Subcommittee, I have supported Chile's accession to the North American Free Trade Agreement [NAFTA], as well as the trade liberalization underway through the Summit of the Americas and the Asian-Pacific Economic Cooperation [APEC] forum, and the initiation of a trade policy toward sub-Saharan Africa. However, it only takes one look at a globe to recognize the critical importance of the Panama Canal to getting U.S. exports to their destinations overseas. Absent the canal, U.S. products would have to be transported via more expensive routes, adding to their overall cost and decreasing their competitiveness in foreign markets. On this basis, it is clear that continued growth in U.S. exports and job creation is, at least in part, dependent on the regular operation of the Panama Canal well into the 21st century.

For all of these reasons, the United States national interest compels us to seek the negotiation of an agreement with Panama that will: First, allow the United States to leave military bases in Panama past the turn of the century; second, permit U.S. military forces to operate out of those bases; and third, enable the United States to guarantee the regular operation of the canal. At present, the administration is conducting negotiations with the Panamanians to provide for a continued United States presence in Panama. However, I believe that a continued U.S. presence is meaningless without also having the ability to intervene to guarantee the canal's security and insure its regular operation.

It is clear that the conclusion of such an arrangement would also benefit Panama, as 6,000 Panamanian citizens are currently employed on U.S. bases, and \$200 to \$600 million in additional income for Panama is tied directly to the United States military presence in the region. Moreover, a poll of Panamanians published in March found that 72 percent of those surveyed would like the United States bases to remain open after their scheduled closure date. Similar polls have shown that