

"magical healing." The administration on the first day withdrew permission to hold the festival but on the assurance that no magical healing would be done and no conversions would take place, it relented. However, groups opposed to the holding of the festival continued their protest dharna near the venue of the festival. The police had made elaborate security arrangements. According to a spokesperson for the Christians, the district administration yesterday forced them to wind up the festival as tension was brewing up in the town. He said that on October 22 an attempt was made to set the venue on fire and electric lights were damaged. But the administration did not take any action against the rioters. He said as the announcement for the cancellation of the festival was made the youngster started a dharna on the Chandigarh Road. The police lathi charged them and chased them to the CMC Chowk where other Christians had collected in protest against the cancellation of the festival. The spokesman said a deputation of the Christians had also met the Chief Minister, Mr. Parkash Singh Badal, at a village in Muktsar district two days ago and apprised him of the situation. The SSP, Mr. Dinkar Gupta, said as many as 19 policemen were injured in the brickbatting. He said the police force was outnumbered at the CMC Chowk and had resort to a lathi charge and open fire in the air to protect themselves.

# INDIA SHOWS RELIGIOUS "TOLERANCE" BY FIRING ON CHRISTIAN FESTIVAL AND BEHEADS A CATHOLIC PRIEST

**HON. DAN BURTON**

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 30, 1997

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, once again the mask of Indian "democracy" has slipped off and the grisly reality underneath has been exposed. Just weeks after the state funeral of Mother Teresa earned India fawning media coverage, it has fired on innocent Christians who were merely holding a 5-day festival called "Jesus Christ is the Answer." According to official reports, 9 Christians and 19 police officers were injured.

This unconscionable act of religious tyranny took place after the militant Hindu parties complained of possible conversions of Hindus to Christianity during the festival in Ludhiana, Punjab. India used to have a law against religious conversions of Hindus. Although it claims that this law has been repealed, in practice it is still enforced.

Hindu militant rioters tried to sabotage the festival by setting fire to the soundstage and other equipment. According to newspaper articles, no action was taken against the persons responsible for these acts. Instead, the authorities closed down the festival based on the allegation that conversions were occurring. What kind of "secular democracy" allows its police to shoot at people merely because they may be persuading people to adopt their religious views.

That is not secularism, and Mr. Speaker that is not democracy. It is militant, fundamentalist theocracy of the same kind that operates in Iran.

And finally Mr. Speaker, I sadly report that a Catholic priest was found beheaded in the northern India state of Bihar. This was the

third Catholic clergyman killed in the past 2 years in this religion. The colleagues of the Reverend A.T. Thomas said that he was killed for aiding the region's "untouchables." There were further reports that the police in the area were offering a \$28 reward for the return of the priest's missing head.

Mr. Speaker, these gruesome facts make it imperative that this Congress continue to support the inclusion of India as a major violator of religious rights in the Wolf-Specter Freedom From Religious Persecution Act of 1997.

I would like to conclude by thanking Dr. Gurmit Singh Aulakh, president of the Council of Khalistan, for bringing these atrocities to my attention. I am introducing the Council of Khalistan's press release and the AP article on this matter into the RECORD.

## INDIAN POLICE OPEN FIRE ON CHRISTIAN FESTIVAL JUST WEEKS AFTER MOTHER TERESA'S STATE FUNERAL

WASHINGTON, D.C., October 30—Several police and Christians were injured after police used firearms, tear gas and baton charges to disperse Christians who were holding a five-day festival entitled "Jesus Christ is the Answer" in Ludhiana, Punjab. Indian authorities dispersed the festival by force after allegations that organizers were engaging in conversions of Hindus to Christianity.

Indian authorities allowed the Christian festival only after assurances by organizers that no conversions would take place. However, in the course of the five-day festival, Hindu protests organized by political leaders turned more militant as rioters attempted to set fire to the soundstage and other equipment. It was reported that Indian authorities took no action against the Hindu rioters.

When allegations arose that the Christian festival was actually converting Hindus, Indian authorities closed down the festival. Christians conducted a sit-in protest on the Chandigarh Road. Police responded by using tear gas and batons to beat the protestors, police gunfire was also reported. Official figures place the injuries at 9 Christians and 19 police officers, however, Christian casualties may be much higher.

"This is secular democracy in action," said Dr. Gurmit Singh Aulakh, President of the Council of Khalistan. "Unless you are Mother Teresa, this is how most Christians in India are treated." Christians in Nagaland have faced religious and political persecution since Indian independence, over 200,000 Christian Nagas have been murdered since 1947. Punjab State Magistracy and human rights groups have stated that since 1984, over 250,000 Sikhs were killed by Indian security forces. 53,000 Kashmiris have been killed since 1988 and tens of thousands of Dalits, India's dark skinned aboriginals relegated to untouchable status, have also been killed.

"Although the Indian Government has publicly declared that their law against converting Hindus is no longer in force, these Christians were attacked by Indian police because of charges that they were converting Hindus and that should indicate how the Indian Government feels about Christians and about Hindus converting to Christian faith," concluded Dr. Aulakh.

[From the Tribune News Service, Oct. 27, 1997]

## DSP HURT IN BRICKBATTING

LUDHIANA, October 26—The police opened fire in the air and resorted to a lathi charge to disperse an agitated mob of Christians last night as many as 19 policemen, including a DSP and nine Christians were injured in the brickbatting and lathi charge. Two ve-

hicles were also damaged. The Christians had started a five-day programme on "Jesus Christ is the answer" festival from October 22 to October 26 on the Chandigarh Road. They claimed that they were holding their prayers and thousands of Christians were participating in the same. On the other hand BJP activists of the Shiv Sena and the Bajrang Dal objected to the holding of the festival alleging that the Christians were resorting to conversions and indulging in "magical healing." The administration on the first day withdrew permission to hold the festival but on the assurance that no magical healing would be done and no conversions would take place, it relented. However, groups opposed to the holding of the festival continued their protest dharna near the venue of the festival. The police had made elaborate security arrangements. According to a spokesperson for the Christians, the district administration yesterday forced them to wind up the festival as tension was brewing up in the town. He said that on October 22 an attempt was made to set the venue on fire and electric lights were damaged. But the administration did not take any action against the rioters. He said as the announcement for the cancellation of the festival was made the youngster started a dharna on the Chandigarh Road. The police lathi-charged them and chased them to the CMC Chowk where other Christians had collected in protest against the cancellation of the festival. The spokesman said a deputation of the Christians had also met the Chief Minister, Mr. Parkash Singh Badal, at a village in Muktsar district two days ago and apprised him of the situation. The SSP, Mr. Dinkar Gupta, said as many as 19 policemen were injured in the brickbatting. He said the police force was outnumbered at the CMC Chowk and had resort to a lathi charge and open fire in the air to protect themselves.

[From the Washington Post, Oct. 29, 1997]

## PRIEST BEHEADED IN INDIA FOR WORKS

NEW DELHI, INDIA (AP)—A Catholic priest was found beheaded in a forest in northern India, apparently killed for aiding the region's no-caste untouchables, colleagues said today.

A search party from the Australian-run mission that employed the Rev. A.T. Thomas found his decapitated body Monday near Sirka village, three days after Thomas was abducted from the village's meeting place.

He was the third Catholic clergyman killed in the past two years in Bihar, India's least-developed state, where caste-based gang wars have killed hundred of residents in recent years.

Thomas, an Indian working for Province of the Society of Jesus, had established 15 schools and health projects for Harijans, or untouchables, who occupy the lowest rung in the hierarchy of the Hindu caste system.

"He was working for uplifting the Harijans in remote areas. That may have been a threat to the upper castes," the Rev. George Pereira of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of India said in New Delhi.

Police were looking into Thomas' past mediation in land disputes, police Superintendent Bihuthy Pradhan said in Bihar.

The priest earlier had been involved in a successful court fight by the untouchables to cultivate land claimed by upper caste Hindus.

"It looks like an act of revenge," the Rev. Father Phil Crotty said in Melbourne.

Police were offering a \$28 reward—a month's wages in that area—for the return of the priest's missing head.

## CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM

**HON. RON KIND**

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, October 30, 1997*

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, today hearings began in the Government Reform and Oversight Committee on campaign finance reform. In the Senate an agreement has been worked out to allow a vote on campaign finance reform before March 6 of next year. On the floor of the House 168 Members, Democrats and Republicans, have signed a discharge petition to bring a vote forward. It looks like campaign finance reform is gaining momentum here in Washington.

I for one am not yet satisfied. There are only a few weeks left before the House adjourns for the year. Next year will be an election year. It will be too late to deal with this issue when we come back next year.

The House leadership needs to commit itself to allowing a vote before we leave this year. Those Members who care about this issue should join me and sign the discharge petition. The recent action on campaign reform is not enough. We must be given a chance to vote on this issue on the floor of the House of Representatives and we must do that in the next few weeks. I refuse to take "no" for an answer.

TRIBUTE TO THE BLACK ARCHIVES, HISTORY AND RESEARCH FOUNDATION OF SOUTH FLORIDA, INC. ON ITS 20TH ANNIVERSARY

**HON. CARRIE P. MEEK**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, October 30, 1997*

Mrs. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to the Black Archives, History and Research Foundation of South Florida, which is celebrating its 20th anniversary on Saturday, November 15, 1997.

This is indeed a milestone in the history of this organization, given the countless struggles and challenges that ushered its humble beginnings. And as I join my community in recalling the role of Miami's Black Archives Foundation, I also would like to honor Dr. Dorothy Jenkins Fields who serves as the catalyst behind its emergence as a respected institution. Almost singlehandedly, Dr. Fields helped turn around a neglected part of Miami's cultural heritage into a living, breathing lesson about the black experience in south Florida for students, adults, and researchers alike.

In preparation for the celebration of our Nation's 200th birthday, she conceived and developed the concept that hastened the establishment of this cultural institution. Incorporated in November 17, 1977, as a private nonprofit organization, the Black Archives, History and Research of South Florida, Inc. is presently governed by a board of directors and supported by a board of trustees. Funded solely by its members, donations and grants, the foundation is dependent upon its volunteer help.

This institution serves as a manuscript/photographic repository of south Florida's African-American communities. The materials in this repository are collected for educational purposes for users, which include students, teachers, scholars, researchers, the media, and the public-at-large. The memories of the pioneers, family albums, photographs, documents, souvenir programs from churches and organizations are preserved in its burgeoning files. Additionally, it identifies historic sites for nomination to local, state and national designation. As a result of the collected documentation, the historic Overtown Folklife Village and Dade County's Black Heritage Trail came to fruition.

It also works in conjunction with the Dade County public schools by providing content for the infusion of African-American history into existing curriculum utilizing source materials for schoolchildren of all races throughout the school year. It also initiated the restoration of several historic sites including the Dr. William A. Chapman, Sr., residence. Located on the campus of Booker T. Washington High School, the house was restored for reuse as the Ethnic Heritage Children's Educational Center.

One of the more recent joint ventures it worked out with the Dade County public schools is the creation of a districtwide, multi-cultural and multiethnic research and educational facility for students, teachers, and the community. The objective is to provide opportunities for students at all grade levels to celebrate the rich variety of cultures in Dade County. This program enables students to record the past in relation to the present, as well as ponder the possible events of the coming century.

The documented materials that now form the wealth of the Black Archives Foundation collectively represent a stirring graphic journey into the inner sanctum of some of the most vivid life-experiences of African-Americans in Dade County. The soul-searching representation captivated by its historic documents personify not so much the black destination, as much as the episodic journey of our pioneers to that destination. Together they evoke the truism of a revered African Ashanti proverb that " \* \* \* until the lions get their own historian, the story of the hunt will always glorify the hunter."

Mr. Speaker, I am truly proud of the pioneering efforts and resilient spirit of Dr. Dorothy Fields that nurtured the spirit of the Black Archives Foundation in South Florida. The significance of the role of the foundation is premised on the paradigm in that when you stifle the remembrance of your people's past, you will have silenced the promise of their future. Conversely, however, I am exultant that under the aegis of this revered institution our community has truly become redemptive and knowledgeable of the struggles and sacrifices of our African-American forebears.

As we honor them through the celebration of the 20th anniversary of the Black Archives Foundation, we will have become once again their partners in exploring the journey they have begun. In the convergence of our spirits and memories with theirs, we will be enriched because through our understanding of the many and varied messages they left us through their life journeys, we will be inextricably linked closer to them.

On this occasion I want to congratulate the board of directors and the board of trustees for their steadfast efforts and genuine resili-

ence throughout the Black Archives Foundation's 20-year history. I would like to reiterate our community's utmost gratitude for giving us the privilege of maximizing our knowledge of the vast richness and nobility of our African-American heritage.

## PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. PETER DEUTSCH**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, October 30, 1997*

Mr. DEUTSCH. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably absent from the Chamber today during rollcall Vote Nos. 546 and 547. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye" on each of these votes.

MOTION TO INSTRUCT CONFEREES ON H.R. 2267, DEPARTMENTS OF COMMERCE, JUSTICE, AND STATE, THE JUDICIARY, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1998

SPEECH OF

**HON. JOSÉ E. SERRANO**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, October 29, 1997*

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the motion to instruct conferees and in strong support of immigrants' rights. I believe family reunification should be one of the highest priorities of our immigration policy and that the process of naturalization of legal residents needs to be more efficient. Letting 245(i) sunset would be morally wrong and economically unwise. It would separate thousands of families and disrupt thousands of businesses. Furthermore letting 245(i) sunset is not fiscally sound. The receipts from the penalty fee help pay for important INS activities.

Mr. Speaker, 245(i) is not amnesty. It does not reward those who purposefully broke our laws. Instead, it is for people who are sponsored by close family members or by employers who cannot find eligible U.S. workers, and whose "priority date" is current under existing quotas. It does not change the order in which a person's claim is adjudicated. In short, section 245(i) allows business to keep valued employees and allows families to stay together.

It is just inhumane to force immigrants who have families in this country to leave the U.S. and to apply and wait for their visas in a foreign country. This instills fear and promotes division of immigrant families.

Mr. Speaker, this whole debate is not really about fighting illegal immigration. This is just another attempt by some members on the other side of the aisle to sharply restrict or even eliminate immigration to the United States. Republican members claim they uphold family values. But when it comes to poor families and immigrant families, Republicans have demonstrated time and again that they want to make it more difficult for immigrants who have been living, working, and paying taxes in this country to reunite with their loved ones.

A policy which divides thousands of families of U.S. citizens and legal residents seems preposterous at a time when family unification