

earlier; and researchers should undertake associated inquiries.

3. AUTHORIZING PROJECT LABOR AGREEMENTS FOR GOVERNMENT CONSTRUCTION.

A project labor agreement is a comprehensive collective bargaining agreement negotiated at the outset of a project between the construction owner or manager and the unions representing all the workers who will construct the project. This agreement sets the wages, working conditions, work rules and dispute resolution procedures for the duration of the project. They usually guarantee that projects will be built without strikes, lockouts and similar disruptions. In the private sector, project labor agreements have long proven their worth in the construction of large utility, manufacturing and other complexes.

Over the years of federal government has used project labor agreements on large construction projects, including dams, atomic energy facilities and other defense installations, but it has never had a policy to consider using them or to require its contractors to negotiate them where these agreements may facilitate efficient and timely construction.

Innumerable state and locally funded construction projects such as the mammoth cleanup of Boston Harbor, and bridges, office complexes, highways, and airports have been built under project labor agreements. In the past three years, Republican Governors Whitman of New Jersey and Pataki of New York and Democratic Governor Miller of Nevada have issued executive orders authorizing the use of project labor agreements for state-funded construction when it will promote the efficient, timely and safe construction of a project.

Under this new presidential executive order, when an agency decides that a project labor agreement will benefit a federal construction project, it may either negotiate one directly or require bidders to agree to negotiate one for the project.

This order advances fair and efficient government contracting by making it clear that federal agencies, just like state and municipal governments and private builders, have the option of using project labor agreements as one means of assuring that the project will be performed in a cost-effective, competent and timely manner.

In order to defend this order from anticipated political attack, we need information from Building and Construction Trades Department affiliates about recent or ongoing project labor agreements, whether public or private. Especially useful would be examples of experiences in the three states where executive orders encourage such agreements on public construction projects.

In particular, building trades: Lawyers should provide examples of publicly-funded project labor agreements whose lawfulness has been litigated; lobbyists should report efforts to have states and localities adopt project agreements on particular projects or general executive orders to promote them as a matter of policy; and researchers should compile lists and data regarding the use of project labor agreements.

We appreciate any assistance you can provide to our campaign to support these initiatives and counter the opposition coalescing against them.

HAPPY 298TH BIRTHDAY KHALSA PANTH

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 15, 1997

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to say happy 298th birthday to the Sikh Nation. April 13 is Vaisakhi Day, the anniversary of the founding of the Khalsa Panth. On this auspicious occasion, I would like to salute the Sikh Nation on their dedication to hard work, family, faith, and freedom.

Sikhism is a monotheistic religion which believes in the equality of all people, including gender equality. The Sikhs currently live under a repressive occupation by India. We have discussed some of the details of this tyranny many times. Let me just take this opportunity to express my solidarity with the Sikh Nation in its peaceful struggle to throw off oppression. Like the United States 200 years ago, the Sikh Nation will ultimately triumph because the cause of freedom is always the right cause.

The Council of Khalistan has recently issued a flyer for Vaisakhi Day. It contains more detailed information about the Sikh struggle. I would like to insert it into the RECORD at this time, and I recommend to all my colleagues that they read it.

HAPPY 298TH BIRTHDAY KHALSA PANTH

We are gathered to celebrate the 298th birth anniversary of the Khalsa Panth, or Sikh nation. On this day in 1699, the tenth and last living Guru of the Sikhs, Guru Gobind Singh Ji stood atop a hill in Anandpur Sahib in Khalistan and asked the Sikhs gathered if anyone would be willing to give their life for their Guru. Five times Guru Gobind Singh Ji asked and five times a different volunteer would offer their head. Guru Ji would escort the volunteer to his tent and re-emerge with bloody sword in hand.

After Guru Gobind Singh Ji asked for the fifth volunteer and escorted him into the tent, Guru Ji came back out of the tent along with all five volunteers who were clad in resplendent robes, perfectly healthy and unscathed. Guru Ji told the congregation that these five Sikhs selflessly offered their lives for their faith, and in so doing, they are to be called the Panj Piaras—the five beloved ones.

Afterwards, Guru Gobind Singh Ji prepared Amrit by placing sugar in a steel bowl stirred with a double edged sword and reciting prayers from Sikh scripture. Guru Ji then administered the Amrit to the Panj Piaras. Afterwards, Guru Ji asked the Panj Piaras to baptize him. Following Guru Ji's baptism, tens of thousands of Sikhs who were gathered at Anandpur Sahib, also became baptized.

Through this act of baptism, Guru Gobind Singh Ji created the modern Sikh nation—the Khalsa Panth. By baptizing himself, Guru Ji had taken the first step of transferring the Guruship to the Khalsa Panth. Nine years later, in 1708, Guru Gobind Singh Ji would proclaim an end to the era of living, human Gurus. He declared that the Sikh holy book, the Adi Granth—containing the writings, hymns and poetry of the previous nine Gurus—would permanently receive the Guruship.

On this day, we celebrate the fact that Guru Gobind Singh Ji vested the Khalsa Panth with our modern identity which has imbued us with a strong ethical and martial tradition and ensured our survival and the

integrity of our homeland for almost 3 centuries. This identity includes unshorn hair; the turban to keep the head covered as a sign of respect to God, and, the carrying of a kirpan—a weapon representing personal defense and readiness to protect the defenseless from injustice, exploitation and cruelty.

Sikhism is a religion anchored in service to God through service to humanity. We end our daily prayer with the words "Sarbat Da Bhalla", a prayer for the well being of all humanity. Sikhs reject idol worship, Sikhs reject all forms of caste and social hierarchy, and Sikhs believe in full gender equality and reject religious priesthood or any other intermediaries between God and humanity.

CELEBRATING SURVIVAL IN THE FACE OF GENOCIDE, FREEDOM IN THE FACE OF IMPERIALISM

Due in part to romanticized visions of India, fostered by movies like "Gandhi" (almost 40 percent of the film's budget came from the Indian Government and they retained editorial control), India continues to enjoy an international reputation as the "world's largest democracy." However, for outcaste Hindus and non-Hindu peoples and nations, India is not a democracy, but a totalitarian state far more ruthless than its British predecessors. Since 1988, Indian police and security forces have killed 43,000 Kashmiris. Indian government forces have murdered over 200,000 Christians since 1947. Tens of thousands of Assamese and tribal peoples have also been murdered by the Indian State.

In addition, the aboriginal people of South Asia, the Dalits, whose indigenous roots and black skin color has relegated them to the status of outcaste untouchables in Indian society, are subjected daily to subhuman treatment which has not changed for millennia. Unlike "Gandhi" the movie, Mohandas Gandhi did not represent India's untouchables but instead represented the Oxford-educated Brahmins of the Indian National Congress. Gandhi, who fervently believed in the Hindu caste system, went on a hunger strike when Daht untouchable leader Dr. Ambedkar demanded full and equal civil and political rights for Dalits. When Congress Party members threatened Dr. Ambedkar that they would start mob riots that would target Dalit communities throughout South Asia, he relented in his demands.

The Sikh homeland Punjab, Khalistan (from the Arabic root "sovereign country of the Sikhs") face similar threats in India. The attack on the Sikh's holiest shrine the Golden Temple, on June 4, 1984, was the beginning of a bloody and calculated attack to destroy the Sikhs politically, culturally and morally. Baptized Sikhs, Amritdhari Sikhs, were reclassified as terrorists as revealed in an excerpt of 'Batchit' [Military Order] Circular No. 153, which contain the official Indian military orders issued for July of 1984.

"Any knowledge of the Amritdharis [baptized Sikhs] who are dangerous people and pledge to commit murders, arson and acts of terrorism should immediately be brought to the notice of the authorities. These people may appear harmless from the outside but they are basically committed to terrorism. In the interest of all of us, their identity and whereabouts must always be disclosed."

With this military order, and the Draconian laws that followed, the Sikhs have faced its darkest period in 300 years. According to the Punjab State Magistracy, the group representing all of the local court judges in the Punjab. Indian police murdered over 200,000 Sikhs from 1984 to 1992. According to Punjab/Haryana High Court Justice Ajit Singh Bains of the Punjab Human Rights Organization (PHRO), over 50,000 Sikhs have been killed since then.

It is not surprising, therefore, that international human rights groups like Amnesty

International have not been allowed in Khalistan for almost 20 years.

EVEN AS THE SIKH GENOCIDE CONTINUES, SO DOES THE FREEDOM STRUGGLE

A quarter million Sikhs murdered since 1984 has not deterred the Sikh nation from our commitment to establish an independent and democratic Khalistan. Unlike what is reported by the Indian government and its media outlets, the Sikh struggle to re-establish our homeland as an independent state is not a violent one. We are committed to the Sikh tradition of peaceful, nonviolent civil and political disobedience called *Shantmai Morcha*, or peaceful agitation.

The Sikh Nation of Punjab was the last South Asian country to fall to British imperialism in 1849. The Sikhs ruled Punjab for almost a century before the British conquest. A century later, Sikh national sovereignty was expressly recognized by both the British and Indian leaders. Nehru assured the Sikhs that they would enjoy the "glow of freedom" in the Sikh homeland. Mohandas Gandhi told the Sikhs that if the Congress should ever betray them ". . . the Congress would not only thereby seal its own doom, but that of the country too. Moreover, the Sikhs are a brave people. They know how to safeguard their rights by the exercise of arms, if it ever comes to that."

In the intervening 50 years of Indian government rule, Sikhs have faced its darkest period in history. Even toddlers who have been baptized into Sikhism are not spared. Last December the Chandigarh court found that the police had murdered 3 year old Arvinder Singh, along with his father and his uncle, and labeled them as terrorists. Under Indian law, police can kill Sikhs, identify them as terrorists and receive cash rewards for the killing. In 1994, the U.S. State Department estimated that 41,000 cash bounties were issued between 1991 and 1993.

Throughout this horrible period, we Sikhs have never surrendered our right to national sovereignty, and we have never surrendered our rightful claim to a pluralistic democracy in an independent Khalistan. The Indian government genocide campaign, a campaign in which all baptized Sikhs are considered terrorists, is just the latest form of oppression set upon the Sikh nation; and is part of a larger pattern of Indian government imperialism over numerous nations and peoples in South Asia.

U.S. RESPONDS TO INDIAN OPPRESSION OF THE SIKHS

In response to the continued subjugation of the Sikhs in Khalistan, Congress has just introduced legislation, House Concurrent Resolution 37 (H. Con. Res. 37), which recognizes and supports the Sikh nation's right to national self-determination. The bipartisan resolution, co-sponsored by Gary Condit (D-CA) and Dana Rohrabacher (R-CA), urges the implementation of an internationally sponsored plebiscite so that Sikhs themselves could decide, by free and fair vote, whether or not they want to remain with India.

If India is the democracy that it claims, then it should allow the people of Khalistan to decide for themselves whether or not they want to be a part of India, just as the U.S. has done with respect to Puerto Rico and Canada has done with respect to Quebec.

Please join us in celebrating this auspicious holiday of the Sikh Nation, it is a time of feasting and festivity. But please also remember that there are millions of Sikhs in our homeland Khalistan who do not have much to celebrate. And think about them the next time you read something about the "world's largest democracy" and call your Member of Congress and ask them to co-sponsor H. Con. Res. 37—because everyone deserves the kind of freedom that we enjoy in the U.S.

Happy 298th Birthday Sikh Nation.

HONORING MARJORIE DAVIS FOR OUTSTANDING AND CONTINUED COMMUNITY SERVICE

HON. CARRIE P. MEEK

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 15, 1997

Mrs. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to recognize Marjorie Davis who has contributed greatly to making our community safer and a better place to live. Ms. Davis, originally from Overtown but now a resident of Northwest Fort Lauderdale, has volunteered her time, effort, and hard work to eliminate drug dealers from the community, and has created programs that have helped unite the communities with one another. She is an outstanding individual who has helped shape community pride, generated respect, and manifested hope that was once lost.

The Miami Herald recognized Marjorie Davis in a January 20, 1997, article entitled "Building Bridges Between Communities" which commemorated her honorable civic service. I would like to submit this inspiring article for the RECORD.

MARJORIE DAVIS

The whistler has left the corner of Fifth Street and 18th Avenue in Northwest Fort Lauderdale.

A defiant intruder in a modest community of neighbors who know each other by name, he would stand with his hat cocked to the side, pucker his lips, and blow to signal his customers.

Mothers, fathers, and teenagers with an appetite for crack cocaine who heard the shrill would file to the corner like children chasing the song of an ice cream truck.

For a while, whistler thought the corner was his. That is, until he met Marjorie Davis, president of Dorsey-Riverbend Homeowners Association.

The corner is hers. Has been for 40 years. She owns a three-bedroom home with a gazebo at 1713 NW Fifth St., and was not afraid to let the whistler know it.

"I'm paying property tax for all this corner right here," she told whistler one day, looking him square in the eyes.

"Old lady, get back in the house," he said smugly.

In the '80s, whistler and his friends stood on corners throughout Davis' neighborhood in the heart of Fort Lauderdale's historic black community. Pimps with flashy cars and prostitutes in skimpy dresses strutted down the community's Main Street.

Their days were numbered.

Davis, then an elementary school teacher in her 50s, rallied the troops, a battalion of proud neighbors who weren't going to let their community be overrun by hoodlums. The association—organized in the '70s over lively conversation and plates of barbecue chicken and potato salad at a neighborhood cookout—haunted city commission meetings until they got police to beef up patrols.

Soon after, the whistler was arrested.

"I guess he thought I was just going to run in the house and be afraid," says Davis, a widow who turns 70 next month. "God doesn't like ugly."

A child of Bahamian immigrants, Davis was taught to stand up for what she believes in. She and her two siblings grew up in Overtown under the watchful eye of every adult on her tidy block until the highway divided her community.

Davis is spending her retirement making her neighborhood the kind of close knit community she knew as a child.

"You really need somebody to get the people together" says Lula Gardner, a retired domestic, standing in the doorway of a home she rebuilt and decorated with a garden of Impatiens and Chrysanthemums. "She keeps around here nice."

Davis has worked with the city to make it that way, adding shade trees, sidewalks, and a citizen patrol. Along the way, she's battled slumlords, billboards, and politicians looking to build a homeless shelter.

The fight keeps her young.

"My husband used to say, 'You put this community before anyone else,'" Davis says. "I think they appreciate it."

Marjorie Davis has demonstrated her commitment to strengthening and linking communities together. Her enthusiasm and service are special qualities that make her a remarkable individual who is greatly appreciated by many. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of my entire community, I commend Marjorie Davis for her outstanding service to our community and extend our best wishes for continued success.

IN HONOR OF MR. BENJAMIN EISENSTADT, FOUNDER OF CUMBERLAND PACKING CORP.

HON. CHARLES E. SCHUMER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 15, 1997

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise in honor of a great man, Mr. Benjamin Eisenstadt, founder of the Cumberland Packing Corp.

I wish to honor him today not because he began what is now a successful company, but instead because he was, and remains, the example of a model employer who earned the admiration, respect, and loyalty of his employees. His legacy remains in these times when corporate downsizing has become the norm, and hardworking, loyal employees have become disposable commodities. The company he started is now described as a "family business that tries to treat its workers like family" by the New York Times. Mr. Eisenstadt's belief was that the workers do matter and business decisions should take them, and their families, into account.

It is often said that these qualities have long been lacking in corporate America. I submit to you that they are not, but only that we have overlooked them by focusing on wealth over character. Mr. Eisenstadt showed us all that it was, and still is, possible to build a successful business without sacrificing your employees. His company still provides good jobs with livable wages to its workers. In exchange Cumberland has their support and undying loyalty. His method was simple, people are your first and most important resource: Treat them well. I am certain that Marvin, his son, will continue this honorable legacy.

I wish for my colleagues to join me today in saluting this fine and good man, Mr. Benjamin Eisenstadt. Thank you, Mr. Eisenstadt, for showing us that the way of the future is not less, but more. More compassion, more opportunity, and more respect for working men and women.