

schools and prayer halls. Graham Staines and his two little boys were burned to death in their jeep while they slept. Earlier, in 1997, police broke up a Christian religious festival with gunfire. No one has ever been punished for these activities. Instead, there have been Indian officials who have been quoted as saying that everyone who lives in India must either be a Hindu or be subservient to Hinduism. Last year RSS leader Kuppa Halli Sitharamaiya called for a ban on foreign churches.

Interestingly, the article mentions Dr. Gurmit Singh Aulakh, the President of the Council of Khalistan, for his lobbying efforts here on Capitol Hill. The Sikhs and Christians are suffering from the same kind of terror. More than 250,000 Sikhs have been murdered by the Indian government since 1984, according to Inderjit Singh Jaijee's "The Politics of Genocide". The Indian government has also killed more than 200,000 Christians in Nagaland. According to Amnesty International, there are about 50,000 Sikhs held in Indian jails as political prisoners without charge or trial. In November, Indian police with heavy sticks called lathis attacked 3,200 Sikh religious pilgrims at a railroad station on the Indian-Pakistani border. These pilgrims were attempting to get to Nankana Sahib in Pakistan to celebrate the birthday of the first Sikh guru, Guru Nanak. Only 800 managed to get to the celebration. In July, police arrested Rajiv Singh Randhawa, the only witness to the September 1995 kidnapping of human-rights activist Jaswant Singh Khaira, while he was trying to give a petition to the British Home Minister in front of the Golden Temple, the holiest Sikh shrine that the Indian government brutally attacked in June 1984. Mr. Khaira was killed in police custody about six weeks after he was kidnapped. More than five years later, no one has been punished. Now the Indian police are harassing the only witness. In March, according to the findings of two independent investigations, the Indian government murdered 35 Sikhs in the village of Chithi Singhpora.

In addition to its persecution of Christians, Sikhs, and other minorities, India has worked aggressively to thwart several U.S. foreign policy goals around the world. Not only does it vote against the United States at the United Nations more often than any country except Cuba, but in 1999 the Indian Defense Minister led a meeting with the Ambassadors from Iraq, Cuba, Libya, Russia, Serbia, and China in which the parties discussed setting up a security alliance "to stop the U.S."

We should stop U.S. aid to India until the oppression of Christians, Sikhs, Muslims, and other minorities ends and human rights are observed. We must also put the United States on record in support for the freedom movements in Khalistan, Nagalim, Kashmir, and the other nations seeking their freedom from India, through a free and fair plebiscite. That is the democratic way and the way that world powers do things. These measures will help bring peace, freedom, stability, prosperity and dignity to all the people of the subcontinent.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to submit a statement issued by the Persecuted Church of India that discusses the efforts that Sikhs have made on behalf of India's Christian community. I commend this statement to anyone who would like to better understand the plight of minorities in India.

PERSECUTED CHURCH OF INDIA—JANUARY 17, 2001—THE SIKHS RUSH TO PROTECT THE CHRISTIANS

A few days ago when the attacks against the Christian missionaries in Rajasthan took place, Fr Dominic Immanuel went on record on Star News to acknowledge the protection that the Sikh community was providing to the persecuted Christians of Haryana and elsewhere. That was a belated recognition to the much maligned Sikh minorities. We had earlier reported the incidents wherein the nuns were protected by the Sikhs at the time of attacks. However almost all the cases have gone unreported. Fr Dominic did great justice to the Sikhs when he underlined incidents in rural Haryana where the helpless Christians had none to help but the Sikhs during the attacks by the Hindu fascists. He quoted the incidents in Panipat, Sonapat and Gannore where the Christians have been saved by the Sikhs, many a time risking their own lives as the Hindu terrorists struck. The recognition is too little for the community whose plight was ignored by the Christians as they too had been under the influence of the Hindu nationalist lies against the Sikhs.

THE LEGACY OF SADHOO SUNDER SINGH

Sadhu Sunder Singh was one of the greatest Christian missionaries India has known. Punjab, more particularly the districts like Ludhiana has a considerable concentration of Christians. The Sikhs themselves have been victims of Hindu majoritarianism and ethnic cleansing. A vast number of their youth had been annihilated in the anti-Sikh riots and fake encounters. Thousands of innocent Sikh youth are persecuted in jails as undertrials. The anti-Sikh crackdown saw the flight of thousands of Sikhs abroad. When the recent wave of anti-Christian persecution started, at least one Christian bishop recognized the injustice done to the Sikh minority by the Christians. Bishop Philipose Mar Chysostem, the Mar Thoma Metropolitan, wrote that it was due to our apathy during the earliest atrocities against other (minorities) that this danger has befallen us. The community which we did injustice to has now become our saviors. In fact Gurmeet Singh Aulakh, the Sikh leader in the U.S. was one of the first persons to lobby against the Christian persecution in the U.S. Congress by the Hindu fundamentalists.

THE ANTI-SIKH MOVEMENT

One of the reasons for the insurrection in Punjab was the attempt by the Hinduists to brand Sikhism as a part (or panth) of Hinduism. The RSS went on to call the Sikhs "Keshadhari Hindus". History says that the no Sikh participated in the drafting of the Constitution, and as they were away, the Hindu nationalists branded them as "Hindus". The governments finally accepted the independent identity of the Sikhs apart from the Hindus. Recently the Hindu majoritarians revived the old tension by once again branding the Sikhs as part of Hinduism. The Sikhs are idol-haters and do not like to be linked to it's worship forms. The Sikh community warned with one voice that any attempt by the Hinduists to carry the Guru Granth Sahib to the temples will be met with stiff resistance. The tension in Punjab has increased manifold due to the upsurge in the activities of RSS, VHP and the Bajrang Dal. There are reports of the raising of a Bajrang Dal army of 30,000 cadres from Punjab. As per an article that appeared in the Hindu, the Bajrang Dal is giving fierce arms training to their cadre. They have the blessings of the rulers of Delhi. The formation of the new organization Rashtriya Sikh Sangatana (RSS) by the Rashtriya

Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) have angered the Sikhs and this has once again brought most Sikhs to a single platform. The majoritarian ambitions of the Hindutva forces in Punjab are sure to lead to doom.

CONCLUSION

At this instance we can only pray for peace in Punjab. We pray that good sense prevails with the majoritarians and they do not do anything harmful to the interests of the nation. We also thank the valiant but unsung Sikh heroes and heroines who have and are risking their own lives to save the defenseless Christians in Haryana, Punjab and elsewhere from the atrocities of the Hindu organizations.

TRIBUTE IN HONOR OF TEXAS COMMUNITY LEADER SAM FLORES UPON HIS RETIREMENT

HON. CIRO D. RODRIGUEZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 30, 2001

Mr. RODRIGUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a true public servant and long-time colleague, Mr. Sam Flores of Seguin, TX. After 36 years of working for the Seguin City Council, Mr. Flores retired the beginning of this year after devoting half of his life to the council and most of his life in the service of others. He is an inspiration for us all.

Mr. Flores was born in San Marcos, TX, during the Roaring Twenties, but grew up during the difficult years of the Great Depression. A young Flores soon learned the value of hard work as the middle child of seven raised during this trying time. As soon as he was physically capable of manual labor, Flores was thrust into the life of an adult migrant worker, traveling from California to Minnesota as the seasons changed. When only 17, he dropped out of school to join the Marines. His six-year career was distinguished, and included serving as a Platoon Sergeant in the Korean War and aiding in the evacuation of Shanghai by Americans during the communist revolution in China.

After finishing his time with the Marines, Flores continued his formal education and earned a degree in education from Southwest Texas State University in 1955. Four years later Sam Flores had earned his Master's degree in school administration, was married to Velia Flores, and moved to her hometown of Seguin, TX. For the next 35 years Flores would serve the Harlandale ISD. He taught regular and special education classes to elementary and secondary school students. He distinguished himself as the first Hispanic Principal for the Harlandale ISD. He then became the Director for Special Education for six school districts. Even after this extensive career, Mr. Flores, knowing the value of education, works for the Seguin school district as the Attendance Officer.

Flores did not limit himself to his teaching vocation, but also took an active interest in other aspects of the community. Flores helped others. And it was both the small and large things that made an impact, everything from helping a single mother fill out a college application to working for the establishment of the Seguin Housing Authority, from assisting an elderly widow with her Social Security to helping establish the Seguin Boys Club. We owe

Sam Flores a great deal of gratitude for his work to build a new Seguin Post Office, establish the Health Unit Project, and provide the leadership needed to complete the Walnut Creek Flood project.

Sam Flores led the fight against discrimination. In the Sixties he helped form the Seguin Biracial Committee, which successfully worked to end discrimination in public places. He also helped to end segregation in the Seguin Independent School District. Beyond merely ending discrimination, Flores worked to expand cultural understanding. Today, for example, because of his dedication, Texas Lutheran University now has Mexican American Studies program for the benefit of our students.

The contributions made by Sam Flores to the City of Seguin are felt not only by those in direct contact with him, but by all the contributions made by the people he touched. His tremendous work and accomplishments is inspiring. His example of sincere dedication to others is a blueprint for all of us to follow.

THE LATE CONGRESSMAN
WILLIAM H. AYRES

HON. TOM SAWYER

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 30, 2001

Mr. SAWYER. Mr. Speaker, William H. Ayres represented the 14th Congressional District of Ohio in the U.S. House of Representatives for 20 years. Congressman Ayres, who died on December 27, defined his political philosophy with typical succinctness. He said, "Most of the fellows today are issue-oriented. They're trying to save the world, while I was trying to save a paycheck."

A direct statement—modest, self-effacing, and misleading. Bill Ayres did much more than "save paychecks."

Congressman Ayres was the son of a Methodist minister and a missionary nurse. Before serving in the Army, he worked as a salesman for a heating equipment company. After the Second World War, he started his own company selling gas furnaces. His priorities were made evident when he hired 15 men—all World War II veterans—to work for him.

Bill Ayres also showed his independent streak by challenging restrictions on heating contractors. That crusade ended in victory in the Ohio Supreme Court.

Those two characteristics—fierce independence and loyalty to veterans—marked his public service, especially in the House of Representatives. Committed to constituent service, Bill Ayres was an energetic and innovative campaigner, who was re-elected nine times, including the 1964 landslide for Lyndon Johnson.

His daughter, Virginia, touched on those tireless efforts as she recalled, "Every weekend, he was at the Polish picnic and the Hungarian picnic and the Kiwanis. Those are my memories of childhood."

After leaving the House, Bill Ayres continued his dedicated work for veterans, running the Jobs for Veterans program in the Department of Labor under President Nixon.

Bill Ayres had as a campaign slogan, "Ayres Cares." His approach to work, to people, and to life, proved clearly that it was no empty slogan, but an apt description of the man, and his model for public service.

Congressman Ayres now rests in Arlington National Cemetery, among the men and women he supported and served. It is a fitting resting place for a tireless fighter for his fellow veterans, for a true public servant.

HONORING THE KOSCIUSZKO
HOUSE IN HISTORIC PHILADELPHIA

HON. ROBERT A. BORSKI

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 30, 2001

Mr. BORSKI. Mr. Speaker, today I recognize an important milestone in Polish-American history, the 25th anniversary of the opening of the Kosciuszko House in historic Philadelphia. The house, at 3rd and Pine Streets, serves as a National Historic Site and a National Memorial to American Revolutionary War hero and Polish freedom fighter, General Thaddeus Kosciuszko.

In the mid-1960s, Edward Pinkowski, a Philadelphia historian, after hours of research, discovered that the house was Kosciuszko's home during the Revolutionary War. In October 1967, the Pennsylvania Historical Commission officially recognized the residence of Kosciuszko by placing a marker on the building and designating it as a historic site. Between 1967 and 1970, Polish American Congress Eastern Pennsylvania District President Henry Wyszynski, coordinated a national campaign among Polish American Congress state divisions to designate the Kosciuszko House as a National Memorial. In 1970, philanthropist Edward Piszek joined the effort by purchasing the building and successfully helping to persuade the 91st Congress to introduce legislation establishing the Thaddeus Kosciuszko Home as a National Historic Site.

In October 1972, after a long, well-organized national campaign, a federal law was passed for the nation to accept the house from Mr. Piszek as a gift. At that time, the government appropriated \$592,000 to develop the site as a National Memorial Site to be administered by the National Park Service of the U.S. Department of the Interior.

After three years of historical restoration work was completed, the adjoining house was purchased by Mr. Piszek and donated to the U.S. Government to provide space to accommodate tourist.

On February 4, 1976—the 230th anniversary of Thaddeus Kosciuszko's birth—the Kosciuszko House was open to the public and became an official site of the United States National Park Service.

Mr. Speaker, since its opening 25 years ago, the Kosciuszko House has been open to thousands of people who have gained a valuable insight into the role this Polish freedom fighter played in America's fight for freedom. It stands along with Independence Hall and the Liberty Bell as a stirring symbol of Philadelphia's honored role as the birthplace of America.

Since 1967, the Polish American Congress has sponsored a tribute ceremony to honor Kosciuszko on the first Saturday of February so all people can pay tribute to this Revolutionary War hero.

This year, on the 25th anniversary of the Kosciuszko House and the 255th anniversary

of Kosciuszko's birth, I am proud to recognize the dedication of proud Polish Americans whose efforts led to the preservation of this important historic treasure as a National Historic Site.

INTRODUCTION OF THE ABANDONED MINE LANDS RECLAMATION REFORM ACT OF 2001

HON. NICK J. RAHALL II

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 30, 2001

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing the "Abandoned Mine Lands Reclamation Reform Act of 2001" in recognition of the pressing need to make continued progress in restoring the environment in coalfield communities throughout the Nation.

Originally authorized as part of the landmark Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977, to date over \$1.7 billion has been appropriated under the Abandoned Mine Reclamation Program to restore lands and waters adversely affected by past coal mining practices. These restoration projects normally involve threats to the public health and safety from dangerous highwalls, subsidence, refuse piles and open mine portals. They also include the construction of new water supply systems to coalfield communities where water supplies have been contaminated by past coal mining practices. Over the years, other amounts have been appropriated under the program for emergency coal reclamation projects, the Rural Abandoned Mine Program, the Small Operators Assistance Program, certain non-coal mining reclamation projects and the administration of the program for a total \$4 billion in appropriations.

The primary delivery mechanism for these funds is through annual grants made through the annual appropriations process to 26 eligible States and Indian tribes. This effort is augmented by funds expended by the Interior Department's Office of Surface Mining (OSM) in States and tribes without approved reclamation programs. By most accounts, this effort has been a success achieving far more in real on-the-ground environmental restoration than programs such as the Superfund.

Yet, the mission of this program has not yet fully been accomplished which is the reason for the legislation I am introducing today. As it stands, there currently exists about \$2.5 billion worth of high priority human health and safety threatening abandoned coal mine reclamation costs in this country. There are other costs as well, associated with lower priority abandoned coal mine sites. The fundamental purpose of the "Abandoned Mine Lands Reclamation Reform Act of 2001" is to raise sufficient revenues which, when coupled with the unappropriated balance in the Abandoned Mine Reclamation Fund and the reforms proposed by the legislation, to finance the reclamation of the remaining \$2.5 billion inventory of high priority coal reclamation sites and draw this effort to a successful conclusion.

In this regard, it is essential to note that this program is not financed by the general taxpayer but rather through a fee assessed on every ton of coal mined. The unreclaimed coal sites eligible for expenditures under the program were primarily abandoned prior to the