

E. Scott. The people of my District are better off today because of his commitment to health care and community service.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO: LATINO
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 12, 2002

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a moment to pay tribute to an outstanding Colorado organization. The Latino Chamber of Commerce, based in Pueblo, Colorado, is an example of the leadership and entrepreneurial spirit that are vital to our country. As the chamber celebrates its 23rd anniversary, it is my honor to pay tribute to this organization of community leaders before this body of Congress and this nation.

The Latino Chamber of Commerce was established in Pueblo in 1979 to organize the Hispanic professional community and give it a clear, unified voice. Many prominent Latino leaders supported the chamber as it grew, doing all they could to promote the organization and its goals. As the chamber steadily grew in size and reputation, it began to function on its own. By the early 1990's, it hired assistants to help manage the increasing administrative load, and soon added a director and support staff. Then, in 1995, the chamber moved into its own building at 215 South Victorian Street, rightfully taking a place in the Historic Union District of Pueblo.

The Latino Chamber can point to many accomplishments in its 23 years. Over 800 individuals, businesses, and corporations are presently members of the Latino Chamber. At the recent United States Hispanic Chamber of Commerce's conference, Pueblo's Latino Chamber was acknowledged with the Hispanic Chamber of the Year Award for being the best in the region. The award recognized the many contributions the chamber has made to the community, as well as the challenges it has overcome. With such an outstanding organization, it is no wonder several of its members walked away from the conference with individual regional awards and are now under consideration for national recognition. The owner of Cortez Construction, Carla Barela, earned the Hispanic Businesswoman of the Year Award; Patrick Avalos received the Government Hispanic Business Advocate of the Year Award for his work on the Pueblo City Council; and Priscilla Lucero took home the Corporate Hispanic Business Advocate of the Year Award for her leadership at Wells Fargo. Leaders like these make the Latino Chamber stand out in the Pueblo community.

Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to rise today to honor the Latino Chamber of Commerce of Pueblo before this body of Congress and this nation. The chamber has shown great dedication to the community it serves. I am honored to extend my sincere gratitude to the chamber and its members for all they have accomplished, and I wish them all the best.

TRIBUTE TO J.D. BRAY

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 12, 2002

Mr. JEFF MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize J.D. Bray of Santa Rosa County. Mayor Bray served the town of Jay for forty-four years as Mayor holding the second longest reign in the state of Florida.

Mayor Bray was born Christmas day in 1919 and has been a lifelong resident of Jay. Mayor Bray volunteered for the U.S. Army in 1939 and served 18 months in Europe. He risked his life for our country when he crossed the half intact Remigan Bridge, while being shelled, in the "Battle of the Bulge".

After being discharged from the service in 1946, Mayor Bray worked for Escambia River Electric Cooperative until going into business for himself in 1954. He owned and operated the Bray Service Station until he sold the business in 1962.

He then worked for the Jay Natural Gas System during construction of the system and the conversion of consumer's appliances. Mayor Bray managed the parts department of Burns Tractor Company in 1963 and worked there until he accepted a job with the Santa Rosa County Board of Commissioners in 1968. Mayor Bray was elected to the Town Council of the town of Jay in 1954 and was elected its mayor in 1956.

As mayor, Bray was instrumental in getting natural gas for the town, a sewer system, a second water well, a well-equipped voluntary fire department, Bray-Hendricks Park (named in his honor), which provides recreational facilities for all ages, and a new town hall. He worked to obtain facilities and transportation for over sixty years.

I would also like to recognize Mayor Bray's family, who has had a helping hand in his success. Mayor Bray is married to the former Theda Rae Warrick and they have three children: Debbie Weil, Cheryl Bray, and Stewart Bray.

Mr. Bray has been a part and is currently active in many organizations: Jay Volunteer Fire Department, Quarterback Club, Redrock Lodge number 96, Scottish Rite, Hadji Shrine Temple and Mustang Unit, Veterans of Foreign Wars and member and past commander of American Legion Post number 121.

On behalf of the United States Congress, I would like to recognize this special person for the example he has set in his community. I offer my sincere thanks for all that he has done for Northwest Florida.

MURDER OF 5 DALITS SHOWS
THERE IS NO FREEDOM IN INDIA

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 12, 2002

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, much has happened while we were in recess. In Dulena, India, five Dalits, the dark-skinned "Untouchables," the lowest caste in India's repressive caste system, were murdered because of a rumor that they had killed a cow. Cows are revered in Hinduism.

According to the Washington Post, family members stated that at least one of the Dalits was murdered by the police because the Dalits refused to pay them a bribe. The remainder were killed by upper-caste Hindus after the police planted a rumor that the Dalits had killed a cow.

To make this case even more offensive, charges have been filed against the five Dalit victims, but no charges have been filed against the police who were involved in these murders. In Hindu-dominated India, apparently the life of a cow is worth more than those of five humans. What kind of country protects cows but engages in the massive killing of minorities?

Dalits are converting in large numbers in order to escape from this oppression, prompting the BJP to pass laws in the states it controls banning anyone from converting to any religion other than Hindu.

Unfortunately, this is part of a long pattern of Indian tyranny against the Dalits. Tens of thousands of Dalits have been killed by the Indian government. In an incident several years ago, a Dalit constable went into a Hindu temple on a rainy day and he was stoned to death. A little Dalit girl was blinded by her teacher when she drank water from the community pitcher. And Sikhs, Christians, Muslims, and other minorities have suffered from similar persecution. As you know, over 250,000 Sikhs have been murdered since 1984, over 80,000 Kashmiri Muslims have been killed since 1988, and over 200,000 Christians have been killed in Nagaland, in addition to tens of thousands of Assamese, Bodos, Manipuris, Tamils, and others.

Mr. Speaker, this is not the conduct of a democratic state. If America wants to live by its principles and help spread democracy, it must take action against this kind of repression. India has already been declared a country that violates religious freedom, which seems to be confirmed by these latest incidents. It is time to impose the sanctions that this status brings. We should also cut off our aid and trade with India until human rights are respected and declare our support for self-determination for all the peoples of South, because self-determination is the very essence of democracy. These measures will help bring real freedom, peace, prosperity, and stability to all the peoples and nations of the subcontinent.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to place the Council of Khalista's press release on the killing of these five Dalits into the RECORD at this time.

[Council of Khalistan, Press Release, Oct. 29, 2002]

5 DALITS MURDERED ON RUMOR OF COW
KILLING

FUNDAMENTALIST HINDU FASCIST POLICE KILL ONE BECAUSE THEY DID NOT GET A BRIBE, THEN INCITE VILLAGERS TO MURDER OTHER FOUR—LIFE OF A COW WORTH MORE THAN 5 HUMAN LIVES IN HINDU THEOCRACY

WASHINGTON, D.C., Oct. 29, 2002—Five Dalits, the dark-skinned "Untouchables," were murdered in Dulena, India, about an hour outside Delhi, on a rumor that they had killed a cow. According to a report in the Washington Post, family members stated that one of the Dalits was murdered by the police because the group refused to pay a bribe, then the upper-caste police planted the rumor that the Dalits had killed a cow to get the upper-caste village residents to kill the other four. Cows are revered in Hinduism. No charges have been filed against

the killers, but charges have been filed against the five Dalits.

Dalits, also called "Untouchables," are the lowest casts in the Hindu social structure. Tens of thousands of Dalits have been murdered by the Indian government. Several years ago, a Dalit constable entered a Hindu temple on a rainy day and was stoned to death by upper-casts Brahmins. A few years ago, a five-year-old Dalit girl was hit by her teacher and blinded for drinking water from the community water pitcher.

"This act of Indian tyranny shows that in India, the life a cow is worth more than the lives of five humans," said Dr. Gurmit Singh Aulakh, President of the Council of Khalistan. The Council of Khalistan, the government pro tempore of Khalistan, leads the peaceful, democratic, nonviolent movement to liberate Khalistan from Indian occupation and tyranny. "This shows that India is not a democracy but a Hindu theocracy in which the lives of lower castes are worthless," he said. "Are these the acts of a democratic country or a fundamentalist Hindu police state?" he asked. "The Sikh Nation sympathizes with the Dalits," he said. "Dalits and other minorities must resist India's racist tyranny."

Dalits have not been the only ones oppressed. All minorities have suffered under the boot of Indian repression. The Indian government has murdered over 250,000 Sikhs since 1984. Over 80,000 Kashmiri Muslims have been killed since 1988. More than 200,000 Christians have been killed since 1947, along with tens of thousands of Dalits, Tamils, Assamese, Bodos, Manipuris, and other minorities. In February 42 Members of Congress wrote to President Bush to get 52,268 Sikh political prisoners released from Indian prisons. Since Christmas 1998, Christians have felt the brunt of the attacks. Priests have been murdered, nuns have been raped, churches have been burned, Christian schools and prayer halls have been destroyed, and no one has been punished for these acts. Militant Hindu fundamentalists allied with the RSS, the pro-Fascist parent organization of the ruling BJP, burned missionary Graham Staines and his two young sons to death. Recently, fundamentalist Hindu fascists murdered about 5,000 Muslims in Gujarat with the connivance of the police.

"This pattern of oppression and tyranny helps to explain the existence of 17 freedom movements within India's artificial borders," Dr. Aulakh said. "We support the aspi-

rations of the Dalits and all the minorities of South Asia. We must end India's tyranny and brutal violations of Sikh human rights and those of other minorities," he said. "The time has come to launch a Shantmai Morcha to liberate Khalistan from Indian occupation," said Dr. Aulakh.

"Sikhs are a separate nation and ruled Punjab until 1849. No Sikh representative has signed the Indian constitution," Dr. Aulakh said. Sikhism is a sovereign, independent, monotheistic, divinely revealed religion that believes in the equality of the whole human race, including gender equality. Sikhs pray every day for the well being of the whole world. "The people of South Asia must have self-determination now," Dr. Aulakh said. "India is on the verge of disintegration," he said. "The Kashmir issue has been internationalized. America is now involved in South Asia. Self-determination in Kashmir is the only solution," he said. "In a democracy you cannot rule the people against their wishes. Khalistan will be free by 2008."