

"an assault as much on civil rights as on human dignity."

John Daya, secretary-general of the Christian Council in New Delhi, said: "In fact, the only inducements by fraud and fear are those being carried out by [Hindu organizations] in the tribal belt, where innocent tribals are being forced to become Hindus."

Muslims, too, are concerned. "How can conversions be prevented if an individual is attracted to another religion because of his or her faith in it? Force is never used to convert one to Islam because it is against the basic tenets of [Islam]," said Maolana Siddikullah Chowdhury, general secretary of the Jamiat-e-Ulema party in Calcutta.

He added that low-caste Hindus converted to Islam simply to "escape discrimination and ill treatment" and not under any coercion.

A TRIBUTE TO JOHN LAFALCE

HON. BARNEY FRANK

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 14, 2002

Mr. FRANK. Mr. Speaker, for the past several years, I have had the privilege of working under the leadership of our colleague from New York (Mr. LAFALCE) in his role as Senior Democrat on the Committee on Financial Services (as it is now officially called, after our Republican colleagues gave a hint of their policy preferences by excising from the Committee's title any reference to cities, urban affairs or housing).

In his leadership of the minority on this important committee, Mr. LAFALCE has been a committed, creative, forceful advocate of policies that combined support for a strong free market with concern for fairness for consumers and social justice for people with low incomes. No opposition was strong enough to deter him from fighting for an America that was both prosperous and fair, and he helped people understand that these goals are mutually supportive, not exclusive.

Personally, I have been the beneficiary of his ability to lead in a cooperative spirit, and to perform both his partisan and bipartisan roles with great skill. That is, when possible, he worked constructively with the majority party to improve legislation, when necessary he led the minority in an effective and cohesive way.

The financial community, the House, and I personally will miss him. As an indication of this, I ask that the well-merited tribute contained in a recent editorial from the official publication of America's Community Bankers be printed here. And, I thank America's Community Bankers for this gracious—and entirely accurate—summation of JOHN LAFALCE's work.

THE LAFALCE LEGACY: THREE DECADES OF LEADERSHIP FOR BANKS

Congressman John J. LaFalce (D-N.Y.), who represented western New York's 29th Congressional District since he was elected to Congress in 1974, will retire at the end of the current Congress. His departure represents the end of an era.

Congressman LaFalce has been a good friend of the banking industry. In his years of service, from the U.S. Army Adjutant General Corps, to the New York State Senate and State Assembly, to the House of Representatives, John LaFalce personified the best in public service.

He listened to those on all sides of an issue, staking out his position and, as a pragmatist, using his skills as a politician to craft compromises on both sides of the aisle to move needed legislation.

In his leadership role as the ranking Democrat on the House Financial Services Committee, John LaFalce exercised extraordinary influence over the outcome of financial services and housing legislation. He contributed greatly to the historic Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act by first introducing his own bipartisan bill and then by helping to craft the final product. In his long career, Rep. LaFalce was involved in all of the major legislative initiatives on banking and financial services.

John LaFalce is a consumer and community advocate, and a staunch defender of the Community Reinvestment Act and financial privacy. And yet bankers also found him to be a champion of balance.

As chairman of the House Small Business Committee, John LaFalce paid special attention to the needs of women who are small business leaders and entrepreneurs. He wrote the Women's Business Ownership Act, which improves access to credit for women.

Rep. LaFalce's public service career was aptly summarized in a citation by Niagara University when it awarded him the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws. It read, in part, "Three qualities emerge as best describing the man: honesty, energy and conviction."

These qualities, along with his integrity, leadership, and good humor, will be missed in the halls of Congress. John LaFalce leaves behind a legacy of outstanding achievement. America's Community Bankers extends its best wishes for the future.

POLICE AGAIN ENTER GOLDEN TEMPLE COMPLEX

HON. DAN BURTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 14, 2002

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, in June 1984, Indian forces invaded the Golden Temple, the most sacred Sikh shrine, and other Sikh Gurdwaras around Punjab, killing 20,000 people. As Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale said, this helped lay the foundation of Khalistan, the Sikh homeland that declared its independence in 1987. Now the police have again invaded the Golden Temple complex on the pretext of searching the three buildings in the complex in connection with the upcoming elections for the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee (SGPC), which oversees all the Gurdwaras in India.

The police were accompanied by Indian political officials, including the Chemicals and Fertilizers Minister, Sukhdev Singh Dhindsa.

People of all religions and from all over the world have been welcomed to worship at the Golden Temple. Now even members of the SGPC may well be blocked from entering it. Some SGPC workers had a verbal altercation with two of the invading police officials, according to the Tribune newspaper out of Chandigarh. The article reports that SGPC members have already had to sneak into the Golden Temple complex.

Mr. Speaker, this is further proof that there is no religious freedom in "the world's largest democracy." India has already been added to our government's list of countries that violate

religious freedom. Now sanctions should be implemented to help ensure real religious liberty in India.

This is just the latest chapter in a long history of repression of Sikhs by India. Over a quarter of a million Sikhs have been murdered since 1984. More than 52,000 are being held as political prisoners, according to a report by the Movement Against State Repression. Another 50,000 have simply been made to "disappear." The police picked up 50,000 Sikh youth, tortured them, murdered them, declared their bodies "unidentified" and secretly cremated them, and refused to hand the remains over to the families. Christians, Muslims, Dalits, and other minorities have seen similar atrocities committed against them, yet the world treats India as a respectable, democratic country.

Mr. Speaker, we must stop our aid to India now. We must declare our support for self-determination for the Sikhs of Khalistan, for predominantly Christian Nagaland, for Kashmir, and for everyone in South Asia. The cornerstone of democracy is the right to self-determination.

I would like to place the Tribune article on the police invasion of the Golden Temple complex into the RECORD at this time. I think my colleagues will find it very informative.

[From the Tribune (Chandigarh), Nov. 11, 2002]

POLICE ENTERS GOLDEN TEMPLE COMPLEX (By Prabhjot Singh)

CHANDIGARH, Nov. 10.—Less than 24 hours before a five-member NDA team, led by union minister Sahib Singh Verma, could fly into the Holy City of Amritsar to oversee the conduct of next Tuesday's annual election to the SGPC executive committee, Punjab policemen in plain clothes entered the Golden Temple complex on the pretext of searching all three serais (inns) there.

Accompanying the team would be not only Union Chemicals and Fertilisers Minister, Sukhdev Singh Dhindsa, who is also a SAD General Secretary, but also 100-odd SGPC members owing allegiance to SAD chief Parkash Singh Badal.

Though preventive arrests continued throughout the state and Golden Temple complex was put under police siege with the deployment of hundreds of anti-riot policemen in anti-combat gear, some of the Akali leaders, including former Finance Minister Kanwaljit Singh managed to sneak into the sanctum sanctorum.

Talking to The Tribune over the telephone, Mr Sukhdev Singh Dhindsa said the names of four NDA observers—Mr Sahib Singh Verma, Mr Thomas (MP, Samata), Mrs D'Souza (MP, Samata), and Mrs Anita Arya (MP, BJP)—have already been cleared, the Union Civil Aviation Minister, Mr Shah Nawaz, is also expected to be a part of the special NDA team to oversee the SGPC elections. The observers and the SGPC members would take a chartered flight from New Delhi to Amritsar tomorrow afternoon.

Mr Dhindsa further said that on the basis of the complaint lodged by the Shiromani Akali Dal with the Union Home Minister yesterday, the Union Home Secretary today called Punjab Chief Secretary Y.S. Ratra on the telephone and expressed his "strong displeasure" over "politicalisation of the bureaucracy".

The Chief Secretary reportedly assured the Union Home Secretary that no SGPC member would be stopped from reaching the Golden Temple complex for attending the election meeting. Efforts would be made to facilitate those lodged in jails in one case or the other to attend and vote in the elections.

Meanwhile, reports indicate that so far the Punjab police has taken 1,222 Akali workers into custody. Of these 934 belong to Shiromani Akali Dal, 234 to Sarb Hind Shiromani Akali Dal, 50 to Shiromani Akali Dal (Amritsar) and one owes allegiance to Mr Ravi Inder Singh. The remaining three belong to the Mehta faction of the AISSF.

Of these, the maximum arrests of the Badal men were made in Sangrur (73), followed by Majitha (64), Tarn Taran (60) and Patiala (62). Rashmi Talwar and Ashok Sethi in their reports from Amritsar said the police in a pre-dawn swoop entered the Golden Temple complex on the pretext of searching all three serais—Guru Nanak Niwas, Guru Hargobind Niwas and Mata Ganga Niwas.

When the police arrived to get the three serais vacated to ensure implementation of the orders, among those evicted were 50 schoolchildren in the age group of six to eight years from Lucknow. The police parties which were headed by Mr Jagdish Khara and Mr R.S. Ghuman, both DSPs, had a verbal altercation with the SGPC workers who resisted the attempts of the raiding party to get the serais vacated. Mr Harbant Singh and Mr Ajaib Singh, Secretary of the SGPC, and personal assistant to the SGPC chief, respectively, refused to budge holding that the orders were not specific to the SGPC and "devotees" could not be evicted from a religious complex.

The SGPC Chief, Prof Kirpal Singh Badungar, who had to rush to Amritsar from Bathinda, after the police entry into the complex, assailed the government action maintaining that it was a direct attack on the most sacred Sikh shrine and the Congress Government was bent upon disturbing communal peace and harmony.

The police officials managed to get computer printouts of the names and addresses of 2,000 devotees staying in the serais.

Hundreds of policemen in top anti-combat gear laid a siege to the Golden Temple complex. The mounted police has also been deployed around the complex.

Talking to The Tribune over the cellphone, Capt Kanwaljit Singh said that that action of the police in the morning and again in the evening of searching serais and evicting yatris was a serious "violation of the sanctity of the Golden Temple complex." The action of the government amounts to gross interference in the religious affairs of the Sikhs and could lead to serious complications besides disturbing communal harmony and peace in the state.

He said a number of SGPC members and dal workers had already managed to sneak into the complex.

Professor Badungar told newsmen that in case the police entered Teja Singh Samundari Hall on the day of the election meeting, the repercussions would be "drastic".

He said the government was gripped by a "fear psychosis" and its nervousness was evident from the desperate steps it was taking. He maintained that the national and international media would be permitted to cover the executive committee elections as he disapproved on any NDA observers to oversee the elections. No other SGPC employee would be allowed inside the meeting hall.

The SGPC chief said that non-bailable warrants issued against former SGPC chief Jagir Kaur by a Kapurthala court was an indication of the desperation of the state government.

Meanwhile, Mr. Sukhdev Singh Bhaur, General Secretary, SHSAD supported the orders issued by the District Magistrate but held that these orders should be applicable in case of "bad elements" and not the devotees.

The SHSAD was ready for a truce with Mr. Parkash Singh Badal provided he agreed to

apologize at Akal Takht and accepted Bhai Ranjit Singh as Jathedar of Akal Takht. He claimed that 50 SGPC members were strongly behind the SHSAD.

Senior Akali leader and close aide of Mr. Parkash Singh Badal, Capt Kanwaljit Singh claimed that the SAD has formulated its secret strategy to bring all 120 SGPC members to Teja Singh Samundri Hall on November 12 to elect the President and the executive committee. Talking to newsmen this evening at Bhai Gurdas Hall after managing to enter the city in disguise. He said the reign of terror unleashed by the Amarinder Singh government on Akali leaders and workers were trampling upon their democratic rights.

Capt Kanwaljit Singh said Mr. Badal, along with all 120 members, would land at Rajasansi Airport tomorrow for the SGPC general house election meeting. Party leaders and workers would ensure that all SGPC members manage to enter the Golden Temple complex on that day.

He claimed that the ex-parte disqualification of SGPC members by the SGJC was likely to be set aside by the Punjab and Haryana High Court tomorrow.

Discounting the rumors of a patch-up between Mr. Badal and Mr. Tohra, Capt Kanwaljit Singh said there was no scope for any compromise. The Badal candidate would win hands down, he asserted.

The arrival of the Jathedar of Akal Takht, Giani Joginder Singh Vedanti, here this evening has raised speculation about an appeal being made by him for a patch-up between the two Akali stalwarts to avoid a confrontation even as the Congress Government has queered the pitch with heavy deployment of the police around the complex.

SELECTIVE SERVICE VOLUNTEERS

HON. BOB SCHAFFER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 14, 2002

Mr. SCHAFFER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Mr. George C. Everett of Fort Collins, Colorado; Mr. Ralph L. Spellman of Yuma, Colorado; and Mr. Dale H. Shoemaker Sr. of La Junta, Colorado on their appointments to Selective Service Local Boards 006 and 024 in Greeley, Colorado, and 026 in Pueblo, Colorado respectively.

Local board members have the distinction of receiving an appointment by the Director of Selective Service in the name of President George W. Bush, and on the recommendation of Governor Bill Owens. Patriotic Americans, these board members serve their country by volunteering their time to assist the government in selecting men suitable for military service in the event of a draft. If a draft commences, these citizens would decide who would receive deferments, postponements, or exemption from military service based on the individual registrant's circumstances and beliefs.

The Selective Service System is America's defense manpower "insurance policy" in a still dangerous and uncertain world. The service performed by a Selective Service Board Member provides a vital link between the community and today's military. His hard work helps guarantee claims filed by young men for deferments and exemptions will receive fair and equitable consideration if a future crisis requires reinstatement of a draft.

Congratulations to these dedicated volunteers on their appointments. I urge the House

to join me in extending its thanks to the three men for their commitment to their country.

THE LAND OF THE PLENTY

HON. CONSTANCE A. MORELLA

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 14, 2002

Mrs. MORELLA. Mr. Speaker, those of you who were with us last evening recall that I mentioned that this month is the two-year anniversary of the report that came out called "The Land of Plenty." This was a report of the Congressional Commission on Advancement of Women, Minorities, and Persons with Disabilities in Science Engineering and Technology Development. It is legislation that I introduced a number of years ago, and like so much of what we know, you have to be tenacious and diligent and patient and persevere. The legislation established a commission that looked comprehensively at the challenge of under-representation in America's science and engineering workforce and the educational pathway that feeds into it. The commission called for the establishment of a public/private partnership to take America into acting to redress the stunning imbalance in America's technical talent pool. In their report to Congress, BEST presented their findings on September 26, 2002 at 8:15 a.m. in the Cannon Caucus Room, 345 Cannon House Office Building, Washington, D.C., Representatives CONNIE MORELLA and EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON, BEST National Leadership Council Co-Chairs, presiding. (Following are edited comments. The full testimony is available at www.bestworkforce.org.)

BUILDING ENGINEERING AND SCIENCE TALENT

BLUE RIBBON PANELS, INTERIM PROGRESS

REPORT TO CONGRESS

September 26, 2002

Present: CONSTANCE A. MORELLA, (R-MD) National Leadership Council Co-Chair; EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON, (D-TX) National Leadership Council Co-Chair, Allan Alson, superintendent, Evanston Township High School; Dan Arvizu, senior vice president, CH2M Hill; Earnestine R. Baker, Meyerhoff Program UMBC; Alfred Berkeley, vice chair, NASDAQ Stock Market, Inc.; Rita Colwell, director, National Science Foundation; Cinda-Sue Davis, director, WISE, University of Michigan; Marye Anne Fox, chancellor, North Carolina State University; Eugene Garcia, professor, Arizona State University; Shirley Malcom, head, Education Directorate, American Association for the Advancement of Science; Willie Pearson, Jr., professor, Georgia Institute of Technology; Anne Petersen, senior program director, W.K. Kellogg Foundation; Paula Rayman, professor, University of Massachusetts; Claibourne Smith, president, Delaware Foundation for Science and Math Education; Richard Tapia, professor, Rice University; Deborah Wince-Smith, president, Council on Competitiveness; also present, John Yochelson, BEST, testimony into RECORD: Shirley Ann Jackson, president, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute.

PROCEEDINGS

MORELLA: Women, African-Americans, Hispanics, Native Americans, persons with disabilities make up two-thirds of our workforce but they hold only one-fourth of the jobs in science, engineering, and technology. We perceive this really as a vulnerability that threatens the living standards of all