

PAYING TRIBUTE TO EIGHTH
STREET MISSIONARY BAPTIST
CHURCH

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 13, 2004

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the Eighth Street Missionary Baptist Church in Pueblo, Colorado. For many years, the church has been spiritually uniting members of the Pueblo community, and I am privileged to join my colleagues in recognizing its positive impact on the community before this body of Congress and this nation today.

The Eighth Street Missionary Baptist Church has been a place of worship and friendship for members of Pueblo for well over a century. The church's roots can be traced back into the 1870's, but the exact date of its inception is unknown as a result of a flood destroying the documentation. Many early members of the congregation can be identified as freed slaves, relocating in Pueblo to establish a new life with new opportunities. Now, many members of the community find comfort in the Eighth Street Missionary Baptist Church. Recently, the church announced plans for a new building to house the church to better serve its members.

Mr. Speaker, the Eighth Street Missionary Baptist Church remains an important part of the lives for many community members. The church has a century old record of bringing people together and creating a strong community. I thank the leadership and the members of Eighth Street Missionary Baptist Church for their service to the community, and wish them all the best in their future endeavors.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MAJOR R. OWENS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 13, 2004

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, because of an emergency in my district, I missed rollcall votes Nos. 359, 360, 361 and 362. If present I would have voted "yea" on rollcall votes 359, 361 and 362 and "nay" on rollcall vote 360.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO JOHN
WILLIAM SOMRAK

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 13, 2004

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, it is with a heavy heart that I rise to pay tribute to the life and memory of John William Somrak of Gunnison, Colorado. "Johnny," as he was affectionately known, recently passed away, and he will be remembered as a pillar of his community. As his family and community mourn his passing, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize his life before this body of Congress and this nation.

Johnny was born and raised in Crested Butte, Colorado. After losing his father at a young age, he went to work for Colorado Fuel

and Iron's Big Mine when he turned seventeen to help support his family. This responsibility taught him a strong work ethic early in his life. Harry's personal loss of his father to a mining accident inspired him to become active in workplace safety at the mine, and join a team to compete in Colorado's Industrial First Aid and Accident Prevention competitions. When the coalmines closed he went on to work as a Forest Service technician, a job that required him to be a man of many talents. He did everything from providing the necessary maintenance of campgrounds to acting as a supervisor for the summer work crews.

A devoted family man, Johnny was married to Frances Starkovich, for over fifty years. In his free time, he enjoyed dancing with his wife and cultivating flowers in his garden. In addition to those passions, his love for skiing kept him active throughout the winter.

Mr. Speaker, the Gunnison community will sorely miss John Somrak. He will be remembered as a dedicated worker and committed family man. I wish to express my deepest condolences to Johnny's family and friends in this difficult time of bereavement.

HONORING THE JOHN MERLO
SPORTS PROGRAM

HON. RAHM EMANUEL

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 13, 2004

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege today to recognize the contributions of the John Merlo Sports Program for its tireless efforts in providing sports programs and other activities for children and senior citizens in the Lakeview Neighborhood of Chicago, on the occasion of its 23rd Annual Awards Dinner.

The annual Sports Program Dinner, hosted again at Chicago's own Wrigley Field, is an opportunity to recognize both the great work the Sports Program has accomplished in the past year, as well as the achievements of so many members of our community who help make Lakeview one of the best neighborhoods in the City of Chicago. This year, I am pleased to congratulate Senator Emil Jones, Andy McPhail, and Paula and Peter Fasseas on being recognized for their unwavering commitment to Chicago.

The John Merlo Sports Program has consistently demonstrated its commitment to providing the Lakeview community with a variety of excellent athletic programs as well as funding for the renovations of Chicago Park District Playlots. Its fundraisers, programs, and honorees, are an integral part of the success of the program, and I thank everyone in attendance for their assistance and dedication to this outstanding program.

Founded in 1981, the John Merlo Sports Program is a charitable organization named after the late John Merlo, a beloved former Alderman, State Representative, State Senator and Democratic Committeeman, who represented the Lakeview community for nearly 30 years. Mr. Merlo, a staunch advocate for the benefits of participating in sports, felt good sportsmanship, and the ability to interact with others were important skills that everyone should possess.

This year's awards are led by the Civic Leader of the Year, Senate President Emil

Jones, Jr. Senator Jones has been serving the people of Illinois as a state legislator for more than 30 years. Throughout his career, he has been a dedicated supporter of education and the disadvantaged. A life long resident of Chicago, Senator Jones has provided a passionate voice for Chicagoans as the leader of the Illinois State Senate.

President and Chief Executive Officer of the Chicago Cubs, Andy MacPhail has a long connection with the Lakeview Neighborhood, first working for the Cubs in 1977. As one of the most successful executives in Major League Baseball, Mr. McPhail has also worked for the Houston Astros and the Minnesota Twins, a team that won two World Championships while he was at the helm. Under Mr. McPhail's management, the Cubs were the National League Central Division Champions last year, and are again fighting for the pennant. Accordingly, I applaud the selection of Mr. McPhail as Business Leader of the year.

Last, but not least, I congratulate Paula and Peter Fasseas on being selected as the Business Leaders of the Year. Metropolitan Bank Group Chairman and Chief Executive Officer Peter Fasseas and Vice Chairman Paula Fasseas have been involved in all facets of the Lakeview community since purchasing North Community Bank in 1978. The number of civic organizations that have been touched by the Fasseas is too numerous to mention, but I am particularly proud of their work with Pets Are Worth Saving (PAWS), the non-profit organization founded by Mr. and Mrs. Fasseas in 1998 dedicated to encouraging pet adoption.

Mr. Speaker, I applaud the leadership of The John Merlo Sports Program, its founder Bernie Hansen, and current President Mike Quigley on the incredible work they are doing for Chicago's youth and seniors. I would also like to commend the tremendous leaders being honored this year, and wish the program continued success in the future.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO KAREN
GREEN

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 13, 2004

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Karen Green, of Aspen, Colorado. Karen is a talented teacher that motivates students to study our nation's history. Her dedication to learning inspires students in many ways, and I am privileged to acknowledge her before this body of Congress and this nation today.

Karen has been an educator for twenty-two years and has also taught in Glenwood Springs, and Cherry Creek in Denver. This year Karen was the only Colorado educator to be awarded the inaugural Preserve America History Teacher of the Year Award. The newly established national award program was created by first lady Laura Bush and is co-sponsored by the Preserve America Foundation and Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History. In addition to her award Karen was also complimented with a one thousand dollar donation to the High School, 20 history books, multimedia, copies of primary documents and some meaningful works of literature and philosophy in original form.

Karen is obviously a phenomenal teacher as this is not the only award that she has received. Last year she was awarded the Most Inspirational Teacher Award and a ten thousand dollar donation from the Basalt community where she used to teach from 1993 to 2003. Most recently, she qualified for a weeklong seminar at Stanford University with Pulitzer-Prize winning historian David Kennedy. She was one of only thirty teachers invited.

Mr. Speaker, Karen Green has devoted her career to expanding the minds of Colorado students and her colleagues. She is a dedicated teacher who demonstrates a strong passion for learning and I am honored to recognize her accomplishments before this distinguished body of Congress and this nation today. Congratulations on your award Karen, and thank you for your many years of service.

PUNJAB GOVERNMENT CANCELS DEAL THAT ALLOWED DIVER- SION OF WATER TO OTHER STATES; LEGISLATURE ASSERTS SOVEREIGNTY

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 13, 2004

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, the Legislative Assembly of Punjab recently annulled a long-standing agreement that allowed the diversion of water from Punjab to other states.

According to the Tribune of Chandigarh, whose article I will be inserting in the RECORD at the end of my remarks, the Legislative Assembly asserted the sovereignty of Punjab in doing so. The newspaper reports that the bill passed by the Legislative Assembly says that "as a sovereign authority [Punjab] considered it its duty to uphold the Constitution and the laws and to protect the interests of its inhabitants."

Apparently, all parties supported this measure. We congratulate them on taking this step forward to protect the interests of the people of Punjab. I urge them to continue claiming, promoting, and establishing the sovereignty of Punjab.

Mr. Speaker, we know that the people of Punjab have been severely oppressed by the tyrannical Indian government. Over a quarter of a million Sikhs have been killed since 1984, according to the Punjab State Magistracy. The Movement Against State Repression reports that 52,268 have been taken as political prisoners, held without charge or trial, some as long as 20 years. According to the Punjab Human Rights Commission, about 50,000 Sikhs have simply been made to disappear by being arrested, tortured, killed in police custody, declared "unidentified bodies," and secretly cremated, without their remains even being given back to their families.

Similar repression has been visited on Christians, Muslims, and other minorities. Yet India continues to say that it is the world's largest democracy.

If India is truly a democracy, it will allow the will of the people to be carried out in regards to the diversion of water. It will allow the people—Sikhs, Christians, Muslims, Assamese, Bodos, Dalits, Manipuris, Tamils, and every-one living under Indian rule—to enjoy the full

range of human rights. And it will allow self-determination for these sovereign states.

Until that happens, Mr. Speaker, we should not provide any aid to India. And we should take a stand for self-determination, which is the cornerstone of democracy, by supporting a free and fair plebiscite on independence in Punjab, Khalistan, in Kashmir, in predominantly Christian Nagaland, and everywhere that people seek their freedom from Indian rule. The assertion of sovereignty by the Punjab Legislative Assembly is a good first step. They should act to claim their sovereignty by severing their ties to India. We should take a stand by letting them know that when they do, we will be there with them.

Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned before, I would like to insert the Tribune article into the RECORD.

[From the Tribune (Chandigarh), July 13, 2004]

PUNJAB ANNULS ALL WATER PACTS: CONG, AKALIS JOIN HANDS ON ISSUE
(By P.P.S. Gill)

CHANDIGARH, July 12.—A special session of the Punjab Vidhan Sabha today unanimously passed the Punjab Termination of Agreements Bill, 2004, thereby "knocking down" the very basis on which the Supreme Court had passed its order on construction of SYL—Sutlej-Yamuna Link canal on June 4, last. This Bill annuls the December 31, 1981, agreement between Punjab, Haryana and Rajasthan signed by the three Chief Ministers in the presence of the late Ms Indira Gandhi and also all other agreements relating to the water of the rivers, Ravi and Beas. This, the Bill says, was done in "public interest". The annulment has come after 23 long years with two staunch political rivals, the Congress and the Akalis, joining hands to protect the state's riparian rights. Immediately after the Bill was passed, the Chief Minister, Capt Amarinder Singh, accompanied by the Leader of the Opposition, Mr Parkash Singh Badal, PPCC president, Mr H.S. Hanspal, Ms Rajinder Kaur Bhattal, Mr Partap Singh Bajwa and a team of legal experts went to Raj Bhavan to meet the Governor, Justice O.P. Verma (retd.), to request him to give his assent to the Bill, as the dead-line for compliance with the Supreme Court order was July 15. The combined delegation spent an hour with the Governor. The Raj Bhavan sources said, "The Bill is being examined."

Capt Amarinder Singh told TNS that he had not discussed the Bill with Ms Sonia Gandhi. "Why involve her? When I go to Delhi, I shall brief her".

Presenting the Bill to the House, Capt. Amarinder Singh made an emotive speech giving facts, figures and background to the entire issue of sharing of river waters and steps taken in the recent past to protect and safeguard the interests of Punjab, particularly the farmers and save nine lakh acres going dry and barren, which would affect the livelihood of 1.5 million families.

The Bill says that Punjab was proud of its position in the Indian union, felt equal concern for its neighbours and as a sovereign authority also considered it its duty to uphold the constitution and the laws and to protect the interests of its inhabitants.

Under the 1981 agreement, flow series were changed from 1921-45 to 1921-60, which had the result of increasing the availability of Ravi-Beas waters from 15.85 MAF to 17.17 MAF. The allocation of water made to the states concerned under that Agreement was as under:

Haryana (non-riparian)	3.50	MAF,
Rajasthan (non-riparian)	8.60	MAF, Delhi

(non-riparian) 0.20 MAF, Punjab (riparian) 4.22 MAF and Jammu and Kashmir (riparian) 0.65 MAF. Under clause IV of this agreement, Punjab and Haryana withdrew their respective suits from the Supreme Court. But the controversy rages on. The issue has become emotive.

Referring to the broad clauses of the proposed Bill, Capt Amarinder Singh maintained that riparian and basin principles were ignored all along and allocation of the Ravi-Beas waters had always been affected by "ad hoc decisions and agreements, dictated by prevalent circumstances". Here was a typical case involving "emotive" issue of impending transfer of water from "deficit" Ravi-Beas basin to the "surplus" Yamuna basin.

Never any reliable and scientific study of hydrological, ecological and sociological impact of such large scale trans-basin diversion from Punjab to Haryana and Rajasthan had been undertaken. Besides this transfer, diversion was even contrary to the National Water Policy guidelines, he added.

Capt Amarinder Singh pointed out, "Non-riparian and non-basin states of Haryana and Rajasthan are not only not entitled to any Ravi-Beas waters, even their current allocation and utilisation is totally disproportionate to the areas alleged to be falling in the Indus basin. Therefore, Punjab, as a good neighbour, has accepted such utilisations by Haryana and Rajasthan as 'usages by sufferance' but not as a matter of any recognition of their rights".

He supported this hypothesis, when he posed the question, "Does Punjab have surplus water and do the claimants of our water a legal right to it?" Then, he paused for effect, "The answer to this question is a resounding 'no'", and went on to give the following picture:

All three rivers, the Ravi, the Beas and the Sutlej, flow through the present Punjab and none through either Haryana or Rajasthan. No part of territories of these states fall within the basin areas of the Ravi and the Beas, although, according to un-substantiated report of the Irrigation Commission, only 9,939 sq. kms. within Haryana fall in Indus basin, against 50,305 sq. kms. of Punjab.

Again, the present utilisation by Haryana was about 5.95 MAF, about 4.33 MAF from Sutlej and about 1.62 MAF from the Ravi-Beas water, through the existing systems. Also out of 17.17 MAF of "surplus" Ravi-Beas water, only 4.22 MAF was allocated to Punjab, a riparian state, against higher quantities to Haryana and Rajasthan. From the total surplus availability of 11.98 MAF of the Beas water, Punjab has been allocated 2.64 MAF.

Therefore, justifying the annulling of the December 31, 1981, agreement and all other agreements relating to the Ravi and the Beas, the Bill seeks to present the fact that ground realities have since undergone a sea change from that date and Punjab settlement of July 24, 1985, under the Rajiv-Longowal Agreement. Therefore, this had made the implementation of that 1981 agreement "onerous and injurious" to the public interest.

The availability of the Ravi-Beas water, 1717 MAF, as on December 31, 1981, has been reduced to 14.37 MAF, as per the flow series of 1981-2002. Haryana has been given 4.65 MA under the Yamuna agreement of May 12, 1994, which will be further augmented by the Sardar-Yamuna link. In the meanwhile, irrigation requirements have increased in Punjab. "The Punjab settlement, except one para 9, relating to allocation of the Ravi-Beas water, has remained unimplemented in letter and spirit, to date."