

HONORING THE UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE NEVADA-SI- ERRA PERFORMANCE CLUSTER

HON. JON C. PORTER

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 17, 2004

Mr. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the dedication, hard work, and superior productivity achieved by Nevada's postal employees. Recently the Nevada-Sierra Performance Cluster was ranked as the number one cluster in the country in Overnight Delivery.

The United States Postal Service (USPS) is comprised of 79 Performance Clusters that are grouped into 9 geographical areas. The Nevada-Sierra Performance Cluster is part of the Pacific area and is serviced by two plants in Nevada, one in Las Vegas and one in Reno. These two plants process and distribute incoming mail to postal facilities throughout Nevada. Currently 96.7 percent of all Overnight Delivery mail in Nevada is delivered on time, ranking the Nevada-Sierra cluster number one in the country. In addition, as measured by the national USPS Breakthrough Productivity Index, the Nevada-Sierra Performance cluster ranks number 2 in the Nation in overall productivity.

These honors pay tribute to the work of the 5,217 career employees working for the United States Postal Service in Nevada. The productivity of Nevada's postal employees benefits all Nevadans who utilize the United States Postal Service. Each day the employees of the Postal Service reach millions of Nevadans through their work delivering the mail.

I am proud to join with all Nevadans in honoring the employees of the USPS Nevada-Sierra Postal Cluster. I wish them continued success and thank them for their fine work.

SIKHS WILL CELEBRATE 400TH AN- NIVERSARY OF THEIR HOLY SCRIPTURE

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 17, 2004

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, the Sikhs will celebrate the 400th anniversary of the compilation of their holy scripture, the Guru Granth Sahib, this year. As you may know, there are over 500,000 Sikhs in the United States and about 25 million worldwide.

Observances will include a seminar on June 5 at George Washington University and a parade on August 14 here in Washington.

In June 1984, the Indian government launched a military attack on the Golden Temple in Amritsar, the center and seat of the Sikh religion, and 125 other Sikh Gurdwaras throughout Punjab in which over 20,000 Sikhs were murdered. Indian forces shot bullets through the Guru Granth Sahib, which was a major desecration and an insult to the Sikh people and the Sikh religion. They took over 100 young Sikh boys outside and shot them at point blank range.

Mr. Speaker, the Golden Temple attack made it clear to the Sikhs that there is no place for them in India's Hindu nationalist theocracy. It is against this background that they

declared their independence on October 7, 1987, calling their country Khalistan.

The Golden Temple attack is unacceptable to all civilized people. We must work to ensure that human rights are respected in India and that nothing like the Golden Temple attack, the Gujarat massacre, or the campaign of violence against Christians occurs there again. We can help bring that about by stopping our aid to India until it learns to observe basic human rights.

We can also help by putting this Congress on record in support of a free and fair plebiscite in Punjab, Khalistan, in Kashmir, as India promised the United Nations in 1948, in primarily Christian Nagaland, and wherever the people are seeking independence. This is the democratic way to settle the issue and India claims to be a democracy, so why are they afraid of holding a free and fair vote?

Mr. Speaker, the Council of Khalistan has published a press release on the 400th anniversary of the Guni Granth Sahib and the 20th anniversary of the Golden Temple attack. It is very informative, so I would like to insert it into the RECORD at this time.

400TH ANNIVERSARY OF GURU GRANTH SAHIB; 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF GOLDEN TEMPLE AT- TACK

WASHINGTON, D.C., March 10, 2004.—On June 5, Sikhs from around the East Coast will observe the 400th anniversary of the compilation of the Guru Granth Sahib, the Sikh holy scriptures. During India's June 1984 attack on the Golden Temple in Amritsar, the center and seat of the Sikh religion, the Guru Granth Sahib was pierced by Indian Army bullets. The Sikh Nation will never forget the desecration of the Guru Granth Sahib. Political power is essential for the survival of the Sikh Nation.

The Council of Khalistan, the organization leading the Sikh struggle for independence, will hold a demonstration Saturday, June 5, from 12:00 noon to 3:00 p.m. in front of the Indian Embassy at 21st and Massachusetts Ave. NW in Washington, D.C. It will commemorate the twentieth anniversary of the attack on the Golden Temple and 125 other Sikh Gurdwaras in Punjab, in which over 20,000 Sikhs were killed, including such major Sikh leaders as Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale, General Shabeg Singh, Bhai Amrik Singh, and others who had taken refuge in the Darbar Sahib complex. The Indian army killed over 100 young religious students, ages 8 to 13. They were taken out into the courtyard and asked whether they supported Khalistan. When they answered "Bole So Nihal," they were shot.

"This attack, along with simultaneous attacks on 125 other Gurdwaras throughout Punjab, was the clearest sign that there is no place for Sikhs in India," said Dr. Gurmit Singh Aulakh, President of the Council of Khalistan. "It is a brutal, tyrannical, fundamentalist Hindu nationalist theocracy," he said. "Sant Bhindranwale said that if the Indian government invaded the Golden Temple, they would lay the foundation of Khalistan," Dr. Aulakh said. "He was right. The movement for Khalistan is strong in Punjab. Just last year, seminars were held on the subject. The fire of freedom burns bright in the hearts of Sikhs."

"The brutal attack on the Golden Temple and the 20-year wave of repression it set off must never be forgotten," Dr. Aulakh said. "Both the Congress Party and the Akalis are complicit in this criminal act against the Sikh Nation," he noted. . . . "India needs to be reminded that 20 years later, Sikhs have not forgiven nor forgotten this brutal atrocity. The younger generation must be reminded of this terrible atrocity."

In addition to the protest, there will be a seminar on Saturday, June 5 at George Washington University to celebrate the 400th anniversary of the compilation of the Guru Granth Sahib. It will be sponsored by the International Conference on Sikh Studies along with Sikh Gurdwaras and institutions of North America.

The Indian government has murdered over 250,000 Sikhs since 1984, more than 300,000 Christians since 1948, over 85,000 Muslims in Kashmir since 1988, and tens of thousands of Tamils, Assamese, Manipuris, Dalits, and others. The Indian Supreme Court called the Indian government's murders of Sikhs "worse than a genocide." According to a study by the Movement Against State Repression, 52,268 Sikhs are being held in illegal detention as political prisoners without charge or trial. Some of them have been held since 1984!

Christian missionary Joseph Cooper was expelled from India after a mob of militant Hindu nationalists allied with the Rashtriya Swayamsewarak Sangh (RSS), a pro-Fascist organization that is the parent organization of the ruling BJP, beat him so severely he had to spend a week in the hospital. In 2002, 2,000 to 5,000 Muslims were murdered in Gujarat while police were ordered to stand aside, reminiscent of the 1984 Delhi massacres of Sikhs. Indian newspapers reported that the government planned the Gujarat massacre in advance.

History shows that multinational states such as India are doomed to failure. Countries like Austria-Hungary, India's longtime friend the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, and others prove this point. India is not one country; it is a polyglot like those countries, thrown together by the British for their administrative convenience. Sikhs ruled Punjab until 1849 when the British conquered the subcontinent. Sikhs were equal partners during the transfer of power from the British. The Muslim leader Jinnah got Pakistan, the Hindu leaders got India, but the Sikh leadership was fooled by the Hindu leadership promising that Sikhs would have "the glow of freedom" in Northwest India. The Sikhs took their share with India on that promise. For that mistake, Sikhs are suffering now. "As Professor Darshan Singh, a former Jathedar of the Akal Takht, said, 'If a Sikh is not for Khalistan, he is not a Sikh,'" Dr. Aulakh noted.

"Democracies don't commit genocide," Dr. Aulakh said. "Only in a free and sovereign Khalistan will the Sikh Nation prosper. In a democracy, the right to self-determination is the sine qua non and India should allow a plebiscite for the freedom of the Sikh Nation," he said. "India should also allow self-determination in Christian Nagaland, Kashmir, Assam, and the other nations fighting for freedom. This is the only way to bring lasting peace to South Asia."

SIKHS CALL FOR AN APOLOGY FROM SENATOR KERRY

HON. DAN BURTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 17, 2004

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, on January 31, 2004 Democratic Presidential Candidate Senator JOHN KERRY referred to "Sikhs in India" as an example of terrorists. As you know, I have been a supporter of freedom for all people in South Asia, including the Sikhs.

Dr. Gurmit Singh Aulakh, President of the Council of Khalistan is well known among my

colleagues as an invaluable source of information on the situation in India and Kashmir. He and his organization are committed to freeing Khalistan, the Sikh homeland, by peaceful, democratic, and non-violent means. However, the Indian government portrays their actions as terrorism. I was saddened to see that Senator KERRY apparently agreed with this mischaracterization.

The Sikhs I have met are responsible citizens. They make important contributions to many facets of American life. Dalip Singh Saund, a Sikh, even proudly served in the Congress. Many Sikhs, including Dr. Aulakh, were quite offended by the statement made by Senator KERRY, and they have asked for an apology. I hope that the distinguished Senator from Massachusetts will do the right thing and retract his statement.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to have the Council of Khalistan's letter to Senator KERRY placed into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD following my statement.

COUNCIL OF KHALISTAN,

Washington, DC, February 11, 2004.

Senator JOHN F. KERRY,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR KERRY: I am writing to you today on behalf of half a million Sikh Americans and over 25 million Sikhs worldwide to say that your remarks equating Sikhs with terrorists were offensive to the Sikh community. While giving a speech in Oklahoma, you referred to "the Sikhs in India" as an example of terrorism.

Sikhism is an independent, monotheistic, revealed religion, not a part of any other religion. Sikhs are distinctive by our religion, language, and culture from any other people on Earth.

Sikhs ruled Punjab from 1710 to 1716 and again from 1765 to 1849. Sikhs, Hindus, Muslims, and Christians all participated in the government. Sikhs are a separate nation and people.

At the time of India's independence, three nations were to receive sovereign power: the Muslims, who got Pakistan, the Hindus, who got India, and the Sikhs. Sikhs took their share with India on the solemn promise that Sikhs would enjoy "the glow of freedom" in Punjab and no law affecting Sikh rights would be passed without our consent. Instead, almost as soon as the ink was dry on India's independence, Nehru sent out a directive describing Sikhs as "a criminal class" and ordering police to take extraordinary measures against us.

Since June 1984, India has murdered over 250,000 Sikhs, according to figures compiled by the Punjab State Magistracy and human rights groups and published in the book *The Politics of Genocide* by Inderjit Singh Jaijee. A report from the Movement Against State Repression (MASR) shows that India admitted to holding 52,268 Sikhs as political prisoners. Some have been in illegal custody since 1984! Tens of thousands of other minorities are also being held as political prisoners, according to Amnesty International. Indian forces carried out the March 2000 massacre in the village of Chithisinghpura, according to two independent investigations. Indian forces were caught red-handed trying to set fire to a Sikh Gurdwara and Sikh homes in a village in Kashmir. Sikh and Muslim villagers joined hands to stop them.

The book *Soft Target*, written by two Canadian journalists, Zuhair Kashmeri of the *Toronto Globe and Mail* and Brian McAndrew of the *Toronto Star*, shows conclusively that the Indian government blew up its own airliner in 1985, killing 329 innocent people, to blame it on the Sikhs and have an excuse for more repression.

Other minorities such as Christians and Muslims, among others, have also felt the lash of Indian repression. Over 300,000 Christians in Nagaland have been killed by the terrorist Indian regime. Nuns have been raped, priests have been murdered, churches have been burned, schools and prayer halls have been destroyed, all with impunity. A mob of militant Hindus affiliated with the parent organization of the ruling BJP murdered missionary Graham Staines and his two sons by burning them to death while they slept in their jeep, all the while chanting "Victory to Hanuman," a Hindu god. India threw missionary Joseph Cooper from Pennsylvania out of the country after he was beaten so severely that he had to spend a week in the hospital. A Christian religious festival on the theme "Jesus is the answer" was broken up by police gunfire.

Almost two years ago, Muslims were massacred in Gujarat while police were ordered to stand by and do nothing, according to Indian newspaper reports. One newspaper quoted a policeman as saying that the Indian government planned the massacre in advance. This is an eerie parallel to the 1984 massacre of Sikhs in Delhi, in which police were locked in their barracks while the state-run radio and television called for more Sikh blood.

An Indian Cabinet minister was quoted as saying that everyone who lives in India must either be a Hindu or be subservient to Hindu. This kind of religious fanaticism as state policy is dangerous and anti-democratic. We would not want it in America; why should we support it in India?

On October 7, 1987, Sikhs declared their independence from India, naming their new country Khalistan. We are committed to liberating Khalistan by peaceful, democratic, nonviolent means. History shows that multinational states such as Austria-Hungary, the Soviet Union, and India are doomed to fall apart. We intend to see that this happens peacefully, in the manner of Czechoslovakia, not violently like Yugoslavia. Yet simply supporting a sovereign, independent Khalistan is what India calls terrorism.

The 20,000 Sikhs who were murdered in the June 1984 attack on the Golden Temple and 37 other Sikh Gurdwaras throughout Punjab were not terrorists. They were seeking refuge from the Indian government's tyranny. Yet the Indian government insists on describing them as "terrorists," as if repeating it often enough will make it true.

Senator Kerry, we respectfully request that you apologize to the Sikh Nation and the Sikh community in the United States for your remark. I urge you to support measures to bring freedom to all the people of the subcontinent. Sikhs share the commitment to freedom you showed when you fought in Vietnam and in your service in public office. There was even a Sikh member of Congress in the late 1950s, Dalip Singh Saund of California. We look forward to working with you in the future to bring the blessings of liberty to everyone in the subcontinent.

If you would like any further information or would like to meet about these issues, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

DR. GURMIT SINGH AULAKH,
President.

ACTION NEEDED ON ANIMAL ID SYSTEM

HON. DOUG BEREUTER

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 17, 2004

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, this Member commends to his colleagues the following editorial from the March 3, 2004, *Lincoln Journal Star*. The editorial emphasizes the need to develop an animal identification system in an expeditious manner. Clearly, an effective system to track livestock would benefit producers as well as consumers. It is time for action.

[From the *Lincoln Journal Star*, Mar. 3, 2004]

QUICK ACTION NEEDED ON LIVESTOCK IDS

A continued sense of urgency is needed in the effort to establish an animal identification system to improve food safety.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has been working to develop a program for several years, but it's still far from implementation.

Meanwhile, the ability of the livestock industry to track sick animals is in woeful condition.

The USDA never did track down all the cattle in the herd in Washington state where a cow with mad cow disease was detected. Officials finally gave up and admitted they could not find 11 cows.

With technology that's available today, that's inexcusable.

A good starting place would be the bill introduced by Sen. Chuck Hagel, which would give U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Ann Veneman authority to implement the system the department has been working on for the past several years.

The program was designed to give inspectors the ability to identify all the farms and other animals that had contact with a diseased animal within 48 hours.

Compare that with the frustrating weeks that inspectors spent on the recent case of bovine spongiform encephalopathy. Tests confirmed the result on Dec. 23 last year. The investigation was not closed until Feb. 9.

The USDA is recommending the use of radio frequency identification devices, but other approaches, such as implantable microchips and retinal scanning, are also possible.

The device is a tag that is stapled to the base of the animal's ear. Each tag has a unique numerical code. The tag would be scanned at each stage of the production chain for tracking purposes. Information on the devices would be stored in a national database.

The program deserves industry support for reasons that should be obvious. The discovery of single case of mad cow cost the industry an estimated \$4 billion in lost sales, according to agricultural economists.

It won't be cheap to establish the program. Officials estimate the costs could run around \$100 million a year. Although a portion of the cost ultimately will be borne by the industry and passed along to consumers, tax support would be appropriate during the transition phase to the new system.

The good news is that some producers are already using the radio frequency identification tags.

The USDA currently plans to phase in the program this summer and begin issuing animal identification tags next year. First priority would be given to tracking beef and dairy cattle.

Progress on that timetable should not be allowed to slip. The livestock industry needs prompt action to protect consumer safety.