

COUNCIL OF KHALISTAN CONGRATULATES INDIA'S NEW SIKH PRIME MINISTER

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 1, 2004

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, as you know, a Sikh, Dr. Manmohan Singh, has been named as the new Prime Minister of India. Dr. Singh is a former Finance Minister in the government of Narasimha Rao from 1991 to 1996. He is a very experienced Indian official.

I hope that this will be a step forward for good relations between the United States and India, Mr. Speaker. We all seek good relations. However, the support of India's Communists for the governing coalition makes me wonder if good relations are possible under this particular government.

Dr. Gurmit Singh Aulakh, President of the Council of Khalistan has sent a letter to Prime Minister Singh congratulating him on his new position. In the letter, Dr. Aulakh notes that it is good for the image of Sikhs worldwide that Dr. Manmohan Singh is now Prime Minister. He also notes that it was the RSS, parent organization of the ousted BJP, that assassinated Mohandas Gandhi and takes note of India's violent history, urging Prime Minister Singh to take strong measures to avoid repeating this history, such as releasing the political prisoners that India holds, punishing those responsible for atrocities, ending the taking of Punjabi water to nonriparian states without compensation, and other such policies I think we can all support. India will be a better place if Prime Minister Singh implements these policies.

According to the Movement Against State Repression (MASR), 52,268 Sikhs are being held as political prisoners. Amnesty International reports that tens of thousands of other minorities are also being held as political prisoners. A democracy should not hold political prisoners. I am sure all my colleagues will agree with me that all these political prisoners should be released immediately.

The letter also reminds Prime Minister Singh that while ending the BJP's policy of Hindutva—total Hinduization of every aspect of Indian life—will be welcome, it was the Congress Party under Dr. Singh's political patrons, the Gandhi family, that carried out the military attack on the Golden Temple, the center and seat of the Sikh religion and the massacre of Sikhs in Delhi and elsewhere in India. Dr. Aulakh urges Dr. Singh to make a complete break with these policies by punishing those responsible.

In 1987, the Sikhs declared themselves independent from India, naming their new country Khalistan. As Dr. Aulakh points out in his letter, allowing Khalistan, Kashmir, Nagaland, and the other nations seeking their freedom from India to be free is the best way to spare the subcontinent any more bloodshed.

I join in that call, Mr. Speaker. We should support a free and fair plebiscite on the question of independence for the minority nations of South Asia. And until human rights are fully observed and a complete break is made with the bloody and repressive policies of the past, the United States should stop providing aid to India. These measures will encourage India to

take the steps necessary to bring peace, freedom, prosperity, and dignity to everyone in the subcontinent.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to insert the Council of Khalistan's letter to Prime Minister Singh into the RECORD at this time.

COUNCIL OF KHALISTAN,
Washington, DC, May 26, 2004.

The Hon. Dr. Manmohan Singh,
Prime Minister of India, Chanakyapouri, New Delhi, India.

DEAR PRIME MINISTER SINGH: Congratulations on becoming Prime Minister of India. You have been entrusted with a significant responsibility.

We are very pleased to see a Sikh as Prime Minister. You have reached this high office because of your intelligence and hard work and your presence in this position gives the world a strong and positive impression of Sikhs. However, remember the way that the Gandhi family used Giani Zail Singh when he was President of India. He became the figurehead for their repression of the Sikhs. Unlike Zail Singh, you are in a position of real power. Sikhs around the world will be watching what you do and hoping that you will not allow yourself to be used in a similar manner.

As a Sikh, you are in a position to understand the problems of the Sikh Nation. The Movement Against State Repression (MASR) did a report that showed the government admitted to holding 52,268 Sikh political prisoners. They have been held without charge or trial, some for as long as 20 years! If you are truly committed to secularism, one of your first acts should be to release all political prisoners. If any have died in custody, their bodies should be released to their families. These are people who have committed no crime but opposition to the government. How can there be political prisoners in a democracy?

I urge you to restore to Punjab what is rightfully Punjab's. I call on you to restore the Punjabi-speaking areas that were removed from the state of Punjab to it. Punjab was meant to be a unified Sikh state and Indian governments of the past have pursued a deliberate policy of dividing, bankrupting, and weakening it to divide and weaken the Sikhs. As a Sikh and as Prime Minister, you are in a position to put a stop to this policy. You are also in a position to restore Punjab's water rights. For years, Punjab's water has been diverted to non-riparian states with no compensation to Punjab or to the people of Punjab. Please put an end to the diversion of Punjab's water to non-riparian states and when such diversion is necessary, please make certain that the Sikh farmers of Punjab get appropriate compensation for their water. This is only fair and right, and it is a policy that will earn you greater support among the Sikhs. All other states control their water resources.

We are also pleased that the BJP is out of power. Rahul Gandhi, MP, the son of Sonia and Rajiv Gandhi and a member of your party, pointed out that the RSS, which is the parent organization of the BJP, assassinated Mahatma Gandhi. The RSS is a pro-Fascist organization and both Vajpayee and Advani are proud RSS members. The end of the policy of Hindutva will be a welcome development. Sikh support for the Congress Party is also a by-product of the corrupt Parkash Singh Badal regime in Punjab, the most corrupt government in Punjab's history. The Badal government even invented a new word for bribery: fee for service. However, it was a Congress government that attacked the Golden Temple and carried out the massacre of Sikhs in Delhi and throughout India.

As your own nephew pointed out, Sikhs can never forget the attack on the Golden

Temple. Thus it is disturbing to read that you have said you intend to follow the policies of Rajiv Gandhi. His policy was the murder of at least 8,000 Sikhs in Delhi alone and over 20,000 throughout India. It is also disturbing that your party gave tickets to Jagdish Tytler and Sajjan Kumar, who are responsible for ordering the murders of thousands of Sikhs in Delhi, and that Tytler was appointed to your Cabinet. Tytler and Sajjan Kumar supplied gasoline for these murders and incited the crowd. These people belong in jail, not in the government.

I hope that you will not follow such undemocratic, anti-secularist, anti-Sikhs policies. Policies such as these have made it clear that there is no place for Sikhs in India. If you are truly committed to secularism, you cannot follow such brutal, repressive policies against Sikhs and other minorities. The brutal policies have brought about the murders of over 250,000 Sikhs since 1984, more than 87,000 Kashmiri Muslims since 1988, over 300,000 Christians in Nagaland, and tens of thousands of Assamese, Bodos, Dalits, Manipuris, and other minorities. The United States State Department exposed the fact that between 1992 and 1994, a Congress government paid out more than 41,000 cash bounties to police officers for killing Sikhs. One officer received a bonus for murdering a three-year-old boy, claiming the toddler was a "terrorist."

The time has come for India to make a clean break with its past by punishing those responsible for these actions, compensating the victims' families, and committing itself to preventing and punishing such acts in the future. This will show your commitment to secular, democratic government and not the theocratic repression of the country's past governments.

India is a very fractured country. Because of past history, no party is able to unify the people and command a majority of the support, so coalition governments are inevitable. Coalition governments are inherently unstable. For example, the support of India's three Communist parties for your coalition weakens your ability to pursue good relations with the United States and other Western countries, which could increase India's isolation from the world.

History also shows us that multinational countries are doomed to failure. Austria-Hungary, the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia, and Yugoslavia are examples of this. India is a multinational state, not a single country, thrown together by British colonialists and with 18 official languages. How can such a country be held together except by massive repression and bloodshed? And the repression has simply created greater resentment of the central government, which also strengthens the support for the 17 independence movements throughout India. Either way, holding India together is a futile enterprise destined to fail.

Since India is a democracy, I urge you to solve this problem the democratic way. In 1947, India committed itself to a plebiscite on the status of Kashmir. The Sikhs also seek their freedom and sovereignty, as the Nagas and others also do. If India is truly the world's largest democracy, why not simply allow the people to decide their status by a free and fair vote. That is the way that you achieved power, by the people's votes. Why not let the people vote on this critical issue? The essence of democracy is the right of self-determination.

As a Sikh, you are aware that the Sikh Nation is a separate nation which was supposed to receive sovereignty at the time of India's independence. As you know, Sikhs ruled Punjab from 1710 to 1716 and from 1765 to 1849. No Sikh representative has signed the Indian Constitution to this day. Every day,

Sikhs pray "Raj Kare Ga Khalsa," the Khalsa shall rule. As you know, the Sikh Nation declared its independence from India on October 7, 1987, calling their new country Khalistan. As former Jathedar of the Akal Takht Professor Darshan Singh has said, "If a Sikh is not a Khalistani, he is not a Sikh."

I know that you are a Sikh, Mr. Prime Minister. I can see your turban. I know that you are concerned about the future of the Sikh Nation. Therefore, I urge you to sit down with Sikh representatives and negotiate the boundaries of a sovereign, independent, free Khalistan. This is the best thing that you can do for the Sikh Nation, your own people, and it is the best way to ensure that India goes the way of Czechoslovakia, not that of Yugoslavia. Please spare India, Khalistan, and all the nations of South Asia any further bloodshed.

Congratulations again on your new position.

Sincerely,

DR. GURMIT SINGH AULAKH,
President, Council of Khalistan.

IN HONOR OF DAVID SABLE

HON. ELIOT L. ENGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 1, 2004

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, the adage if you want something done ask a busy person to do it was never more true than in the case of David Sable. For more than 20 years he has been busy in marketing communications, becoming vice chair and president of Wunderman's worldwide operations.

But there is another side of Mr. Sable, one which led the Riverdale Jewish Center to honor him at their 50th anniversary celebration, a decision they said wasn't particularly difficult.

He was raised in Riverdale from early childhood, the son of the founding Rabbi of the Riverdale Jewish Center. He has served the RJC with extraordinary tenure as President and is currently the Chair of the Board of Trustees. He is, in their words, understanding of the RJC past, an integral part of its present, and a source of confidence for its future.

He also has served his community in a larger sense, as a member of New York City's Cultural Advisory Committee and a member of the steering committee for the Mail Industry Task Force of the United States Post Office.

His love for Israel is well known. With the breakout of the Yom Kippur war, he joined the Israeli Defense Force as a combat medic. He is a member of the Board of the Tzfat Foundation. He has also served the RJC as Youth Director and Vice President.

A celebration of the Riverdale Jewish Center without David Sable would not be a true celebration. I congratulate him and the RJC for all the good work both have accomplished in Riverdale and beyond.

RECOGNIZING JUSTIN MYERS FOR
ACHIEVING THE RANK OF EAGLE
SCOUT

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 1, 2004

Mr. GRAVES. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Justin Myers, a very special

young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 320, and by earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Justin has been very active with his troop by participating in many Scout activities, earning numerous merit badges, and serving in a variety of leadership positions. He has held such positions as Patrol Leader, Assistant Patrol Leader, and Senior Patrol Leader, as well as Troup Guide. Justin has attended camp at Saukenauk Scout Reservation as well as Camp Maumee and Polar Bear Camp. He has also attended a High Adventure in Elk Horn, Colorado and a National High Adventure in the Northern Tier Bissett. Justin's dedication is quite impressive as he has been a member of four separate Councils through his career in the Scouts. For his Eagle Scout project, Justin organized the materials for him and his fellow Scouts to construct a safe and enjoyable playground area for the children of the Clay County Christian Church.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Justin Myers for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

TRIBUTE TO HONORABLE WARD
WHARTON MCFARLAND

HON. SPENCER BACHUS

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 1, 2004

Mr. BACHUS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to remember and pay tribute to one of Alabama's most esteemed citizens on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of his passing. Today a flag flies over the Capitol building to honor the man who contributed to the state of Alabama as an educator, lawyer, and as a businessman. The Honorable Ward McFarland taught at the University of Alabama in the Economics Department for two years prior to practicing law in Tuscaloosa. He served as both State Highway Director and Docks Director for the state, and participated in International Commerce on behalf of the State of Alabama in order to recruit industry. His efforts were recognized in 1979, at the time of his death, as the Alabama State Senate commended him as one of the state's most outstanding and contributing citizens.

Mr. McFarland founded a multi-million dollar real estate empire that included the construction of malls, apartment complexes, medical buildings, restaurants, hotels, and neighborhoods throughout Alabama and the South. His works were again recognized this past year as Alabama Governor Bob Riley proclaimed June 20, 2003 to be James Elisha Folsom, Sr.-Ward Wharton McFarland Day, placing him alongside the governor with whom he had worked during two administrations. Concomitant to that proclamation came the naming of a highway in Alabama the "Folsom-McFarland Highway".

His legacy reaches well beyond the borders of Alabama as well. Mr. McFarland served in the Navy during WWII, during which his vessel was bombed. Accepting Medical Discharges along with all other survivors of the incident, he came home to enlist in the U.S. Army Air Corps. His resolute patriotism during this time

served as a foreshadowing of the resolve he maintained in all other enterprises in his life. Mr. McFarland has a lasting legacy in the state of Alabama, one that will continue to be echoed in the structures that he helped build, and the minds and determinations that he helped to mold in the next generations of Alabama's citizens.

Mr. Speaker, I know that the citizens of Alabama are aware of and appreciate all that Mr. McFarland has done for his state. I am now honored to recognize his accomplishments to this House of Representatives in our nation's Capitol.

CONGRATULATING BEDFORD FIRE
DEPARTMENT #1, INC. ON 200TH
ANNIVERSARY

HON. BILL SHUSTER

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 1, 2004

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Bedford Fire Department #1, Inc. on its 200th Anniversary and to extend my sincere gratitude for the selfless actions of so many firefighters over the years. The citizens of Bedford, Pennsylvania are undoubtedly grateful for all that they have done.

The history of firefighting in Pennsylvania can be traced back to the early 1700's. Ben Franklin, a Philadelphia resident at the time, developed a fine-tuned system of volunteer firefighters that could handily combat the threat of fire within the city limits. When referring to how this cooperative technique worked, Franklin said,

Soon after [a fire] is seen and cried out, the place is crowded by active men of different ages, professions and titles who, as of one mind and rank, apply themselves with all vigilance and resolution, according to their abilities, to the hard work of conquering the increasing fire.

The Bedford Fire Department is one of the oldest fire departments in the United States, founded in 1804. For 200 years this entirely volunteer department, which now consists of 82 members, has successfully collaborated to provide safety and protection for over 11,000 people within an area of 210 square miles.

These volunteer firefighters deserve the highest honors for constantly putting themselves in harm's way to protect and save fellow citizens. Their unselfish valor and relentless dedication to their community make them special, and certainly worthy of praise.

The two stations built within the rural area provide the necessary resources for the firefighters to perform to the best of their ability and handle any variety of situations. The volunteers spend countless hours planning and implementing fundraising events to maintain adequate facilities, provide each firefighter with the proper equipment, and ensure the continued success of the department.

I am tremendously appreciative of the vital duties that the Bedford Fire Department performs and for the time it spends contributing to the safety of the Bedford community. Congratulations on reaching the 200 year milestone! I am proud to have the distinguished honor to represent such a reputable group of volunteers.