

improving the condition of his fellow man for nearly 50 years.

POPCORN WORKERS LUNG DISEASE PREVENTION ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. BETTY McCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 26, 2007

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2693) to direct the Occupational Safety and Health Administration to issue a standard regulating worker exposure to diacetyl:

Ms. McCOLLUM of Minnesota. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of the Popcorn Workers Lung Disease Prevention Act.

Bronchiolitis obliterans frequently referred to as popcorn lung is a serious and debilitating lung disease, which has resulted in severe illness and even death of workers in popcorn and flavor production. This irreversible disease has been linked with exposure to the artificial butter chemical, diacetyl. However, despite this knowledge, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has not issued a single regulation for diacetyl. In fact, OSHA has not issued a single worker safety standard in the last 7 years, except for one ordered by a court.

This legislation requires OSHA to issue an emergency standard within 90 days to minimize worker exposure to diacetyl in popcorn and flavorings manufacturing plants. It also requires OSHA to develop a permanent and more comprehensive standard within the next 2 years to regulate diacetyl exposure in all workplaces.

The Popcorn Workers Lung Disease Prevention Act is supported by a wide range of organizations including the Flavor and Extract Manufacturers Association, the AFL-CIO, the American Society of Safety Engineers, and the American Industrial Hygiene Association.

All workers have the right to a safe and healthy workplace. I urge my colleagues to join me in voting for H.R. 2693.

INTRODUCTION OF THE STATE VIDEO TAX FAIRNESS ACT OF 2007

HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 27, 2007

Mr. CONYERS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce the State Video Tax Fairness Act of 2007. This legislation will ensure that video competition remains robust, states retain the ability to raise revenue through sales taxes, and, most importantly, consumers are not harmed.

Discriminatory sales taxes harm consumers. It is well-established that robust competition for substitutable products generally benefits consumers by yielding lower prices and greater quality.

A number of states, however, have enacted what may be deemed to be discriminatory sales taxes on DBS service, with no burden or a lesser burden placed on cable subscribers,

and more states are threatening to do so. These states impose a higher sales tax on nationally distributed DBS subscribers than they do on cable or other types of video providers.

The legislation that I am introducing today will ensure fair taxation to all consumers, and I hope to conduct hearings and request a GAO study of this issue.

The State Video Tax Fairness Act of 2007 would prohibit discriminatory taxes against any pay-TV service and apply the non-discrimination principle to taxes on both services and equipment.

State revenues would not be impacted. The Act would allow states to tax pay-TV providers or their subscribers, provided that such taxes are applied equally to all such services, including cable and DBS.

Consumers Union and Media Access Project, in separate letters submitted to this record, point out that artificial cost increases to the consumer imposed on one category of service provider can undermine the consumer benefits of competition. A discriminatory sales tax placed on one type of provider but not another is such an artificial cost.

National Taxpayers Union, in a letter submitted to this record, points out that, at the very least state and local governments should not discriminate among products or services by disadvantaging one with heavier taxes. Discriminatory sales taxes against DBS subscribers set a dangerous precedent for picking and choosing winners and losers in a marketplace based on who receives the most favorable sales tax treatment, rather than who provides the best value to consumers.

I urge my colleagues to join me as cosponsors of this legislation.

COMMENDING SIDNEY PHILLIPS, OF MOBILE, ALABAMA, FOR HIS SERVICE DURING WORLD WAR II

HON. JO BONNER

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 27, 2007

Mr. BONNER. Madam Speaker, it is my pleasure to rise today to recognize Dr. Sidney Phillips of Mobile, Alabama, for his courageous service during World War II. At just 17 years of age when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor, young Sidney Phillips signed up for the Marines.

After training, Pvt. Phillips was assigned to H Company, 2nd Battalion, 1st Marines Regiment, 1st Marine Division, and taught to operate the 81 mm mortar. He went overseas in the spring of 1942 first to New Zealand, and then to the Solomon Islands that August where he participated in the landings on Guadalcanal. He survived four months of combat on the island and fought in many battles, including the Battle of the Tenaru.

At the end of 1943, he was sent to New Guinea for training and participated in the invasion of Cape Gloucester, on the western tip of New Britain. In 1944, he was sent back to the United States for the V-12 naval officer training program. He was still in training when the war ended, and was able to return to Mobile.

His story is told in the Ken Burns' documentary series "The War." He is now a retired physician living in Theodore. In 1997, Dr. Phil-

lips penned his war memoir entitled, "You'll Be Sor-reel!"

Madam Speaker, the recognition of Dr. Sidney Phillips in "The War" documentary is an appropriate time for us to pause and thank him—and all of the soldiers who fought in World War II. They personify the very best America has to offer. I urge my colleagues to take a moment to pay tribute to Dr. Phillips and his selfless devotion to our country and the freedom we enjoy.

IN HONOR OF THE 125TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION OF HOOPER, WA

HON. CATHY McMORRIS RODGERS

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 27, 2007

Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the town of Hooper, WA, as they celebrate their 125th anniversary this year. This town has come a long way since four McGregor brothers, John, Archie, Peter and Alec, established the McGregor Land & Livestock Company in Hooper over a century ago. Hooper joins a long list of small communities in Washington State that have found a way to thrive and succeed over the years through the trials and tribulations of an ever changing agriculture industry.

Through the efforts of the community, Hooper has come to symbolize the importance of working together to restore and preserve a rich history. The citizen's commitment to revitalizing the buildings and grounds of the area is outstanding. Seeing refurbished early 20th century buildings like the Hooper Hotel, Hooper Store, and U.S. Post Office conjures memories of simpler times in Washington State's history when rough herdsman, seasonal workers, and aspiring immigrant farmers would come out west in search of the American Dream.

The legacy of these brave individuals will echo for centuries. Due to the hard work and diligence in breaking out land and experimenting with agriculture methods in this part of the country, we now enjoy one of the most successful agriculture industries in the nation. More than 120 families in Whitman County alone have farmed and ranched here for a century or more. Whitman County is the leading wheat producing county in the United States; the Hooper area contributes greatly to this impressive statistic.

What a thrill it must have been to enjoy the company of nearly 400 past and present residents of Hooper during their celebration in August. I am certain we will all be in awe as the beautiful restoration continues in Hooper. This town has been a diamond in the rough for Whitman County since 1882.

Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the town of Hooper and people who have made it such a wonderful part of Washington State history over the years. I invite my colleagues to join me in honoring the community of Hooper, WA as they celebrate 125 years together.

OPERATION SILENCE: SHIFTING BLAME ON AIR INDIA BOMBING

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 27, 2007

Mr. TOWNS. Madam Speaker, on August 4, the Indian newspaper and website Tehelka, which has done significant work exposing corruption in India, published a report on the 1985 Air India bombing, which was the worst terrorist incident involving aircraft until September 11, 2001. In the report, they produce new evidence that the Indian Government was responsible for the attack, which killed 329 innocent people.

The new report discusses the interrogation of the late Babbar Khalsa leader Talwinder Singh Parmar, who was considered by the Indians to be one of the masterminds of the attack. It should be noted that Babbar Khalsa was and is heavily infiltrated by the Indian Government and has been pretty much under its control.

In his interrogation, Parmar points the finger of responsibility straight at the Indian Government. The documents, obtained from the Punjab Human Rights Organization, PHRO, which conducted a 7-year investigation, were supposed to have been destroyed by the interrogating officer, but he secretly kept them all this time.

Parmar identifies Lakhbir Singh Rode as a mastermind of the bombing. Rode is head of the International Sikh Youth Federation. According to PHRO, Rode is an agent of the Indian Government. Sarbjit Singh, chief investigator for the PHRO, reports that Parmar was ordered killed to cover up Rode's involvement.

Parmar was supposed to have been killed in an encounter with police, but the PHRO pointed out that he had been in police custody for some time at the time he was killed. PHRO reports that there is "conclusive evidence" that Parmar was killed in police custody.

With this information coming on top of the mountain of evidence produced by Zuhair Kashmeri and Brian McAndrew in their book *Soft Target* and the report by former Member of Parliament David Kilgour in his book *Betrayed: The Spy Canada Abandoned*, in which he reports that a Canadian-Polish double agent was approached by representatives of the Indian Government asking him to become involved in a second bombing because "the first one worked so well," there can be no doubt that the Indian Government itself is the real culprit behind this act of terrorism. The links are just too strong.

State terrorism is unacceptable whether it is carried out by the Taliban in Afghanistan, by Mr. Ahmadinejad in Iran, by some tinhorn dictator in Latin America, or by the "world's largest democracy." We cannot let this stand. The time has come to stop our aid to India, end our trade, and speak out strongly for self-determination, the cornerstone of democracy, throughout South Asia. Only then will these kinds of abuses, designed to set up one ethnic or religious group as "terrorists" so they can be killed, come to an end.

I request the permission of the House to place the Tehelka article in the RECORD for the information of my colleagues and the public.

KANISHKA TRAGEDY—OPERATION SILENCE (By Vikram Jit Singh)

Fifteen years after Babbar Khalsa International leader Talwinder Singh Parmar, one of the two alleged masterminds of the mid-air bombing of Air India's Kanishka airplane, was shown as having being killed in an encounter in Punjab, retired Punjab Police DSP Harmail Singh Chandi, who nabbed Parmar from Jammu in September 1992 and interrogated him for five days before he was killed along with five others, has come forward with the claim that Parmar was killed in police custody on the orders of senior police officers, who also asked his confession record to be destroyed. In his confession, Parmar had named Lakhbir Singh Brar "Rode", nephew of the late Bhindranwale and head of the banned International Sikh Youth Federation, as the mastermind of the bombing. Rode, who is now said to be holed up in Lahore, has never figured in the investigations of either the CBI or the Canadian authorities.

Chandi has brought forward the entire record of Parmar's confession, including audio tapes and statements, before the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) and the John Major Commission of Inquiry that is reinvestigating the June 23, 1985 blast that claimed 331 lives off the Irish coast. Chandi had been ordered by senior officers to destroy the records but he retained them secretly. The record was brought before the Major Commission due to seven-year-long investigations by the Punjab Human Rights Organisation (PHRO), a Chandigarh-based ngo that conducted interviews of Parmar's associates in India and Canada and pieced together a comprehensive report. The PHRO's Principal Investigator Sarbjit Singh and lawyer Rajvinder Singh Bains flew to Canada along with Harmail in June and produced their findings before the Commission's counsels.

A Canadian citizen, Parmar was shown as having been killed in an exchange of fire between police and six militants in the wee hours of October 15, 1992, near village Kang Arian in Phillaur sub-division. However, evidence brought forward by Harmail (who was then DSP, Phillaur) shows that Parmar was interrogated between October 9 and 14 by senior police officers, where he revealed that the blasts were instigated by Lakhbir Singh Brar Rode.

Parmar's confession reads: "Around May 1985, a functionary of the International Sikh Youth Federation came to me and introduced himself as Lakhbir Singh and asked me for help in conducting some violent activities to express the resentment of the Sikhs. I told him to come after a few days so that I could arrange for dynamite and battery etc. He told me that he would first like to see a trial of the blast . . . After about four days, Lakhbir Singh and another youth, Inderjit Singh Reyat, both came to me. We went into the jungle (of British Columbia). There we joined a dynamite stick with a battery and triggered off a blast. Lakhbir and Inderjit, even at that time, had in their minds a plan to blast an aeroplane. I was not too keen on this plan but agreed to arrange for the dynamite sticks. Inderjit wanted to use for this purpose a transistor fitted with a battery . . . That very day, they took dynamite sticks from me and left.

"Then Lakhbir Singh, Inderjit Singh and their accomplice, Manjit Singh, made a plan to plant bombs in an Air India (AI) plane leaving from Toronto via London for Delhi and another flight that was to leave Tokyo for Bangkok. Lakhbir Singh got the seat booking done from Vancouver to Tokyo and then onwards to Bangkok, while Manjit Singh got it done from Vancouver to To-

ronto and then from Toronto to Delhi. Inderjit prepared the bags for the flights, which were loaded with dynamite bombs fitted with a battery and transistor. They decided that the suitcases will be booked but they themselves will not travel by the same flights although they will take the boarding passes. After preparing these bombs, the plan was ready for execution by June 21 or 22, 1985. However, the bomb to be kept in the flight from Tokyo to Delhi via Bangkok exploded at the Narita airport on the conveyor belt. The second suitcase that was loaded on the Toronto-Delhi ai flight exploded in the air."

Sarbjit said the PHRO's probe has shown that Parmar was killed to hide the name of Lakhbir, who was an Indian agent. "After the Khalistan movement gained in sympathy in the West, especially in Canada, after the 1984 Blue Star operation and the killing of Sikhs in Delhi, a plot was hatched to discredit the Sikh movement. Parmar was roped in by Lakhbir at the behest of his masters. The Punjab Police got orders to finish off Parmar as he knew too much about the main perpetrators. On the day of the Kanishka blast, an explosion took place at Japan's Narita airport, where two Japanese baggage handlers were killed. The plot was to trigger blasts when the two aircraft had de-embarked their passengers but the 1 hour 40 minute delay in Kanishka's takeoff led to the bomb exploding mid-air," Sarbjit said.

What gives credence to Sarbjit's charge is the Source Report (in Tehelka's possession) prepared by the Jalandhar Police soon after Parmar was killed. Based on information provided by Parmar—though not attributing it to his interrogation—the report makes no reference to Lakhbir. Interestingly, Lakhbir, accused in many acts of terrorist violence, is wanted by the Indian Government in only a minor case registered in Moga, Punjab. The Red Corner Interpol notice, A-23/1-1997, put out by the CBI against Lakhbir states: "OFFENCES: House breaking, theft, damage by fire."

The PHRO told Canadian authorities that conclusive evidence existed of Parmar being killed in police custody and not in the "encounter" shown in FIR No 105 registered at Phillaur police station on October 15, 1992. The PHRO report, AI Flight 182 Case, states "On October 14, 1992, a high-level decision was conveyed to the police that Parmar had to be killed . . . The contradiction in the FIR and post-mortem report (PMR) is too obvious. As per the FIR, Parmar was killed by AK-47 fire by SSP Satish K Sharma from a rooftop. The PMR shows the line of fire of the three bullets is different. It cannot be if one person is firing from a fixed position. The PMR is very sketchy and no chemical analysis was done. Moreover, the time of death is between 12am and 2am according to the PMR, whereas the FIR records the time of death at 5.30am." Then Jalandhar SSP and now IGP, Satish K Sharma, denied the charge. "It was a clean encounter. The RCMP is bringing this up because they botched their investigations and failed to get convictions," he said.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE BIRTHDAY OF SUL ROSS

HON. CIRO D. RODRIGUEZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 27, 2007

Mr. RODRIGUEZ. Madam Speaker, today on the 169th anniversary of his birth, I would like to recognize a Texas hero, Lawrence Sullivan "Sul" Ross. He was a Texas Ranger,