

At 6 p.m. on October 11, 2007, Lt. Marc Tunstall and Ensign Jason Evans, pilot and co-pilot of a Coast Guard HH-60 Jayhawk helicopter found the downed F/A-18 Hornet nearly 80 miles off Cape Henry, Virginia. Rescue swimmer Petty Officer 2nd Class Mike Ackermann was dispatched to retrieve the pilot from the ocean, whereupon the rescued pilot was hoisted in the helicopter by flight mechanic Petty Officer 3rd Class Steven Acuna. The rescued pilot was transported to Sentara Norfolk General Hospital where he is in stable condition, with only minor injuries from the crash.

Madam Speaker, this successful rescue is one of nearly 360 search and rescue missions executed every year by the men and women of Coast Guard Air Station Elizabeth City. In the last 60 years, the Air Station has rescued or assisted over 10,000 people. I am proud that Coast Guard Air Station Elizabeth City is located in my district, and more proud of the exemplary work and bravery exhibited by the men and women who save hundreds of lives each year. I ask my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to the commendable work of Lt. Tunstall, Ensign Evans, Petty Officer 2nd Class Ackermann and Petty Officer 3rd Class Acuna.

EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE HOUSE REGARDING WITHHOLDING OF INFORMATION RELATING TO CORRUPTION IN IRAQ

SPEECH OF

**HON. ELIJAH E. CUMMINGS**

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, October 16, 2007*

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, five years ago today, President George W. Bush signed into law the "Joint Resolution to Authorize the Use of United States Armed Forces Against Iraq," H.J. Res. 114.

In the House, the bill passed on October 10, 2002, by a vote of 296-133. I was one of 126 Democrats who voted against this grossly misguided bill, concluding that further diplomacy was needed over a U.S. military strike.

And today—I remain unyielding in my stance that diplomacy, rather than military action is the answer to creating political reconciliation in Iraq.

We must implement a diplomatic strategy that is framed upon the doorway of the U.N. and hinges on the Arab League, the Organization of the Islamic Conference, U.S. allies and the will of the Iraqi people.

Mr. Speaker, as the Iraq Study Group concluded, a diplomatic strategy of gaining multi-lateral and bilateral support throughout the international community, especially with Iraq's neighboring states will help marginalize extremists and terrorists, promote U.S. values and interests, and improve America's global image.

Unfortunately, to date, the President's new strategy is not a new strategy at all and continues the same failed plan that was utilized prior to the surge. His failed plan has resulted in over 3,800 U.S. soldiers being killed and over 27,000 American soldiers being wounded.

Additionally, at least 150,000 of our service members have been victims of concussions,

many of whom will suffer from life long injuries that have no medical or technological resolutions—including blindness, deafness, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and Traumatic Brain Injury. In the great State of Maryland alone, we continue to mourn the deaths of 70 service members and our prayers go out to over 392 brave men and women in uniform who suffer from wounds gained on the battlefield of Iraq.

Mr. Speaker, as we look back over the last five years we can only point to meager accomplishments while the overwhelming factor that shatters the forefront of our memory is the onslaught of bloodshed, further internal and external displacement of the Iraqi people, further corruption of the Iraqi government and further strained relations in the Middle East due in large part to the President's stubborn course of military operations in Iraq.

In fact, corruption within the Iraqi government is as bad as ever and has become what has been described by Stuart Bowen, the U.S. State Department's Special Inspector for Reconstruction in Iraq as a 'second insurgency' threatening to undermine U.S. and Iraqi efforts to build a stable democracy. As concluded by the Iraqi Commission for Public Integrity, corruption cases have increased by a staggering 70 percent in the last year, despite the Administration's efforts to quell these concerns by layering them in bureaucratic red tape and retroactively labeling unwarranted information as being classified.

As such, I congratulate my colleagues on passing H. Res. 734, which is a step in the right direction. Specifically, this legislation sends a strong message to the Administration that anti-democratic practices will not be tolerated. It also sends a message to the Iraqi Government that the U.S. Government will not sit idly by as Americans continue to sacrifice their lives at the expense of sustaining a mismanaged Iraqi Government.

Considering the ongoing corruption in Iraq, it is clear that our military can not do what should be the job of ambassadors, foreign dignitaries and heads of state.

As we look to the future, I hope that the Administration will shift from these failed policies in Iraq to a new policy that is fundamentally diplomatic and weighs heavily on the assistance of the international community.

We owe this to our brave soldiers, their families and friends, the American people, and to the people of Iraq.

TRIBUTE TO MAXINE PIERCE FROST

**HON. KEN CALVERT**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, October 18, 2007*

Mr. CALVERT. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor and pay tribute to an individual whose dedication and contributions to the community of Riverside, California has been exceptional. The Riverside educational community has been fortunate to have dynamic and dedicated community leaders who willingly and unselfishly give their time and talent for the betterment of our children. Maxine Frost is one of these individuals. On December 8, 2007, Maxine will be honored at a retirement dinner after serving 40 years as a

member of the Riverside Unified School District Board of Education.

Mrs. Maxine Frost graduated from Stanford University with a bachelor's degree in history and has been a resident and active member of the Riverside community since 1958. Mrs. Frost's interest in education began with her involvement in the education of her children. She was an active mother who served on various school committees. In 1967, the President of the Riverside Unified School District Board of Education selected Maxine to fill a vacancy on the Board of Education. During her tenure, Mrs. Frost witnessed history including the desegregation of the Riverside school district. Maxine went on to serve on the California School Boards Association and in 1981 she was elected President of the organization.

During her tenure on the Board, Maxine has been elected by her fellow board members to serve as board president, vice-president and clerk. One of Maxine's many success stories is the creation and development of the AVID program: Achievement Via Individual Determination. AVID offers average students the opportunity to take college prep classes while teaching them study techniques and teamwork.

Mrs. Frost's involvement in the community is not limited to education; she has also dedicated her time to many other organizations that improve our quality of life including the Riverside Art Alliance, Junior League of Riverside, League of Women Voters and the National Charity League. One reflection of Maxine's many contributions to the community are the countless awards and honors she has received over the years. Recently the Riverside Unified School District Board of Education voted to name a school after Maxine, a vote which required the Board to make an exception to its policy which requires that a person be deceased for two years before a facility can be designated.

Mrs. Maxine Frost's tireless passion for community service has contributed immensely to the betterment of the community of Riverside, California. She has been the heart and soul of the Riverside Unified School District Board of Education and many other community organizations. I am proud to call Maxine a fellow community member, American and friend. I know that many community members are grateful for her service and salute her as she retires.

INDIA IS A DEFICIENT DEMOCRACY

**HON. DAN BURTON**

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, October 18, 2007*

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Madam Speaker, I was extremely disappointed today to see the Human Rights Watch had to issue a statement calling on the Government of India to finally take concrete steps to hold accountable members of its security forces who killed, "disappeared," and tortured thousands of Sikhs during its military campaign in the Punjab. I was disappointed because India should already be doing this. I was disappointed because this call to action is simply further proof that India—which prides itself on being the

world's most populous democracy—is in reality a highly deficient democracy; and that it has yet to do what it legally and morally must do; which is to clean up its atrocious human rights record.

The massive human rights violations of the Indian Government have been well documented. In fact, according to the Department of State's 2006 Human Rights Report for India: "Major problems included extrajudicial killings of persons in custody, disappearances, torture and rape by police and security forces. The lack of accountability permeated the government and security forces, creating an atmosphere in which human rights violations often went unpunished. Although the country has numerous laws protecting human rights, enforcement was lax and convictions were rare." Again, these are not my words; this is from the State Department's official report on Human Rights.

Although relations between India and the United States have been rocky in the past, since 2004 Washington and New Delhi have been pursuing a "strategic partnership" based on shared values such as democracy, multiculturalism, and rule of law. In addition, numerous economic, security and globally focused initiatives, including plans for "full civilian nuclear energy cooperation," are currently underway. I support these initiatives but I remain deeply concerned about the numerous serious problems that remain when it comes to India's respect for the rights of all of her citizens.

Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to place a copy of the Human Rights press release into the RECORD at this time. I urge my colleagues to read it and remember it and as the United States and India move towards greater cooperation in numerous endeavors to insist that India live up to its moniker and adhere to the full expression of democracy and basic human rights; especially for members of ethnic or religious minorities.

INDIA: TIME TO DELIVER JUSTICE FOR ATROCITIES IN PUNJAB

DELHI.—The Indian government must take concrete steps to hold accountable members of its security forces who killed, "disappeared," and tortured thousands of Sikhs during its counterinsurgency campaign in the Punjab, Human Rights Watch and Ensaaf said in a new report released today.

In order to end the institutional defects that foster impunity in Punjab and elsewhere in the country, the government should take new legal and practical steps, including the establishment of a commission of inquiry, a special prosecutor's office, and an extensive reparations program.

The 123-page report, "Protecting the Killers: A Policy of Impunity in Punjab, India," examines the challenges faced by victims and their relatives in pursuing legal avenues for accountability for the human rights abuses perpetrated during the government's counterinsurgency campaign. The report describes the impunity enjoyed by officials responsible for violations and the near total failure of India's judicial and state institutions, from the National Human Rights Commission to the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), to provide justice for victims' families.

Beginning in the 1980s, Sikh separatists in Punjab committed serious human rights abuses, including the massacre of civilians, attacks upon Hindu minorities in the state, and indiscriminate bomb attacks in crowded places. In its counterinsurgency operations in Punjab from 1984 to 1995, Indian security

forces committed serious human rights abuses against tens of thousands of Sikhs. None of the key architects of this counterinsurgency strategy who bear substantial responsibility for these atrocities have been brought to justice.

"Impunity in India has been rampant in Punjab, where security forces committed large-scale human rights violations without any accountability," said Brad Adams, Asia director at Human Rights Watch. "No one disputes that the militants were guilty of numerous human rights abuses, but the government should have acted within the law instead of sanctioning the killing, 'disappearance,' and torture of individuals accused of supporting the militants."

A key case discussed in detail in the report is the Punjab "mass cremations case," in which the security services are implicated in thousands of killings and secret cremations throughout Punjab to hide the evidence of wrongdoing. The case is currently before the National Human Rights Commission, a body specially empowered by the Supreme Court to address this case. However, the commission has narrowed its efforts to merely establishing the identity of the individuals who were secretly cremated in three crematoria in just one district of Punjab. It has rejected cases from other districts and has ignored the intentional violations of human rights perpetrated by India's security forces. For more than a decade, the commission has failed to independently investigate a single case and explicitly refuses to identify any responsible officials.

"The National Human Rights Commission has inexplicably failed in its duties to investigate and establish exactly what happened in Punjab," said Adams. "We still hold out hope that it will change course and bring justice to victims and their families."

The report discusses the case of Jaswant Singh Khaira, a leading human rights defender in Punjab who was abducted and then murdered in October 1995 by government officials after being held in illegal detention for almost two months. Despite credible eye-witness testimony that police chief KPS Gill was directly involved in interrogating Khaira in illegal detention just days prior to Khaira's murder, the Central Bureau of Investigation has thus far refused to investigate or prosecute Gill. In September 2006, Khaira's widow, Paramjit Kaur, filed a petition in the Punjab & Haryana High Court calling on the CBI to take action against Gill. More than a year later, she is still waiting for a hearing on the merits.

"Delivering justice in Punjab could set precedents throughout India for the redress of mass state crimes and superior responsibility," said Jaskaran Kaur, co-director of Ensaaf. "Indians and the rest of the world are watching to see if the current Indian government can muster the political will to do the right thing. If it fails, then the only conclusion that can be reached is that the state's institutions cannot or will not take on the security establishment. This has grave implications for Indian democracy."

Victims and their families seeking justice face severe challenges, including prolonged trials, biased prosecutors, an unresponsive judiciary, police intimidation and harassment of witnesses, and the failure to charge senior government officials despite evidence of their role in the abuses.

Tarlochan Singh described the hurdles he has faced in his now 18-year struggle before Indian courts for justice for the killing of his son, Kulwinder Singh:

"I used to receive threatening phone calls. The caller would say that they had killed thousands of boys and thrown them into canals, and they would also do that to Kulwinder Singh's wife, kid, or me and my wife . . .

"The trial has been proceeding . . . with very little evidence being recorded at each hearing, and with two to three months between hearings. During this time, key witnesses have died."

After Mohinder Singh's son Jugraj Singh was killed in an alleged faked armed encounter between security forces and separatists in January 1995, he pursued numerous avenues of justice. He brought his case before the Punjab & Haryana High Court and the CBI Special Court, but no police officer was charged. A CBI investigation found that Jugraj Singh had been killed and cremated by the police. However, 11 years and a few inquiry reports later, the CBI court ended Mohinder Singh's pursuit for accountability by dismissing his case in 2006. Mohinder Singh describes his interactions with the CBI:

"On one occasion when [the officer] from the CBI came to my house, he told me that I wasn't going to get anything out of this. Not justice and not even compensation. He further said that: 'I see you running around pursuing your case. But you shouldn't get into a confrontation with the police. You have to live here and they can pick you up at any time.' He was indirectly threatening me."

Human Rights Watch and Ensaaf expressed concern that the Indian government continues to cite the counterinsurgency operations in Punjab as a model for preserving national integrity.

"The government's illegal and inhuman policies in the name of security have allowed a culture of impunity to prevail that has brutalized its police and security forces," said Kaur.

The report suggests a comprehensive framework to address the institutionalized impunity that has prevented accountability in Punjab. The detailed recommendations include establishing a commission of inquiry, a special prosecutor's office, and an extensive reparations program.

"The Indian government needs to send a clear message to its security services, courts, prosecutors, and civil servants that it neither tolerates nor condones gross human rights violations under any circumstances," said Adams. "This requires a comprehensive and credible process of accountability that delivers truth, justice, and reparations to its victims, who demand nothing more than their rights guaranteed by India's constitution and international law."

HONORING ROBERT C. THOMPSON

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 18, 2007

Mr. WOLF. Madam Speaker, I want to call to the attention of the House the outstanding public service of Robert C. Thompson of McLean, Virginia, in my congressional district, as he prepares to retire this month.

Mr. Thompson has contributed more than 30 years of public service to our Nation, most recently as Deputy Director for Management and Administration of the Naval Criminal Investigative Service, which he helped completely restructure from the ground up following 9/11. He has proven himself a pioneering, tireless leader in the Navy's efforts to combat terrorism around the globe.

Robert Thompson began his career in the Army, where he saw armed conflict in Vietnam, and was stationed in the Republic of