

MILITANTS KILL CHRISTIAN MINISTER IN PAKISTAN

(By Nahal Toosi and Chris Brummitt)

ISLAMABAD.—Militants gunned down the only Christian in Pakistan's government outside his widowed mother's home Wednesday, the second assassination in two months of a high-profile opponent of laws that impose the death penalty for insulting Islam.

Shahbaz Bhatti was aware of the danger he faced, saying in a videotaped message that he had received death threats from al-Qaida and the Taliban. In it, the 42-year-old Roman Catholic said he was "ready to die" for the country's often persecuted Christian and other non-Muslim minorities.

The slaying in Islamabad followed the killing of Salman Taseer, a liberal politician who was gunned down in the capital by one of his guards. Both men had campaigned to change blasphemy laws in Pakistan that impose the death penalty for insulting Islam and have been loudly defended by Islamist political parties.

The Taseer slaying triggered fears the country was buckling under the weight of extremism, especially since the government, fearful of militants and the political parties that champion their causes, did not loudly condemn the killing or those who publicly celebrated it.

Wednesday's slaying will only reinforce those concerns and further undermine confidence in the government, which appears paralyzed by political rivalries and unable to fix a stagnant economy or provide basic services for the country's 180 million mostly poor people.

The turmoil comes despite attempts by the Obama administration to support Pakistan, which it sees as key to ending the war in neighboring Afghanistan and defeating al-Qaida, whose leadership is believed to reside in the mountainous northwestern regions.

Pakistani government ministers usually travel with police escorts, but Bhatti was without such protection when he was killed as he and a driver left his mother's home. Bhatti, who was minister for religious minorities, had been given police and paramilitary guards but had asked them not to accompany him while he stayed with his mother, said Wajid Durrani, a senior police official.

A friend of the politician, Wasif Ali Khan, said Bhatti was nervous about using guards after the Taseer killing and had requested a bulletproof car, but had not received one.

Bhatti had just pulled out of the driveway when three men opened fire, said Gulam Rahim, a witness. Two opened the door of the car and tried to pull Bhatti out, Rahim said, while a third fired a Kalashnikov rifle repeatedly into the dark-colored Toyota, shattering the windows.

The gunmen then sped away in a white car, said Rahim, who took shelter behind a tree.

Bhatti was hit with at least eight bullets and was dead on arrival at hospital.

In leaflets left at the scene, al-Qaida and the Pakistani Taliban Movement in Punjab province claimed responsibility. They blamed the government for putting Bhatti, an "infidel Christian," in charge of an unspecified committee, apparently in reference to his support for changing the blasphemy laws.

"With the blessing of Allah, the mujahdeen will send each of you to hell," said the note, which did not name any other targets.

Government officials and political party workers condemned the killing, but made no reference to the blasphemy law controversy. Muslim clerics contacted by The Associated Press or interviewed on Pakistani TV either offered a tepid condemnation or claimed the assassination was part of an American-led

conspiracy to drive a wedge between Muslims and Christians.

Bhatti, a soft-spoken minister who rose to prominence defending a Christian woman sentenced to death for blasphemy, often spoke of the threats against him from extremists. Very few Pakistani politicians were willing to talk about changing the blasphemy law because of the danger.

"They (the Taliban) want to impose their radical philosophy in Pakistan. And whoever stands against their radical philosophy, they threaten them," he said in the video message, which was posted on the website of the First Step Forum, a Finland-based group that promotes religious harmony, rule of law and democracy.

"These threats and these warnings cannot change my opinions and principles. I'm living for my community and suffering people," said Bhatti, who was an adviser to the group and had asked that his message be released in the event of his death.

The slaying robbed Pakistani Christians of their most prominent advocate.

"We have been orphaned today!" wailed Rehman Masih, a Christian resident of Islamabad. "Now who will fight for our rights? Who will raise a voice for us? Who will help us?"

Christians are the largest religious minority in Pakistan, whose population is 95 percent Muslim. They have very little political power and tend to work in lower-level jobs, such as street sweeping.

As Christians took to the streets Wednesday to protest in several cities, relatives and friends went to Bhatti's home to pay their respects. "Tell the mullahs that the man who was the voice of the Christians is silent. Where are they now?" Samuel David, one of the visitors, shouted to a television crew.

The assassination drew condemnation from Christian and government leaders.

A Vatican spokesman, the Rev. Federico Lombardi, called the slaying a "new episode of violence of terrible gravity," saying it "demonstrates just how justified are the insistent statements by the pope regarding violence against Christians and religious freedom."

Lombardi noted that Pope Benedict XVI had met with Bhatti in September.

President Barack Obama condemned the slaying, saying Bhatti "fought for and sacrificed his life for the universal values that Pakistanis, Americans and people around the world hold dear"—including rights to free speech and religious freedom.

In Britain, leaders of the Anglican Church expressed shock and sorrow and urged Pakistan's government to do more to protect Christians.

U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton said the attack was "not only on one man but on the values of tolerance and respect of all faiths and backgrounds."

The blasphemy laws were originally framed by the Asian subcontinent's British colonial rulers but were toughened in the 1980s during the military rule of Gen. Mohammad Zia ul-Haq, who pushed a politicized, austere brand of Islam.

Human rights groups have long warned that the laws are vaguely worded and open to abuse because people often use them to settle rivalries or persecute religious minorities.

Right-wing Islamist parties, looking for an issue to rally their supporters, have campaigned against any change to the laws, accusing those who seek to amend them of blasphemy—and creating an environment that led to the latest killings.

"Bhatti's murder is the bitter fruit of appeasement of extremist and militant groups both prior to and after the killing of Punjab Governor Salman Taseer," said Human

Right Watch. "An urgent and meaningful policy shift on the appeasement of extremists that is supported by the military, the judiciary and the political class needs to replace the political cowardice and institutional myopia that encourages such continued appeasement despite its unrelenting bloody consequences."

Another prominent opponent of the blasphemy laws, ruling party member Sherry Rehman, recently dropped her bid to get them changed. Rehman, who has said she had to abide by party leaders' decisions, faces death threats and has been living with heavy security.

RECOGNIZING EMILY McMILLAN AS THE 2012 ESCAMBIA COUNTY, FLORIDA TEACHER OF THE YEAR

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2011

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Ms. Emily McMillan as the 2011 Escambia County, Florida Teacher of the Year. Ms. McMillan joined the Escambia County School District in January 2008. From day one she has inspired her students to strive for excellence, and I am honored to recognize her achievements.

Ms. McMillan was identified as an exceptional candidate for the teaching profession years before she stepped into the classroom. In high school, Ms. McMillan began taking dual enrollment courses at a local college. Her dedication to achieving scholastic excellence during her high school career put her on track to graduate from the University of West Florida in just two years. Ms. McMillan's undergraduate studies were completed on an accelerated time frame; however, during her time at UWF she received myriad awards and scholarships, including the Florida Retired Educators Association's Scholarship for Teachers of Tomorrow.

Ms. McMillan arrived at Ferry Pass Elementary School ready to teach; nonetheless, she also knew that even the best teachers always have room to improve and new methods to employ. She joined the Reading Leadership Team, which meets on a monthly basis to create and implement reading goals for the entire school. She now serves as the Reading Committee Chairwoman, meeting with teachers from each of the seven grade levels at Ferry Pass Elementary and Middle School to work on the implementation of the Reading Leadership Team's goals. She also works with the Media Specialist to develop innovative methods to foster a love of reading.

While the overall goal of education remains the same, teachers today must be able to adapt to the changing needs of their students. Ms. McMillan serves her students and, as a result, she incorporates a variety of instructional strategies to ensure that every student meets their specific learning needs. Her sedulous dedication to her students facilitates learning and creates an educational environment where students are given the time and support to ensure that they meet their goals.

Ms. McMillan realizes that parents are fundamental to the educational success of their children. She creates lines of communication between herself and parents by sending home

daily citizenship reports, a weekly folder with detailed notes, and a monthly newsletter. Her dedication to her profession earns her respect from students, parents, and colleagues alike.

The importance of teachers cannot be overstated. They play an integral role in shaping the future of our nation. To be selected as Teacher of the Year, chosen from a large pool of extremely qualified applicants, is an immense honor. This award is a reflection of Ms. McMillan's assiduous work ethic and steadfast dedication to the students of Escambia County, Florida. She has proven to be among the many exceptional teachers in our nation, and I am proud to have her as a constituent in Florida's First Congressional District.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress, I am privileged to recognize Emily McMillan for her accomplishments and her continuing commitment to excellence at Ferry Pass Elementary School and in the Escambia County School District. Her passion for her students is laudable, and her dedication to her profession is exemplary. My wife Vicki joins me in congratulating Ms. McMillan, and we wish her all the best.

IN HONOR OF U.S. MARSHAL
DEREK HOTSINPILLER

HON. DAVID B. MCKINLEY

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2011

Mr. MCKINLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in sadness over the tragic loss of U.S. Deputy Marshal Derek Hotsinpiller. 24 year old Derek Hotsinpiller of Bridgeport, West Virginia, was killed in the line of duty while serving a federal search and arrest warrant in Elkins, West Virginia. It deeply saddens me to see anyone hurt in the line of duty, let alone lose their life such as Derek Hotsinpiller did.

Deputy Marshal Hotsinpiller was a dedicated hero who defended our community with the utmost dignity. He always went above and beyond the call of duty for his partners, colleagues, and country. Derek served our community selflessly.

Deputy Marshal Hotsinpiller was born June, 2 1986, and graduated from Fairmont State University in 2009. After excelling in both high school and college, he became a U.S. Deputy Marshal in 2010. Many who knew this brave young man say law enforcement was in his DNA, and since childhood he dreamed of following in the footsteps of his late father and brother, who both served in the Bridgeport Police Department. Derek wanted nothing more than to serve our country as a Marshal.

After witnessing so many recall their experiences with this brave young man at his funeral, it's clear to me that Derek Hotsinpiller was a unique American hero. So many in our community have felt this tremendous loss. He was truly loved by those who knew him. There is no question that Derek's memory should be honored.

Derek leaves behind an inspiring legacy and serves an example of what we can accomplish if we put our hearts and minds towards serving others. My thoughts and prayers are with Derek's mother Pam, his brother Dustin, his high school sweetheart Megan and the rest of the Harrison County-area community.

IN SUPPORT OF THE PLANNED
PARENTHOOD FEDERATION OF
AMERICA

HON. ED PERLMUTTER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2011

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to the Pence Amendment #11 regarding the defunding of Title X health programs including Planned Parenthood. The Planned Parenthood Federation of America provides essential medical services to millions of men and women. For more than 90 years Planned Parenthood has promoted the health and well-being of women and men. More than 90 percent of the care Planned Parenthood provides is primary and preventive. These services include wellness exams, cancer screenings, immunizations, contraception and STD testing and treatment.

Often the only medical care women and men will receive is at Planned Parenthood. More than 6 in 10 patients who receive care at centers like Planned Parenthood consider it their primary source of care. Three-quarters of Planned Parenthood patients live at or below 150 percent of the federal poverty rate. These patients need centers like Planned Parenthood more than ever. Without their services millions of patients will go without health care.

The Pence Amendment would defend all of these services. Planned Parenthood is the only national provider that has developed a set of evidence-based guidelines to define health care delivery, and they review them annually. For every public dollar invested in family planning services, \$3.74 is saved in Medicaid-related costs. This amendment would cut these savings to the federal government and state governments. Title X funding provided 2.2 million Pap tests, 2.3 million breast exams, over 6 million tests for sexually transmitted infections, and nearly 1 million HIV tests. This amendment would cause women to experience unintended pregnancies, face potentially life-threatening cancer and other disease that could have been prevented. This amendment is not about fiscal responsibility or legality, it is about denying women the right to affordable medical care.

In Colorado and across this country Planned Parenthood is providing care to over 3 million people a year. Their services are essential to women, men and their families. No one should go without affordable health care, and Planned Parenthood leads the way in providing it.

INTRODUCING THE MARRIAGE
PROTECTION ACT OF 2011

HON. DAN BURTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2011

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, last week, President Obama made an unprecedented decision to declare a Federal law unconstitutional and thereby abdicate his responsibility to uphold and defend that law.

The law in question is the 1996 "Defense of Marriage Act" written "to define and protect the institution of marriage." It allows all states, territories, possessions, and Indian tribes to

refuse to recognize an act of any other jurisdiction that designates a relationship between individuals of the same sex as a marriage.

This law was properly passed by the U.S. House of Representatives and the United States Senate and properly signed by then-President Clinton. The law was passed to reflect the desire of the American people that we clarify the meaning of "marriage" so that the definition of the word could not be changed by activist judges.

The Constitution of the United States grants certain powers to the President, but not the power to unilaterally legislate based on personal preference. The power to legislate was given specifically to the Congress and it is Congress' responsibility to pass or repeal legislation. Neither does the Constitution of the United States grant courts the power to legislate, although many activist judges have attempted to redefine the legal definition of marriage through the judicial process.

Furthermore, the Constitution does not grant the Federal government the power to regulate marriage. In fact, the Tenth Amendment specifically states: "The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or the people." The responsibility to regulate marriage properly belongs to the people of the various States and it is time for us to return that power to the people.

That is why I, along with a number of my colleagues, am today reintroducing the Marriage Protection Act of 2011. This bill simply states that no courts created by an act of Congress—meaning Federal courts—will have jurisdiction to hear cases regarding same-sex marriage. Additionally, the Supreme Court will not have appellate jurisdiction to hear these cases. In short, the bill makes same-sex marriage an issue to be determined by the people through their State legislatures or via referendum, not to be determined by Federal judges.

If this bill is passed then no President, Justice Department official, or Judge will be allowed to unilaterally define marriage. Only the people will have the power to decide the definition of marriage.

I urge my colleagues to co-sponsor this important and timely bill.

SUPPORT OF MR. KLINE'S
AMENDMENT TO H.R. 1

HON. ANDRÉ CARSON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 3, 2011

Mr. CARSON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, on February 17, 2011, Mr. KLINE offered an Amendment to H.R. 1 to prevent the use of funds toward implementing the Department of Education's harmful gainful employment rule. Although that amendment passed, I mistakenly voted against it. I apologize to Mr. KLINE, my colleagues, and supporters of the amendment for my mistake.

Whereas we cannot support programs that offer little to no substantive education and mislead students down a path to insurmountable debt, I do not support a rule that will eliminate many quality programs and block access to higher education for many non-traditional, low-