

IN HONOR OF THE 90TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CHURCH OF THE INCARNATION

**HON. ROBERT MENENDEZ**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, December 8, 2000*

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Church of the Incarnation on its 90th anniversary, which will be celebrated on Sunday, December 10, 2000. Founded in 1910, the Church of the Incarnation is celebrating ninety years of faith in God and community.

The Church of the Incarnation held its first service on January 8, 1911, in a room rented from the Afro-American Women's Industrial Club for \$6.00 a month. Although its beginnings were meager, its future would not be. Despite financial hardship, the congregation grew steadily, attracting members with the deepest faith and commitment.

In June of 1928, the Church of the Incarnation held a groundbreaking ceremony for its new building. On December 24, 1928, the Church held its first service there.

In 1971, the Church achieved "Parish Status," and later established an award for the man and woman of the year. In order to become more involved in the community, the Church began to sponsor and implement community outreach programs and participated in community development projects, including after school and summer camp programs; the renovation of P.S. #18, which currently provides housing for low-income families; a "Clothing Ministry" for the poor; and a scholarship fund. "Resurrection House" opened for occupancy in 1992. In addition, the Church established a Sunday school and a men's chorus and youth choir, as well as a newsletter entitled "Good News."

The Church of the Incarnation merged with St. Mathew's and St. Stevens in 1997. Today, the three churches together are St. Augustine. A new church and community center will be completed in December 2001.

Ninety years after its founding, the Church of the Incarnation proudly celebrates its history—a history that is a testament to the congregation's enduring faith and extraordinary commitment to God and community.

Today, I ask that my colleagues join me in honoring the 90th anniversary of the Church of the Incarnation. This congregation's faith is a wonderful example for everyone.

SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT  
WITH REGARD TO INDIA

**HON. BENJAMIN A. GILMAN**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, December 8, 2000*

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, as the year 2000 comes to a close, we can look back over the past twelve months with a profound sense of accomplishment by pointing to a new chapter in our relationship between the United States and India. We have witnessed dramatic changes that have created a dynamic and lasting partnership as celebrated throughout President Clinton's visit to India last July and Prime Minister's Vajpayee's journey to the

U.S. where, on an historic September morning, he addressed a joint meeting of the House and Senate. Today, as never before, India and the U.S., the world's two largest democracies, are collaborating on a host of issues of mutual interest, from technology to the environment and from economic development to the fight against terrorism.

Our close ties with India would not have been possible without the bipartisan cooperation of the Congress. The vast majority of our members have embraced that relationship. We have enacted congressional resolutions demonstrating our solid support for India and its democratic institutions and we have been actively engaged in promoting regional stability in an area of vital concern to U.S. interests, and the flow of commerce between our nations. In view of the overwhelming support in forging a harmonious relationship for the new millennium, it is disappointing that a few of our colleagues have seen fit to disparage and discourage that relationship by launching a series of ill-informed attacks on India and its people. In the interest of accuracy and in the broader context of the growing bonds of friendship between the U.S. and India, it is important that we set the record straight.

First, let us consider the baseless claim that the Government of India was responsible for the bombing of an Air India jet in 1985, which occurred off the coast of Ireland in a flight originating in Canada, claiming the lives of 329 passengers. That incident has now been thoroughly investigated by one of the world's most respected law enforcement agencies, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP). On October 27, 2000 after an almost 15-year inquiry, the RCMP charged two residents in British Columbia, Ripudaman Singh Malik and Ajaib Bagri, with the murders of the innocent civilians killed in the crash of the Air India jet. One of those individuals, Mr. Malik, has been identified by Canadian authorities as the financial backer of extreme Sikh separatist groups operating from Canada. Both Canadians have also been charged with the murders of two baggage handlers in Tokyo by a bomb that was meant to destroy yet another Air India flight. These individuals, will be given a trial and afforded every opportunity to defend themselves against the murder and criminal conspiracy charges lodged against them by Canadian authorities.

As the India Abroad News Service reported recently, moderate Sikhs in the U.S. have welcomed the RCMP's apprehension of the suspects. According to India Abroad, the Sikh Council on Religion and Education—a community think-tank based in Washington—concluded:

We, the Sikhs, condemn the killing of innocent people. We also want to emphasize in the strongest possible terms that any such employment of violence for political ends is totally against Sikh teachings and values. The Sikh religion teaches tolerance and respect for all religious beliefs and practices . . . The consensus in the Sikh community in India and internationally has been that political issues must be resolved through dialogue, political process and peaceful means. We are surprised and shocked that there could be Sikh individuals who would commit such a horrible act . . .

These moderate and responsible views of the U.S. Sikh community stand in sharp contrast to the false information in press releases prepared by the so-called "Council of

Khalistan" on the destruction of the Air India jet that were reflected in statements by one of our colleagues. This "Council" has little presence and

Turning to the second event—the massacre of 36 Sikh villagers in Chittisinghpura on March 20, 2000 which occurred just as President Clinton arrived for his state visit to India. Statements that the Indian government was responsible for this infamous act of murder, defies the facts. The true story is otherwise. Indian authorities have arrested a prime suspect in the case who disclosed that the massacre was the work of a group of terrorists in the ranks of the Hiz-ul-Majahideen (HUM) and HUM's affiliate, the Lashkar-e-Toiba (LET). The HUM has already been designated by the State Department as a foreign terrorist organization and I have joined with other members of the Congress in calling upon the State Department to name the LET as a terrorist organization.

Both the HUM and LET are on the long list of terrorist organizations that are encouraged and supported by Pakistan. Attacks from forces outside of India, often led by armed mercenaries, are consistent with the pattern of terrorism that these and other terrorist groups have carried out for many years against innocent Hindus and Muslims in Kashmir. Their motive is clear—they seek to disrupt the territorial integrity of India and to show that a multi-religious society cannot survive. The attack on the Sikh community in Chittisinghpura, by cynically choosing the very eve of President Clinton's visit to New Delhi to perpetrate these atrocities, follows the policy of ethnic cleansing to eliminate whatever little minority population that resides in the Kashmir valley. Casting blame on India for these deliberate acts of violence is at odds with the facts of the case and India's constitutional obligation to protect the civil and human rights of its diverse communities.

Finally, let us consider recent statements claiming that India is practicing "state terrorism" in Punjab and Kashmir, citing unsubstantiated figures from questionable and unreliable sources. Using these claims, it is contended India should be declared a terrorist state. Such a notion flies in the face of the documented record by the U.S. State Department citing the improvement of human rights in India. It is also contrary to the partnership between the U.S. and India in combating the menace of international terrorism by engaging in day-to-day cooperative counter-terrorist activities.

With India's record of democracy deeply rooted in its constitution and its tolerance for its many religious and ethnic communities, India itself has suffered from the ravages of terrorism to a degree virtually unparalleled around the world. The human cost of this cross-border terrorism has been staggering. Indeed, over the years, more than 16,000 Indians in Punjab have been murdered and maimed by cross-border terrorists. The deadly toll in Jammu and Kashmir has exceeded 21,000.

It is in this context that we should examine the damage that can be caused by unsubstantiated allegations and false propaganda. Charges are continually hurled against the Government of India every time a vicious act