

The significance of Fort Osage is not limited to Lewis and Clark. Both the Yellowstone Expedition and the Long Expedition visited the Fort in 1819. The Long Expedition brought the first steamboat, Western Engineer. Only years later, William Becknell arrived at Fort Osage, using the site as mile marker "0" for the Santa Fe trail, again distinguishing the importance of the Fort in relation to commerce in the west.

Due to the area's historical significance, the Fort Osage Education Center was proposed as part of the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Commemoration. The Education Center was recently recognized by the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Commission as the priority project in Missouri and I am honored to have this historical site in my district. I look forward to the events surrounding the bicentennial commemoration at Fort Osage and in other areas of the 6th District of Missouri. I join the Missouri Bicentennial Commission, the Missouri Department of Conservation and the United States Geological Survey in full support of the proposed Fort Osage Education Center.

RESOLUTION ON KALMYK  
SETTLEMENT IN AMERICA

**HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, May 8, 2001*

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing a resolution congratulating the Kalmyk people in the United States on the fiftieth anniversary of their settlement in this country. The resolution also encourages continuing scholarly and educational exchanges between the Russian Federation and the United States to encourage better understanding and appreciation of the Kalmyk people and their contributions to the history and culture of both countries.

The Kalmyks were originally an ethnic Mongolian nomadic people who have inhabited the Russian steppes for around 400 years. The present Kalmyk Republic of the Russian Federation is located north of the Caspian sea in southern Russia. During World War II, the Kalmyk people were one of the seven "punished peoples" exiled en masse by Stalin to "special settlements" in Siberia and Central Asia for allegedly collaborating with the Nazis. There were about 170,000 deportees. After World War II, several hundred Kalmyks who managed to escape the Soviet Union were held in Displaced Persons camps in Germany. For several years, they were not allowed to emigrate to the United States because of prejudice against their Mongolian ethnicity.

However, on July 28, 1951, the Attorney General of the United States issued a ruling which cleared the way for the Kalmyk people in the Displaced Persons camps in Germany to enter the United States. In the fifty years since their arrival, the Kalmyk emigres and their descendants have survived and prospered. Moreover, they are the first community of Tibetan Buddhists to settle in the United States. While adapting to much of America's diverse and modern culture, the Kalmyk have also sought to preserve their own unique traditions. Many continue to practice the Tibetan Buddhist religion.

Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Kalmyk community of the United States has

been able to re-establish contact with the Kalmyk people in the Russian Federation. For the past ten years, a wide exchange has been developed between relatives, students and professionals.

Mr. Speaker, our country is so much richer for the presence of our Kalmyk-American citizens. I urge my colleagues to join me and my colleagues Mr. HOYER, Mr. PITTS, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. WAMP, and Mr. HASTINGS, in congratulating the Kalmyk-American community on the fiftieth anniversary of their settlement in the United States by cosponsoring and supporting this resolution.

IN HONOR OF THE MEMBERS OF  
THE STRATEGIC TECHNICAL DI-  
RECTORATE COMMANDOS FAMILI-  
TERRANCE, CA

**HON. LORETTA SANCHEZ**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, May 8, 2001*

Ms. SANCHEZ. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to pay tribute to a very extraordinary group of members who are being commemorated for the Presidential Unit Citation. These heroic members of the Strategic Technical Directorate Commandos Family passionately and diligently sacrificed their lives for "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness" for the people of Southeast Asia.

During the Vietnam War, the people of Southeast Asia and the fighting soldiers of the United States faced many challenges that jeopardized their lives. But in 1964, the Strategic Technical Directorate (the U.S. joint services command) was created to help the U.S. and Southeastern Asian soldiers to fight for freedom. The Strategic Technical Directorate included the best selected group of officers. The members showed their intelligence, commitment, and bravery in combat. They selflessly risked their own lives in hopeless situations to save others. For example, in 1974, the North Vietnamese Army attacked the city of Phuoc Long. 250 Airborne Rangers came to the rescue, but they faced brutal assaults from the North Vietnamese Army and lost contact with the Strategic Technical Directorate. After a four-day search, the Strategic Technical Directorate found only 50 percent of their surviving members in the city. Another example is during April 1975. The Strategic Technical Directorate's Special Missions Services went to the city of Phan Rang, where the North Vietnamese were attacking the city. 100 of their additional commandos were captured by the North Vietnamese Army. Then the remaining Strategic Technical Directorate units went to defend Saigon. By the final days of April, the North Vietnamese Army surrounded the capital. The Strategic Technical Directorate did not give up. 500 SMS commandos, the headquarters personnel, and the Liaison Service barged in and fought until capitulation on April 30. These two examples prove how the members of STD risked their lives and put 100 percent of their diligence and commitment in winning the freedom for Southeast Asia.

The members of the Strategic Technical Directorate Commandos Family will not be forgotten, but be remembered and honored, for their survival, courage, and dedication in fighting for "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happi-

ness." They risked their lives to help the people of Southeast Asia because they were in danger and had their human rights taken away. I ask you to join me today in recognizing these heroic figures who proved to us the meaning of bravery and diligence.

VAISAKHI DAY

**HON. DAN BURTON**

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, May 8, 2001*

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, the Sikhs recently celebrated their important holiday of Vaisakhi Day. It is the 302nd birthday of the Sikh Nation. On Vaisakhi Day in 1699, Guru Gobind Singh, the last of the Sikh gurus, formed the Khalsa Panth. He blessed them with the blessing "Raj Kare Ga Khalsa," which means, "the Khalsa shall rule."

The Sikhs consider Vaisakhi a very important holiday. It is effectively the Sikh national holiday. As this Vaisakhi Day passed, however, the Sikh Nation still lives in slavery.

Sikhs ruled Punjab from 1765 to 1849. They ran a secular state with religious tolerance. Sikhs, Muslims, and Hindus participated in the government. When the British vacated the subcontinent, the Sikhs were to receive sovereign power, but they were taken in by the false promises of Nehru and Gandhi that they would have freedom in Punjab. No Sikh representative has ever signed the Indian constitution, and many Sikhs are demanding their independence, as declared on October 7, 1987. Although they seek this peacefully, India considers anyone who speaks out for a separate Sikh state, called Khalistan, to be a "terrorist." Instead, it is India that has used the tools of terrorism.

A new report from the Movement Against State Repression shows that the Indian government holds, by its own admission, at least 52,268 political prisoners under the illegal and expired "Terrorist and Disruptive Activities Act," called TADA. Both the Movement Against State Repression and Amnesty International have confirmed that tens of thousands of political prisoners are being held without charge or trial. Some of them have been in jail since 1984. According to The Politics of Genocide by respected human-rights worker Inderjit Singh Jaijee, the Indian government since 1984 has murdered over 250,000 Sikhs. They join thousands of Christians, Muslims, Dalits, and others who have been killed at the hands of the Indian government.

In the spirit of Vaisakhi, the U.S. Congress should support freedom for the Sikh Nation and the other nations of South Asia who are seeking their sovereignty and independence. We must support a free and fair plebiscite in Punjab, Khalistan, on the question of independence and also plebiscites for Kashmir, as India promised in 1948, for Nagalim, and for all the nations living under Indian occupation. We should also cut off American aid until India learns to respect its own laws and the basic human rights of all people. Let the Sikhs, celebration of Vaisakhi remind us that the freedom is the birthright of all peoples and nations.