

who inspired so many in the Greater Pittston area of Northeastern Pennsylvania. I would like to reprint that article below.

JOSEPH SAPORITO LIFETIME OF SERVICE  
AWARD

If you knew "Cugsy" Adonizio you know he always cried when he was happy. He'd tell a funny story and inevitably his laughter turned to tears.

Such paradox tells the story of Cugsy's life. He was successful, yet humble, strict yet compassionate, powerful yet gentle.

In his later years, as he battled a heart condition, Cugsy became weak yet strong. He needed the assistance of a cane, but still walked a couple of miles every day. And while walking was difficult for him, swinging a golf club was not. He scored a hole-in-one at the age of 81.

And the paradox continues since his death on October 26 at 88 years old. "In a funny way," his wife Helen says, "he's more alive than ever. I talk to him all the time and, in his own way, I believe he answers me."

Charles Adonizio Jr.—"Cugsy" to most, just "Cugs" to his wife of 57 years—is today honored posthumously with the Joseph Saporito Award for Lifetime of Service to Greater Pittston.

He received a similar honor in 1979 when he was named Man of the Year by St. Michael's School for Boys. It was a fitting tribute for a man who dedicated a good part of his life to helping troubled youth.

As Chief Juvenile Probation Officer for Luzerne County from 1962 until his retirement in 1982, Cugsy earned a reputation as a compassionate disciplinarian. He was more concerned with rehabilitation than punishment. He saw a system that needed fixing and he set about to fix it.

Cugsy graduated from Pittston High School (later returning as school director) and Duquesne University, who since placed his name on their Who's Who list.

He served in the U.S. Navy during World War II and was a full lieutenant at the time of his discharge. He spent 33 months on active duty in the Pacific.

He organized the Wyoming Valley Naval Reserve and became its first commanding officer. He retired in 1955 as a Lieutenant Commander.

He was a Past Exalted Ruler of the Pittston Elks, Fourth Degree and Life Member of the Knights of Columbus, Past Commander of Fort Pittston Post V.F.W., and first President of the Our Lady of Mount Carmel Holy Name Society.

He and Helen are parents of six children: Judy Yanchek, Gloria Blandina, the late Mary Christine Thompson, Charles III, Jane Adonizio Lukas, and Dr. Patrick.

SIKHS PROTEST INDIAN REPUBLIC  
DAY

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 24, 2004

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, on January 26, India celebrated its Republic Day, the anniversary of the adoption of its Constitution. Now if it would only live by that constitution.

The Council of Khalistan organized a successful protest outside the Indian Embassy here in Washington. While India celebrated, minorities are being killed. India has murdered over 250,000 Sikhs since 1984, over 300,000 Christians in Nagaland, over 85,000 Kashmiri Muslims, and tens of thousands of other mi-

norities. There are tens of thousands of political prisoners, according to Amnesty International. These include over 52,000 Sikhs, a study from the Movement Against State Repression showed. That doesn't sound like a republic to me.

People came to the protest from all over the East Coast. They chanted slogans like "Khalistan Zindabad," "Long live Khalistan," and many others. They educated the public about the repression of minorities in India while the attendees at the Ambassador's party celebrated India's freedom.

We salute India's freedom, but it is time that these benefits extended to everyone within its borders, not just the Brahmin elites and their friends. It is time for the repression to end and for the minorities to live in freedom too.

Mr. Speaker, this kind of repression is unacceptable in any country, but especially in one that proclaims itself democratic.

Perhaps they feel that this repression is necessary to hold the country together, since India is not a single nation but many nations thrown together under one banner, much like the Soviet Union or the Austro-Hungarian Empire. History shows that such nations cannot long survive.

Now I know you're wondering what America can do to help. We should uphold and support the principle of self-determination for all people. The right to self-determination is the cornerstone of democracy.

The time has come to end our aid to India so that all the people there can enjoy the glow of freedom. The best way to secure the blessings of liberty for everyone within India's artificial borders is to stop aiding the tyrants who oppress them with U.S. taxpayer dollars. The other thing that we must do, Mr. Speaker, perhaps equally important, is to take a stand for the essential right of self-determination by putting this Congress on record in support of a free and fair plebiscite with international monitoring on the question of independence for all the minority nations of the subcontinent. This will ensure them the opportunity to enjoy the full rights of free people.

Mr. Speaker, the Council of Khalistan issued an outstanding press release on its Republic Day protest. I would like to insert it into the RECORD at this time for the information of my colleagues and the public.

COUNCIL OF KHALISTAN,  
Washington, DC, January 26, 2004.

SIKHS PROTEST INDIAN GENOCIDE ON REPUBLIC  
DAY

DEMAND FREEDOM FOR SIKH NATION OF  
KHALISTAN. NO DEMOCRACY FOR SIKHS,  
CHRISTIANS, MUSLIMS, OTHERS

Sikhs from around the East Coast demonstrated in Washington, D.C. today to protest the ongoing genocide against the Sikh Nation and other minorities by the Hindu fundamentalist, terrorist Government of India. They raised slogans of "Khalistan Zindabad", "India out of Khalistan," "2-4-6-8, India is a Fascist state," and other slogans.

India's Republic Day celebrates the day in 1950 when India adopted its Constitution. But what India calls "Republic Day" is Genocide Day for the minority peoples and nations of South Asia. The Indian government has murdered over 250,000 Sikhs since 1984, more than 300,000 Christians since 1948, over 85,000 Muslims in Kashmir since 1988, and tens of thousands of Tamils, Assamese, Manipuris, Dalits, and others. The Indian Supreme Court called the Indian government's mur-

ders of Sikhs "worse than a genocide." According to a study by the Movement Against State Repression, 52,268 Sikhs are being held in illegal detention as political prisoners without charge or trial. Some of them have been held since 1984!

"India is not a democracy for Sikhs, Muslims, Christians, and other minorities," said Dr. Gurmit Singh Aulakh, President of the Council of Khalistan, which leads the Sikh Nation's struggle for independence. "The rights guaranteed in the Indian constitution are not enjoyed by non-Hindus," he said. "While India celebrates, Sikhs and others are dying," he said. "Is that something to celebrate?"

Christian missionary Joseph Cooper was expelled from India after a mob of militant Hindu nationalists allied with the Rashtriya Swayamsewak Sangh (RSS), a pro-Fascist organization that is the parent organization of the ruling BJP, beat him so severely he had to spend a week in the hospital. In 2002, 2,000 to 5,000 Muslims were attacked in Gujarat while police were ordered to stand aside, reminiscent of the 1984 Delhi massacres of Sikhs. Indian newspapers reported that the government planned the Gujarat massacre in advance.

Indian police arrested human-rights activist Jaswant Singh Khalra after he exposed their policy of mass cremation of Sikhs, in which over 50,000 Sikhs have been arrested, tortured, and murdered, then their bodies were declared unidentified and secretly cremated. He was murdered in police custody. His body was not given to his family. The police never released the body of former Jathedar of the Akal Takht Gurdev Singh Kaunke after SSP Swaran Singh Ghotna murdered him. Ghotna has never been brought to trial for the Jathedar Kaunke murder. No one has been brought to justice for the kidnapping and murder of Jaswant Singh Khalra.

"It is good that American pressure has forced India and Pakistan to talk about Kashmir," said Dr. Aulakh. "But the atrocities still continue. Khalistan, Kashmir, and all the nations of South Asia have the right to self-determination," he said. "In a democracy, you cannot rule the people against their will." On October 7, 1987, the Sikh Nation declared its independence from India, naming its new country Khalistan. On December 5, Dr. Aulakh met President Bush. "I am aware of the Sikh and Kashmiri problem," President Bush told him.

History shows that multinational states such as India are doomed to failure. Countries like Austria-Hungary, India's longtime friend the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, and others prove this point. India is not one country; it is a polyglot like those countries, thrown together for the convenience of the British colonialists. It is doomed to break up as they did. India is ruled by Hindu theocrats whose agenda is "Hindu, Hindi, Hindutva, Hindu Rashtra," or total Hindu domination of every facet of Indian life. An Indian Cabinet minister said that everyone who lives in India must be a Hindu or subservient to Hindus.

Sikhs ruled Punjab until 1849 when the British conquered the subcontinent. Sikhs were equal partners during the transfer of power from the British. The Muslim leader Jinnah got Pakistan, the Hindu leaders got India, but the Sikh leadership was fooled by the Hindu leadership promising that Sikhs would have "the glow of freedom" in Northwest India. The Sikhs took their share with India on that promise.

"Democracies don't commit genocide," Dr. Aulakh said. "Only in a free and sovereign Khalistan will the Sikh Nation prosper. In a democracy, the right to self-determination is the sine qua non and India should allow a

plebiscite for the freedom of the Sikh Nation," he said. "India should also allow self-determination in Christian Nagaland, Kashmir, Assam, and the other nations fighting for freedom to bring peace to South Asia."

"As Professor Darshan Singh, a former Jathedar of the Akal Takht, said, 'If a Sikh is not for Khalistan, he is not a Sikh,'" Dr. Aulakh noted. "We must continue to press for our God-given birthright of freedom," he said. "Without political power, religions cannot flourish and nations perish."

HONORING ESTHER MEDINA, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE MEXICAN AMERICAN COMMUNITY SERVICES AGENCY, INC

**HON. ZOE LOFGREN**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 24, 2004*

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to acknowledge the great contributions of Esther Medina, the executive director of the Mexican American Community Services Agency, Inc. (MACSA). Founded in 1964, MACSA has established itself as the leader in the Latino community in the area of advocacy, social justice, youth/family/senior services, implementation and operation of two charter schools and the development of affordable housing.

Esther Medina was hired as the executive director of MACSA in 1982. At that time, MACSA was on the verge of losing funding from the United Way and was put on a 3-month corrective action plan to prove fiscal solvency, stable management and leadership. At that time, the finances were in such disarray, MACSA had no money in its budget to operate. Esther was able to convince the United Way to allocate \$27,000 to keep its doors open for 3 more months. Through Esther's efforts, she transformed MACSA from an organization with 1 full-time and 1 part-time employee, on the verge of having its doors closed forever, to an organization with 120 employees and an annual operating budget of over seven million dollars as well as developing and owning its current headquarter building, 2 acclaimed affordable housing projects for seniors, a full service 25,000 square foot multi-service youth center, a youth/teen intervention center, and 2 public charter high schools.

Esther Medina exemplifies the characteristics of a competent leader by being true to her values as a human being. The astounding success of MACSA is clearly attributable to her outstanding leadership.

IN LASTING MEMORY OF THOMAS MCRAE

**HON. MIKE ROSS**

OF ARKANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 24, 2004*

Mr. ROSS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to rise in honor of the life and legacy of Thomas McRae III. He was a loving father and husband, a statesman, a leader, a public servant, and a tireless advocate of helping the less fortunate. He recently passed away at the age of 65 at his family's home in Arkadelphia.

Tom McRae, who was deeply rooted in an affluent Arkansas political family, graduated from El Dorado High School in 1956, and went on to earn a History degree from the University of Arkansas and a law degree from the University of Arkansas Law School. Upon graduation, he volunteered to go to Nepal with the Peace Corps in 1964, a 2-year experience that would give him a new perspective on society and allow him to perform extensive social work on behalf of Nepalese villagers and farmers.

Tom became a household name in 1990 when he ran in the Democratic primaries against Governor Bill Clinton in the face of overwhelming odds. He finished a strong second in a field of six, proving that odds are no detriment to a steadfast spirit and determination to fight for the causes and ideals in which you believe. It was a fight he would continue years later by directing nonprofit programs in Mississippi and Kentucky, helping the rural poor get loans and find jobs.

Throughout his life, Tom distinguished himself through a sustained commitment to his ideals and his community. He devoted himself to uplifting society by helping those less fortunate. His character is an example of the values we, as parents, teachers, community members, and legislators, hope to instill in our next generation. Bill Clinton spoke for many of us when he said, "I respected, admired and liked Tom McRae, and I will be forever grateful for the lifetime of service he gave to Arkansas."

I extend my deepest sympathies to his wife, Christine, his children, Catherine and Thomas, as well as all of those who knew and loved him. Although he may no longer be with us, his spirit and his legacy live on in the examples he set and the many lives he touched.

TRIBUTE TO MARJORIE CLEMENT

**HON. SCOTT MCINNIS**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 24, 2004*

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, it is with profound sadness that I rise before you to recognize Marjorie Clement of Jefferson County, Colorado, who recently passed away at the age of 81. She was a stellar public servant who will be missed by many, and I think it appropriate that we remember her life before this body of Congress and this Nation today.

Marjorie was appointed Jefferson County Commissioner in 1981, and was elected to serve for two additional terms. An ardent supporter of preserving Colorado's open spaces, Marjorie worked tirelessly to preserve some of Colorado's most beautiful landscapes and vistas. Marjorie became the second woman elected to the Jefferson County Board of County Commissioners, and will be remembered as a great defender of the citizens in her community. In addition to her elected office, Marjorie also contributed to her community as a member of the Jefferson County Historical Commission and the Jefferson County Historical Society. Marjorie was an avid outdoorswoman, enjoying horseback riding, tennis, and skiing. She is survived by a daughter, Elizabeth Graham, a son, Lawrence Clement, five grandchildren, and a great-granddaughter.

Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to rise before this body of Congress and this Nation to pay tribute to the life of Marjorie Clement. Marjorie was a beloved woman who made a tremendous impact on her community through her many selfless years in public service. The Jefferson County community and the State of Colorado will truly miss her, and my thoughts go out to Marjorie's loved ones during this difficult time of bereavement.

COUNCIL OF KHALISTAN URGES SIKH ORGANIZATIONS TO TAKE STRONG STAND FOR FREEDOM

**HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 24, 2004*

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, recently, the French National Assembly enacted a law banning religious symbols such as "conspicuous crosses," yarmulkes, Muslim headscarves, and Sikh turbans from schools. Many religious organizations spoke out against it, including many Sikh organizations. Belgium is thinking about such a law also.

The Council of Khalistan wrote a letter on February 11 noting that none of the other Sikh organizations mentioned the persecution of Sikhs in India or their struggle for freedom in their communications about this law. Yet a free and sovereign Sikh homeland, Khalistan, would have put the Sikhs in a much stronger position to protest these discriminatory and unfair rules.

The letter, brought to me by Dr. Gurmit Singh Aulakh, the tireless fighter for freedom in South Asia, calls on Sikh organizations to stand up to the repression by working for freedom for the Sikh people.

In my years of public service, I have had the privilege of knowing many Sikhs. They are hardworking people and they are very supportive of the cause of freedom. Yet the Indian government's response is to step up the repression in the name of Hindutva—total Hindu domination of every facet of life in the subcontinent. An Indian Cabinet minister even said that everyone who lives in India must either be a Hindu or be subservient to Hindus.

Over a quarter of a million Sikhs have been killed by the Indian government in the last 20 years, Mr. Speaker. More than 52,000 are political prisoners. Even one political prisoner is unacceptable, Mr. Speaker. Even one government murder is unacceptable, especially when no one is punished for it and especially when the country where it happens proudly proclaims its commitment to democratic values.

Over 200 years ago, Americans fought to achieve our independence from an overbearing British monarchy. Today, the Sikhs fight for their freedom by peaceful means, which the Indian government falsely describes as terrorist. We are the beacon of hope for the freedom-loving people of the world, Mr. Speaker. We owe it to them and to ourselves to help them if we can.

One way to help is to stop aid to India as long as these egregious human rights violations continue. Everyone is entitled to live in peace and freedom, to go to work and enjoy life with the family and friends. Yet minorities in India are unable to do that because militant Hindus aligned with the RSS, the parent organization of the ruling party, and the government itself in many cases commit terrible acts