

on record in support of self-determination for all the people seeking their freedom there.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to place Dr. Aulakh's letter to the Human Rights Commission into the RECORD at this time.

COUNCIL OF KHALISTAN,
Washington, DC, July 13, 2004.

Madam Justice LOUISE ARBOUR,
High Commissioner, United Nations Commission
on Human Rights, Plaise des Nations, Geneva,
Switzerland.

DEAR JUSTICE ARBOUR: As the Chief Prosecutor for the International Court of Justice, you helped to bring the persons who committed massacres, genocide, and pogroms on the innocent people of Bosnia to justice. Your work for human rights around the world is well known and we salute you for it. It is because of that record that I am writing to you today about the plight of the Sikhs and other minorities in India. The plight of the Sikhs and other minorities in India is deplorable. India claims to be "the world's largest democracy" and claims that it is a secular country, but in practice it is not. As Narinder Singh, a spokesman for the Golden Temple, told America's National Public Radio, "The Indian government, all the time they boast that they are democratic, that they are secular, but they have nothing to do with a democracy, nothing to do with a secularism. They just kill Sikhs just to please the majority." Unfortunately, Sikhs are not the only victims of this brutality. Other minorities such as Christians, Muslims, even the Dalits (called "Untouchables") are persecuted in India.

The Indian government has murdered over 250,000 Sikhs since 1984, more than 300,000 Christians in Nagaland since 1947, over 88,000 Kashmiri Muslims since 1988. Christians and Muslims have been murdered in other parts of the country as well, along with tens of thousands of Assamese, Bodos, Dalits, Manipuri's, Tamils, and other minorities. According to the Movement Against State Repression (MASR), 52,268 Sikhs are being held as political prisoners under the repressive TADA law, which expired in 1995. Amnesty International reports that tens of thousands of other minorities are also being held as political prisoners. These prisoners are held without charge or trial in "the world's largest democracy," some of them since 1984! That is 20 years in illegal detention. Their whereabouts are unknown. They might have been killed while in police custody.

Sardar Jaswant Singh Khalra looked at the records of the cremation grounds at Patti, Tam Taran, and Durgiana Mandar and documented at least 6,018 secret cremations of young Sikh men ages 20-30. These young Sikhs were arrested by the police, tortured, murdered, then declared unidentified and secretly cremated. Their bodies were not even returned to their families. They have never officially been accounted for. The Punjab Human Rights Commission estimates that about 50,000 such secret cremations have occurred.

For exposing this horrendous atrocity, Sardar Khalra was abducted by the police on September 6, 1995 while he was washing his car, then murdered in police custody. The only witness to his kidnapping, Rajiv Singh Randhawa, has been repeatedly harassed by the police. Once he was arrested for trying to hand a petition to the then-British Home Minister, Jack Straw, in front of the Golden Temple in Amritsar.

Police SSP Swaran Singh Ghotna tortured and murdered Akal Takht Jathedar Gurdev Singh Kaunke and has never been punished for doing so. K.P.S. Gill, who was responsible for the murders of over 150,000 Sikhs in his time as Director General of Police, is still

walking around scot-free. He was even involved in leading the Indian Olympic field hockey team. His trip to the Atlanta Olympics in 1996 was protested by the Sikh community in the United States, which is over half a million strong, but he was allowed to come to the Olympics on an Olympic Committee visa. Immediately after the Olympic hockey game, he was shipped back to Punjab as a threat to peace and an affront to the Sikh community. 50 members of the U.S. Congress from both parties wrote to the President protesting his appearance in the United States.

In addition to this, the Indian government attacked the Golden Temple in Amritsar, the center and seat of the Sikh religion, in June 1984, as well as 224 other Gurdwaras (Sikh places of worship) throughout Punjab. Sikh leaders Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale, General Shabeg Singh, and others, as well as over 20,000 Sikhs were killed in these attacks. The Sikh holy scripture, the Guru Granth Sahib, written in the time of the Sikh Gurus, was shot full of bullet holes by the Indian Army. Over 100 young Sikh boys ages 8 to 13 were taken out into the courtyard and asked if they supported Khalistan, the independent Sikh state. When they answered with the Sikh religious incantation "Bole So Nihal" they were summarily shot to death.

Unfortunately, other minorities have also suffered greatly under the boot of Indian repression. In March 2002, 5,000 Muslims were killed in Gujarat while police were ordered to stand by and let the carnage happen, in an eerie parallel to the Delhi massacre of Sikhs in November 1984 in which Sikh police officers were locked in their barracks while the state-run television and radio called for more Sikh blood.

Christians have suffered under a wave of repression since Christmas 1998. An Australian missionary, Graham Staines, and his two young sons, ages 8 and 10, were burned to death while they slept in their jeep by a mob of Hindu militants connected with the Rashtriya Swayamsewak Sangh (RSS), an organization formed in support of the Fascists. The mob surrounded the burning jeep and chanted "Victory to Hanuman," a Hindu god. None of the mob has ever been brought to justice; instead the crime has been blamed on one scapegoat. Mr. Staines' widow was thrown out of the country after the incident. An American missionary, Joseph Cooper of Pennsylvania, was expelled from India after being beaten so severely that he had to spend a week in the hospital. None of the persons responsible for beating Mr. Cooper has been prosecuted. Churches have been burned, Christian schools and prayer halls have been attacked and vandalized, priests have been murdered, nuns have been raped, all with impunity. Police broke up a Christian religious festival with gunfire. Amnesty International has not been allowed into Punjab since 1978. Even Castro's Cuba has allowed Amnesty into the country more recently. What is India hiding?

My organization, the Council of Khalistan, is leading the Sikh struggle for freedom and sovereignty. Working with the Congress of the United States, we have internationalized the struggle for freedom for the Sikhs and all the people of South Asia since the Council of Khalistan's inception on October 7, 1987, the day that the Sikh Nation declared its independence from India. We have worked to preserve the accurate history of the Sikhs and the repression of minorities by India by preserving the information in the Congressional Record. We continue to work for freedom for the Sikh Nation. Self-determination is the essence of democracy.

On behalf of the Sikh Nation, I am asking the Human Rights Commission to expose In-

dia's reign of terror to the international community. It is time for India to be held to account for its tyrannical rule covered by a veneer of democracy. Please do not let India hide behind a false claim of democracy and secularism. By shining the light on India's terroristic rule, you can help bring freedom and basic human rights to all the people of the subcontinent.

Thank you in advance for your attention to this situation and for helping the people of South Asia.

Sincerely,

DR. GURMIT SINGH AULAKH,
President, Council of Khalistan.

150TH ANNIVERSARY OF PENN
STATE

HON. TODD RUSSELL PLATTS

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 14, 2004

Mr. PLATTS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize a great institution of higher learning, the Pennsylvania State University, as a leader in post-secondary education. On July 1, 2004, Penn State began a year-long celebration of its 150th Anniversary, marking the historic achievements it has made in Pennsylvania, the Nation, and around the world.

Penn State, known at its inception in 1855 as "the Farmers" High School," was born at the behest of the State's Agriculture Society. The Society members recognized the need to base the growing field of agriculture in sound sciences. College President Evan Pugh rose to the challenge, uniquely combining classical studies with practical application. Pugh's vision soon became the foundation of the institution's mission: to provide "instruction, research, outreach and extension".

As student and business interest grew over the following decades, Penn State grew along with it. Recognizing the limitations the Depression placed on households in the 1930's, Penn State began opening satellite campuses throughout the state. Penn State began renting classroom space in York, Pennsylvania, which is in my Congressional District, as early as 1926.

In 1955, the Penn State York campus officially opened and began offering courses to students at its current location. The campus was much-admired for having one of the highest concentrations of students enrolled in technical courses and studying the field of engineering on a satellite campus. As a student who studied engineering at the Penn State York Campus, I can attest to the high quality education provided to Penn State students. Continuing its mission for outreach and extension, Penn State merged with the Dickinson School of Law in 1997, also located in my Congressional District in Carlisle, Pennsylvania.

There can be no doubt that Penn State has played a strong and vitally important role in the education of students around the world. With three members of my staff, both past and present, as Penn State alumni, I can attest to the quality education Penn State provides. Even as the proud son of a University of Pittsburgh graduate, a known "rival" of Penn State, I wish to congratulate the Pennsylvania State University on its successful 150 years, and extend best wishes for continued successes in the years to come.