

Miller still loves to be a political player. He ticks off the issues he had worked on that very day: child labor and sweatshops, sugar subsidies, the war in Kosovo, Sierra forests, Delta water, education standards.

"I've never taken the honor of being a member of Congress lightly," he says. "It is a privilege. It's what makes me get up in the morning and go to work, knowing in one fashion or another you're going to get to be a participant in our Democratic system. It sounds really corny, except it's really energizing."

The bottom line is that there's no sign Miller will retire any time soon. Indeed, he's making plans for the next phase of his congressional career.

Rep. William Clay, D-Mo., the ranking Democrat on the Education and the Workforce Committee, announced last month that this will be his last term. Miller is in line to succeed him, to lead the Democrat's education agenda in the House. And to become committee chairman if Democrats win back a majority. Miller has put out word he wants the job.

But to get it he will have to give up his ranking position on the Resources Committee. Central Valley water leaders are quietly gleeful.

"I'm excited for him to go pursue other areas," Peltier says. "It also excites me that if the Democrats take control of Congress again, he won't be breathing fire on us immediately."

Nelson concurs. "Someone will just have to warn all the education people just what they're in for. It will not be status quo."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JIM TURNER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 16, 1999

Mr. TURNER. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 50, I was absent because of my participation in a congressional delegation trip to Russia with members of the House Armed Services Subcommittee on Military Research and Development for the purpose of discussing with the Russian Duma pending anti-missile defense Legislation. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes" on H.R. 819.

INDIAN COLONEL: TROOPS "DYING LIKE DOGS"

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 16, 1999

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, all of us have been following with alarm the Indian attack on the Kashmiri freedom fighters at Kargil and Dras. India has been losing many of its troops in this desperate effort to crush the freedom movements within its borders. Casualties are mounting. The soldiers they sent to discharge this dirty war are demoralized. According to the Associated Press, an Indian colonel said that Indian troops "are dying like dogs." A corporal is quoted as saying "Even in war we don't have such senseless casualties."

Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, most of these troops are Sikhs and other minorities sent to

die for India's effort to suppress the freedom of all the minorities. These Sikh troops should not be fighting for India; they should be working to free their own country.

Now there has been a new deployment of troops in Punjab. A mass exodus from villages in Punjab is underway because the villagers are justifiably afraid that India's war against the freedom movements will spread to their homeland.

India reportedly also used chemical weapons in this conflict, despite being a signatory to the Chemical Weapons Convention. India has a record of escalating the situation with regard to weapons of mass destructions. India began the nuclear arms race in South Asia by conducting underground nuclear tests.

There are steps that we can take to make sure that this conflict does not spread and that all the peoples and nations of South Asia are allowed to live in freedom. We should impose strict sanctions on India, the aggressor in this conflict. We should stop providing American aid to India and we should support a free and fair vote on national self-determination not only in Kashmir, Punjab (Khalistan), Nagaland, and the other countries held by India.

I thank my friend Dr. Gurmit Singh Aulakh for bringing this situation to my attention, and I urge India to allow the basic human right of national self-determination to all the people of South Asia.

Mr. Speaker, I place the Associated Press article on the conflict in the RECORD.

"WE ARE DYING LIKE DOGS," SAID ONE [INDIAN ARMY] COLONEL

BLACK MOOD HOVERS OVER KASHMIR

(By Hema Shukla)

DRASS, KASHMIR—June 11, 1999 (AP): On the eve of talks aimed at ending a month of fighting in Kashmir, a black mood is settling over Indian army camps on the front line. Casualties are mounting. Troops are ill-equipped for high-altitude fighting. The task, they say, is close to suicidal.

Since early May, the army has mobilized its largest fighting force in nearly 30 years against what India says are infiltrators from Pakistan who have occupied mountain peaks on India's side of the 1972 cease-fire line in disputed Kashmir.

On Saturday, Pakistan will send its foreign minister to New Delhi to discuss whether the fighting can be ended. India says that regardless of the talks it will persist until the last intruder is killed or flees back to Pakistan.

In daily briefings in New Delhi, military spokesmen report the fighters are being driven back. Indian airstrikes are punishing them, peaks are being recovered, the "enemy" is taking casualties in the hundreds. India's official casualty rate on Friday stood at about 70 dead and 200 wounded. The story on the front is much different.

In the fading evening light in a forward artillery camp, at checkpoints along a road under steady artillery bombardment, in bunkers where men shelter from showers of shrapnel, soldiers and junior officers grimly tell stories of death and defeat on the mountains. No one can say how many have died, but no one believes the official toll.

Amid the gloom, however, the Indian troops show a gritty determination to fight and a conviction that the opposing forces must be evicted at all costs. "We have a job to do and we will do the best we can," said one officer. "We will do our duty."

India says the guerrillas in Kashmir are mostly Pakistani soldiers, a charge Islamabad denies.

On Friday, India produced what it said were transcripts of telephone conversations between two Pakistani generals that proved Pakistan was involved in the fighting. In a transcript from May 26, army chief Pervez Musharraf tells another general that Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif was concerned the fighting could escalate into a full-scale war.

"We gave the suggestion that there was no such fear," Musharraf said he told Sharif, according to the transcript. "Whenever you want, we can regulate it."

Pakistan called the transcripts false. "This can't be given any credence or weight," Pakistan army spokesman Brig. Rashid Quereshi said.

As officials traded charges, heavy fighting continued in Kashmir. The guerrillas are entrenched on the mountain peaks defending their positions against soldiers scaling steep slopes, constantly exposed to gunfire and rocket-propelled grenades. "We are dying like dogs," said one colonel. Recapturing the peaks, said another officer, is "almost a suicide mission." None of the officers could be quoted by name, and senior officers who earlier briefed journalists on condition of anonymity have been ordered not to speak.

"This is worse than war. Even in war we don't have such senseless casualties," said M. Singh, a corporal and a veteran of India's campaign in Sri Lanka in the 1980s. Some of the casualties are from "friendly fire," either from Indian artillery or aerial bombing meant to provide cover to the advancing troops, officers said. The risk increased after the air force began high-altitude bombing to stay out of range of shoulder-fired anti-aircraft missiles. Indian troops wade through chest-high snow. The wind is so strong soldiers must be tied to each other with rope so they don't get blown over a cliff. Their opponents can pick them off with rifles or simply send boulders cascading down the mountain on top of them. One major said his unit was returning down the mountain when it came under withering fire from above. The soldiers dove into the icy water of a Himalayan river to escape.

Some forward units are living on one meal a day, the soldiers said. Mess camps in the rear cook puris—deep fried flat bread—but by the time it is delivered to the front it is frozen and can barely be chewed. The only drinking water is melted snow. There is no chance to pitch tents on the slopes. The men sleep in the open.

Few troops have had time to adjust to altitudes of 14,000 feet or more, where the air is thin and every exertion, every upward step, leaves strong men gasping.

Despite the difficulties, the tremendous pressure to recapture the peaks continues.

RECOGNIZING CART

HON. GEORGE RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 16, 1999

Mr. RADANOVICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Center for Advanced Research and Technology (CART) for their efforts in developing a new model for high school education. CART is a joint project of the Fresno and Clovis Unified School Districts in California.