

Mrs. Brown was an obvious choice for appointment to the Judicial Advisory Commission for Court Operations. In 1998, Chief Justice Burley Mitchell appointed Mrs. Brown to this Commission where she served until November of 1999.

Mrs. Brown's leadership may also be seen through her unfaltering commitment to service throughout the community. She has been a member of the Harnett County Democratic Women, the National College of Probate Judges, the Board of Directors of North Carolina Baptist Foundation, and more. Her many contributions to her community did not go unnoticed by those around her and in 1981, she was named Woman of the Year by the Lillington Business and Professional Women's Club. In 1987 she was recognized as Democrat of the Year by the Young Democrats of Harnett County.

Mrs. Brown has served as a role model and an inspiration for all those around her. She is an active member for the Antioch Baptist Church serving as an adult Sunday School teacher president of Women on Missions. She has exemplified the principles of service and generosity through her numerous contributions and strong commitment to the community. Georgia Lee O'Quinn Brown embodies the North Carolina values my constituents hold dear, and I want to take this opportunity to share with my colleagues in the U.S. House of Representatives the outstanding contributions of this fine American.

TRIBUTE TO 16TH LOGISTICS GROUP, HURLBURT FIELD, FLORIDA

HON. JOE SCARBOROUGH

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 26, 2000

Mr. SCARBOROUGH. Mr. Speaker, today I am proud to recognize the United States Air Force's 16th Logistics Group for receiving the Year 2000 Department of Defense Maintenance Award.

Each year, the Secretary of Defense recognizes outstanding achievements in military equipment and weapon system maintenance by intermediate and organizational level maintenance organizations of the Military Services.

The purpose of this awards program is to improve material readiness, improve efficiency and reduce waste by encouraging innovative management and use of resources, provide recognition of below depot-level maintenance programs, aid development of competitive programs, and enhance maintenance awareness throughout the Department of Defense.

In recognition of the contribution maintenance makes to keeping our forces ready and to sustaining them in conflict, the Secretary of Defense has chosen to honor the 16th Logistics Group for their exceptional unit maintenance accomplishment.

The 16th Logistics Group is the Air Force's largest logistics group and performs maintenance on several different airframes. The group's men and women outperformed their competition by achieving an impressive 80 percent mission-capable rate, among other ac-

complishments. The 16th generated the two most important combat missions of the Balkan conflict and continued to focus on reducing total ownership costs through innovative and practical programs. Mobilizing over 120 times in 12 months for an unprecedented 75 contingencies and exercises worldwide, the group led first-in, last-out operations in the Balkans, capping more than 6 years of continuous presence in that theater.

This award recognizes the professionalism and commitment to service by the men and women of the 16th Logistics Group. My congratulations go to the Air Force's 16th Logistics Group for these significant contributions.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE COUNCIL OF KHALISTAN

HON. JOHN T. DOOLITTLE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 26, 2000

Mr. DOOLITTLE. Mr. Speaker, earlier this month, the Council of Khalistan held its international convention in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. The Council of Khalistan leads the peaceful struggle to liberate the Sikh homeland, Punjab, Khalistan. I would like to congratulate the Council on a very successful convention.

Delegates came from all around the United States, Canada, and even as far away as Great Britain. They engaged in extensive discussion of plans to liberate Khalistan, and they passed resolutions for independence, human rights, and self-determination. The convention opened on October 7, which is the anniversary of Khalistan's declaration of independence from India.

Dr. Gurmit Singh Aulakh, who is the President of the Council of Khalistan, has been a tireless advocate for his people and has made himself a well-known presence in the halls of Congress by his persistence over the last thirteen years or so. He also fights for human rights of Christians, Muslims, and anyone else who is being oppressed by India. His tireless efforts have helped to keep this issue alive, and I salute him for this work. His struggle merits our support.

Mr. Speaker, I submit the Council of Khalistan's press release on its convention for the RECORD.

[Council of Khalistan, Press Release, Oct. 10, 2000]

COUNCIL INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION VERY SUCCESSFUL—DELEGATES VERY ENTHUSIASTIC AND UPBEAT

FREE KHALISTAN ESSENTIAL FOR SURVIVAL OF SIKH NATION

WASHINGTON, D.C., October 10, 2000—The annual convention of the Council of Khalistan, held this weekend in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, was very successful. Delegates came from all over the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom. The delegates were very enthusiastic and their spirit was very upbeat (*charhdi kala*). They expressed appreciation for the work of the Council of Khalistan, the government *pro tempore* of Khalistan, the Sikh homeland that was declared independent on October 7, 1987.

Very candid discussion was held concerning the Sikh Nation and its struggle for

independence. The delegates agreed that the liberation of Khalistan is essential for the survival of the Sikh Nation. The delegates agreed to contribute one (1) percent of their annual incomes to the Washington office and to ask others to do the same.

Delegates passed resolutions calling for the liberation of the Sikh homeland, Khalistan, through a *Shantmai Morcha* (peaceful agitation), for self-determination, demanding the release of political prisoners in Punjab, calling for the formation of a Khalsa Raj Party in Punjab, condemning the Sikh Youth of America for inviting Simranjit Singh Mann to their convention, and many others. The delegates decided that next year's convention will be held on Columbus Day weekend, 2001, in Atlanta, Georgia.

Dr. Gurmit Singh Aulakh, President of the Council of Khalistan, expressed satisfaction at the success of the convention. "I would like to thank everyone who helped to make this convention so successful," he said, "especially the Fort Lauderdale Gurdwara and Sardar Manmohan Singh Randhawa, who took all the reservations and helped to organize the convention. The success of this convention and the fact that people came from great distances to be there send a strong message to the Indian government that Sikhs demand an independent, sovereign Khalistan," he said.

Other resolutions that were passed at the conventions included resolutions demanding that human-rights groups be allowed to operate in Punjab, where they have not been allowed since 1978, nominating Dr. Aulakh for the Nobel Peace Prize, naming Dr. Aulakh Khalistan Man of the Year 2000, calling on all Gurdwaras to support the freedom struggle, demanding leaders with vision, appreciating the Council of Khalistan, to raise money for the Council's office, and urging Sikhs and youth to get involved in the political process. A committee was formed to find new leadership if anything should happen to Dr. Aulakh and also support and advise the Council of Khalistan in its effort to expedite the liberation of Khalistan.

"It is appropriate that the convention opened on the anniversary of Khalistan's declaration of independence," Dr. Aulakh said. He noted that Sikhs ruled Punjab until 1849 when the British forcibly annexed it into British India. No Sikh representative has ever signed the Indian constitution.

Thousands of Sikhs languish in prisons without charge or trial, according to Amnesty International. Between 1993 and 1994, 50,000 Sikhs were made to disappear by Indian forces. More than 250,000 Sikhs have been killed since 1984. Over 200,000 Christians have been killed since 1947 and over 70,000 Kashmiri Muslims have been killed since 1988. In March, during President Clinton's visit to India, the Indian government murdered 35 Sikhs in the village of Chithi Singhpora, Kashmir. Two independent investigations and an Amnesty International report have confirmed the government's responsibility. The Indian Supreme Court described the situation in Punjab as "worse than a genocide."

"India is on the verge of disintegration," said Dr. Aulakh. "Kashmir is going to be free. Khalistan will also be free during this decade, by the grace of Guru. Guru gave sovereignty to the Sikh Nation," he said. "This convention was a step forward in that effort."