

CHRISTIANS IN INDIA SEEK
INTERNATIONAL HELP

HON. JOHN T. DOOLITTLE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 20, 2000

Mr. DOOLITTLE. Mr. Speaker, Newsroom.org, a website devoted to religious news from around the world, reported on June 15 that Christian leaders in India have appealed for help from abroad.

The Christian leaders of India, including the United Forum of Catholics and Protestants of West Bengal, wrote to the Secretary General of the United Nations complaining that the Indian government and police have ignored the wave of terror against Christians since Christmas 1998. They have also requested help from Amnesty International in stopping these atrocities.

"We are scared," said Herod Malik, the leader of the United Forum. "We have to go to international organizations because we have no faith in the Indian government." Just a few days ago Hindu nationalist militants murdered a priest and placed five bombs in four churches. Some Christians who were peacefully distributing Bibles and Christian religious literature were savagely beaten, one so badly that he may lose his arms and legs. These are just the most recent incidents.

Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, it is not just Christians who are suffering atrocities and persecution. Sikhs, Muslims, Dalits, and others are oppressed in a similar fashion, although Christians seem to be the primary targets at the moment.

We can help these people to live in freedom and in the assurance that their rights will finally be respected. If India promotes terror against its religious and ethnic minorities, it is not a country that the United States should be supporting. Cutting off its aid is one message it would understand loudly and clearly. We should also declare our support for self-determination through an internationally-supervised plebiscite on the future of political status of Christian Nagaland, of the Sikh homeland, Khalistan, Kashmir, and other nations of Indian. Remember that the people of Kashmir were promised a plebiscite in 1948 and it has never been held. It is time for the United States and the international community to hold India's feet to the fire.

Mr. Speaker, I submit the Newsroom.com article of June 15 into the RECORD for the information of my colleagues.

[From Newsroom.com, June 15, 2000]

CHRISTIANS IN INDIA SEEK HELP FROM ABROAD

A wave of church bombings and murders of clergy has prompted Christian leaders in India to appeal for international help, according to Catholic World News. The United Forum of Catholics and Protestants of West Bengal claimed Tuesday that the Indian government and police have ignored their pleas and have insisted the attacks are random crimes.

The Christian leaders said they have written to the secretary general of the United Nations and also are appealing to the human rights group Amnesty International. "We are scared. We have to go to international organizations because we have no faith in the In-

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

dian government," said Herod Malik, the head of the United Forum.

The leaders said that unless international groups pressure the Indian government to protect Christians from Hindu fundamentalists, the "atrocities will increase."

Bombs exploded in four churches in the southern Indian states of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, and Goa on June 8, injuring at least one person. The blasts occurred the day after a Roman Catholic priest was murdered in the Mathura district of Uttar Pradesh in northern India.

The nation's governing Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) blamed the four church bombings on Pakistani intelligence "out to give Hindu organizations a bad name." Opposition parties, however, assert that the bombings are the work of the Sangh Parivar, the extended family of Hindu organizations.

Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee promised a delegation of Christian leaders on Monday that his government would investigate the incidents fully.

Christians charge that the Hindu nationalist Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), considered the ideological parent of the BJP, have engaged in a campaign against Christians since the BJP came to power two years ago. The New Delhi-based United Christian Forum for Human Rights says that in the past year it has documented 120 attacks by Hindu fundamentalists against Christian individuals, churches, and schools.

Indian government officials deny having any influence on the aggression. CWN said a senior interior ministry official, speaking on condition of anonymity, insisted the Christian community had nothing to fear and the government was taking steps to prevent such attacks.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. DARLENE HOOLEY

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 20, 2000

Ms. HOOLEY of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, on Monday, June 19, I was unavoidably detained and forced to miss two votes.

If present, I would have voted "yes" on the motion that the Committee rise on H.R. 4635 (Vote 292).

If present, I would have voted "yes" on agreeing to Mr. Waxman's amendment to H.R. 4635 (Vote 292).

HONOR OF THE WOMAN'S BOOK
CLUB OF HARRISON, ARKANSAS

HON. ASA HUTCHINSON

OF ARKANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 20, 2000

Mr. HUTCHINSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of the Woman's Book Club of Harrison, Arkansas. This month marks the one-hundred-year anniversary of the club's founding.

On June 25, 1900, twelve women in Harrison, Arkansas, founded a small book club, each contributing a single book. Soon after, a small library, consisting of a few shelves in the back of a newspaper office opened to mem-

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bers on Saturday afternoons. From these humble beginnings, the Woman's Book Club opened the first public library in north central Arkansas in 1903.

With support from the Woman's Book Club, the Harrison Public Library continued to grow and expand, moving several times to keep up with the demand for library services. In 1944, it became one of the first regional libraries in Arkansas and today contains over 58,000 volumes.

Mr. Speaker, the Woman's Book Club of Harrison is one of the largest private civic contributors to education and good works in my state. Over the past century, thousands who might not otherwise have had the opportunity to learn have been touched by its work. On behalf of all Arkansans, I would like to commend each of the many women who have been involved in the Harrison club. I look forward to another century of service.

IN RECOGNITION OF SHELBY
MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

HON. DAVID D. PHELPS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 20, 2000

Mr. PHELPS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to congratulate one of my district's hospitals. For the second year in a row Shelby Memorial Hospital in Shelbyville, IL, has been recognized by the HCIA and the Health Network as being one of the top 100 facilities in the nation for clinical excellence and efficiency.

Each year the HCIA and the Health Network compare hospitals across the nation in search of hospitals that focus on clinical excellence and efficient delivery of care. The study places hospitals into categories by size. Shelby Memorial Hospital fits into the category for small hospitals, consisting of 25-99 acute care beds in service. The HCIA and Health Network based their study on quality of care, efficiency of operations, and sustainability of overall performance. They ranked 1266 small hospitals based on: risk adjusted mortality index; risk adjusted complications index; severity adjusted average length of stay; expense per adjusted discharge, case mix, and wage adjusted; profitability (cash flow margin); proportion of outpatient revenue; index of total facility occupancy; and productivity (total asset turnover rate). The scores are then computed, and the results are then published in Modern Healthcare Magazine. The top 100 hospitals stand out above the rest by having superior care at lower costs.

According to CEO John Bennett, Shelby Memorial Hospital's main focus is on patient care, not Finances. Plans are already being made to improve the hospital's rating. The hospital will soon have a new, ER, lab, X ray and physical therapy departments, and new patient rooms.

It is with this, Mr. Speaker, that I say congratulations to Shelby Memorial Hospital on their excellent accomplishment. Due to the hospital's excellence in serving its community, it is clear that Shelby Memorial Hospital is an asset to Illinois and our nation's health care system.