

June 29, 2001

SELF-DETERMINATION FOR SIKH
HOMELAND DISCUSSED ON CAP-
ITOL HILL

HON. CYNTHIA A. MCKINNEY

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 28, 2001

Ms. MCKINNEY. Mr. Speaker, on Friday, June 15, the Think Tank for National Self-Determination held a very informative meeting here on Capitol Hill in the Rayburn House Office Building. The featured speaker was Dr. Gurmit Singh Aulakh, President of the Council of Khalistan. He laid out very well the strong case for self-determination for the Sikhs of Punjab, Khalistan, and for the other nations of South Asia, such as predominantly Christian Nagaland and predominantly Muslim Kashmir.

During his speech, Dr. Aulakh noted that "self-determination is the birthright of all peoples and nations." He quoted Thomas Jefferson, who wrote in our own Declaration of Independence that when a government tramples on the basic rights of the people, "it is the right of the people to alter or abolish it." Jefferson also wrote, "Resistance to tyranny is obedience to God."

India certainly is that kind of government. It has killed over 200,000 Christians in Nagaland since 1947, more than 250,000 Sikhs since 1984, over 75,000 Kashmiri Muslims since 1988, and many thousands of other minorities, including people from Assam, Manipur, Tamil Nadu, and members of the Dalit caste, the dark-skinned "Untouchables," who are the aboriginal people of South Asia, among others. Currently, there are 17 freedom movements in India.

Just recently, a group of Indian soldiers was caught trying to set fire to a Gurdwara, a Sikh temple, in Kashmir, and some houses. Local townspeople, both Sikh and Muslim, overwhelmed the soldiers and prevented them from committing this atrocity. Unfortunately, that is the reality of "the world's largest democracy."

Mr. Speaker, there are measures that America can take to prevent further atrocities and help the people of the subcontinent live in freedom. We should end our aid to the Indian government until it stops repressing the people and we should openly and publicly declare our support for self-determination for the people of Khalistan, Nagaland, Kashmir, and the other nations seeking their freedom in South Asia. This is the best way to help them. It supports the principles that gave birth to our country and it strengthens our security position in that region.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to insert Dr. Aulakh's speech into the RECORD for the information of my colleagues.

REMARKS OF DR. GURMIT SINGH AULAKH,
PRESIDENT, COUNCIL OF KHALISTAN

It is a pleasure to be back here with my friends at the Think Tank for National Self-Determination. This is a very important organization and I am proud to support its work.

Self-determination is the birthright of all peoples and nations. Next month America will celebrate its independence. Thomas Jefferson, author of the American Declaration of Independence, wrote that when a govern-

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

ment tramples on the people's rights, "it is the right of the people to alter or abolish it." He also wrote that "resistance to tyranny is obedience to God." Sikhs share that view. We are instructed by the Gurus to be vigilant against tyranny wherever it rears its ugly head. Guru Gobind Singh, the last of the Sikh Gurus, proclaimed the Sikh Nation sovereign. Every day we pray "Raj Kare Ga Khalsa," which means "the Khalsa shall rule."

Let me tell you a little about the history of Sikh national sovereignty. Sikhs established Khalsa Raj in 1710, lasting until 1716. In 1765, Sikh rule in Punjab was re-established, and it lasted until the British conquered the subcontinent in 1849. Under Maharajah Ranjit Singh, Hindus, Sikhs, and Muslims all served in the government. All people were treated equally and fairly. The Sikh state was extensive, at one point reaching all the way to Kabul.

At the time that the British quit India, three nations were supposed to get sovereignty. Jinnah got Pakistan for the Muslims on the basis of religion and the Hindus got India. India made a deal with the Hindu maharajah of Kashmir to keep the state within India despite a Muslim majority population, but at the same time it marched troops into Hyderabad to annex it to India by defeating the Muslim ruler, Nizam of Hyderabad. Hyderabad at the time had a majority Hindu population and a Muslim maharajah.

The third nation that was to receive sovereign power was the Sikh Nation. However, Nehru tricked the Sikh leadership of the time into taking their share with India on the promise that Sikhs would enjoy "the glow of freedom" in Punjab and no law affecting the rights of Sikhs would pass without Sikh consent. As soon as the ink dried, however, the Indian government broke those promises. They sent a memo to all officials declaring Sikhs "a criminal race" does that sound like a democracy or a totalitarian state in the Nazi/Communist mold?—and the repression of Sikhs began. No Sikh representative has ever signed the Indian constitution to this day.

In June 1984 the Indian government attacked the holiest of Sikh shrines, the Golden Temple in Amritsar. Ask yourself, what would you think if someone launched a military attack on the Vatican or Mecca? That is how Sikhs felt about the Golden Temple massacre and desecration. Seventeen years later, we have still not forgotten it, as the attendance at our recent protest shows.

Since that attack, the Indian government has murdered more than 250,000 Sikhs, according to figures published in *The Politics of Genocide* by human-rights leader Inderjit Singh Jaijee, convener of the Movement Against State Repression. A new report from Jaijee's organization shows that India admitted that it held over 52,000 Sikhs as political prisoners without charge or trial under the expired "Terrorist and Disruptive Activities Act." Some of the political prisoners have been in illegal custody since 1984! In 1994, the U.S. State Department reported that the Indian government paid over 41,000 cash bounties to police officers for killing Sikhs. One such bonus was paid to a policeman who murdered a three-year-old Sikh boy. Others have been paid for killing Sikhs who later showed up alive, rising the question: Who did the police really murder?

Unfortunately, there is often no way to answer that question. Human rights activist Jaswant Singh Khalsa exposed the fact that the Indian government picked up over 50,000

Sikhs, tortured them, killed them, then declared their bodies "unidentified" and cremated them. Just recently, more bodies were found in a river bank. For this, Mr. Khalsa was arrested and killed in police custody. The only eyewitness to the Khalsa kidnapping was arrested for trying to hand the British Home Secretary a petition asking Britain to get involved in helping to secure human rights for the Sikhs.

Two independent investigations showed that the Indian government killed 35 Sikhs last year in the village of Chithi Singhpora in Kashmir. Just last week, five Indian troops were overwhelmed by Sikh and Muslim residents of another village while they were trying to burn down the local Gurdwara and some Sikh homes. This is part of India's ongoing effort to set the minorities against each other. With 17 freedom movements within India's borders, the idea that the minorities might support each other scares the Indian government.

It is not just Sikhs who are being oppressed. While my main focus is on my own people, I am committed to freedom and human rights for all peoples and nations. There has been a wave of oppression of Christians since Christmas 1998. Members of the RSS, the pro-Fascist parent organization of the ruling BJP, murdered missionary Graham Staines and his two sons, ages 8 to 10, by burning them to death while they slept in their jeep. Nuns have been raped, priests have been killed, schools and prayer halls have been attacked. Last year, the RSS published a booklet on how to implicate Christians and other minorities in false criminal cases.

The BJP destroyed the Babri mosque in Ayodhya and still intends to build a Hindu temple on the site. Leaders of the BJP have said that everyone who lives in India must be Hindu or must be subservient to Hinduism. They have called for the "Indianization" of non-Hindu religions.

Is that a democratic country? U.S. Congressman Edolphus Towns pointed out that "the mere fact that [Sikhs] have the right to choose their oppressors does not mean they live in a democracy." Congressman Dana Rohrabacher said that for the minorities "India might as well be Nazi Germany."

Sikh martyr Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale said that "If the Indian government attacks the Golden Temple, it will lay the foundation of Khalistan." He was right. On October 7, 1987, the Sikh Nation declared the independence of its homeland, Punjab, Khalistan. India claims that there is no support for Khalistan. It also claims to be democratic despite the atrocities. Then why not simply put the issue of independence to a vote, the democratic way? What are they afraid of?

Self-determination is the right of all people and nations. America should sanction India and stop its aid until all the people of South Asia are allowed to live in freedom.

Thank you for giving me this opportunity. I hope you will support freedom for Khalistan, Kashmir, Nagaland, and all the nations of South Asia.

TRADE RELATIONS REGARDING
PRODUCTS OF KAZAKHSTAN

HON. ROBERT WEXLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 28, 2001

Mr. WEXLER. Mr. Speaker, I would like to place in the Congressional Record the following letter I received from A. Machkevitch

12625

the President of the Jewish Congress of Kazakhstan in support of H.R. 1318, legislation that would authorize President Bush to extend normal trade relations treatment to the products of Kazakhstan.

JEWISH CONGRESS OF KAZAKHSTAN,
Ky-naev sir., June 27, 2001.

Hon. ROBERT WEXLER,
Member of Congress, Cannon HOB, Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN WEXLER: The Jewish Congress of Kazakhstan welcomes the decision of a number of US Congress members, in particular Senator S. Brownback and Congressman J. Pitts on termination of Section IV of Trade Law of 1974 in relation to Kazakhstan and granting the country a permanent Regime of Normal Trade Relationship with the USA.

Undoubtedly, at the time of this Section adoption the decision of American legislators was timely and justified. One can not deny the fact that the communist regime tried all ways to oppress and limit rights of the country's Jewry. Similar to the representatives of many other nationalities of the Soviet Union we could neither openly declare ourselves as ethnic group, nor visit our relatives abroad, as well as freely profess our religion. In this respect we are immensely grateful to the American people demonstrating concern and sympathy with our life at the time of hardships. The amendment introduced by the two prominent US Statesmen—Jackson and Vanick—warmed our hearts.

However, the environment has changed. The Union broke up. Having cast off the totalitarianism chains, Kazakhstan has built a new independent state where the great principles of political and economic freedom, parity of rights and opportunities are being practiced. Today Kazakhstan is a democratic nation with steadily developing economy and fair chances to become a stronghold of security and democracy in the Central Asian region.

The young State of Kazakhstan emerged on the background of unique ethnic situation. Kazakhstan was the only former soviet republic in the region without distinct prevalence of a single ethnic group. Over 100 nationalities and ethnic groups living together learned to coexist without internal conflicts and discords to much extent owing to the efforts of the country's leadership headed by President Nursultan Nazarbayev.

Realizing that the majority, of peoples of Kazakhstan subjected to mass repression at the time of stalinism and fascism have been deprived of possibility to develop their culture and language, the Government of Kazakhstan encourages creation of ethnic and cultural centers in all regions of the country. The Jewry is not an exclusion. The only Jewish school in the Central Asian region successfully functions in our country, construction of 10 new synagogues is underway in the largest cities of Kazakhstan. In general, 3000 religious organizations of 46 confessions function in Kazakhstan. None of the other countries in the region can demonstrate such achievements.

In our sincere belief the Kazakhstan Government's aspiration to preserve and strengthen stability and interethnic concord both in the country and the whole region should be encouraged by the USA. We proceed from the fact that a country which liberated the minds of people would be to a larger extent successful in achieving prosperity than a society burdened with heavy heritage of the past, such as amendment of Jackson—Vanick.

In this context the Jewish community of Kazakhstan calls upon you to exert your influence in freeing Kazakhstan from this rudiment of the past, which would undoubtedly strengthen relationship between our countries and testify to the fact that voices of tens of thousands of the Kazakhstan Jews have been once again heard by our American friends.

Yours Sincerely,

A. MACHKEVITCH,
President.

RETIREMENT OF REV. LEO J. O'DONOVAN, S.J. AS PRESIDENT OF GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 28, 2001

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, Leo J. O'Donovan, S.J. leaves Georgetown University on June 30th after twelve splendid and productive years as the president of the oldest Catholic university in the United States. I know I am joined by the Members of the House in recognizing Father O'Donovan's very distinguished service to Georgetown, to higher education, to this city, and to his Catholic faith.

Father O'Donovan, a summa cum laude graduate of Georgetown College, a Jesuit institution, returned to his renowned alma mater, himself a distinguished Jesuit. He has led the University in the tradition of scholarship, faith, and service, as if it were second nature to him.

I have had the opportunity to observe Father O'Donovan at work because I was a tenured member of the faculty of the Law Center when he became president in 1989 and have continued as a faculty member, teaching a course every year. I watched first hand as Father O'Donovan strengthened a university that was already acknowledged to be one of the best in the country, and at the same time, deepened its strong commitment to its religious mission and to this city.

Father O'Donovan managed simultaneously to raise the university's academic standing and enrich the religious mission of one of the world's foremost Catholic universities. He leaves the University significantly expanded both academically and physically, with 37% more full time faculty, a 25% increase in library holdings, and a doubling of endowed chairs. Among the most significant capital improvements during Father O'Donovan's tenure are an \$82 million renovation of all undergraduate housing and his initiation of a \$169 million Southwest Quadrangle, which will contain new residences for undergraduates and for the Jesuit community. His signature especially is on the religious identity of the institution to which he has brought fresh and innovative emphasis.

I am particularly grateful to Father O'Donovan for his leadership in making Georgetown an especially good D.C. citizen. These contributions have been plentiful and varied, from the University's D.C. Reads literacy tutors and faculty and student support for our catholic elementary schools, to the university's \$1 million investment that helped launch a community bank, the City First Bank.

Mr. Speaker, I cannot pretend to summarize Father O'Donovan's magnificent accomplishments in a terse statement before the House or even in the longer statement of his accomplishments that I am submitting for the record. The achievements of the O'Donovan presidency will continue to roll out for years to come. Suffice it to say that in 1989, the challenge for a top university was to find a top president and that after a dozen years, no one can doubt that Georgetown was fortunate to meet that high standard in the man who became its 47th president. Father Leo J. O'Donovan will always be remembered at the university, in this city, and in our country for his gallant and loving spirit and for his unique contributions to education and to the District of Columbia, while reinforcing the values of his religious faith in the institution he has superbly lead into the 21st century.

LEO J. O'DONOVAN, S.J.—LEADERSHIP FOR
GEORGETOWN

The Reverend Leo J. O'Donovan, S.J., became Georgetown University's 47th president in 1989, 33 years after he graduated summa cum laude from Georgetown College. A member of the Society of Jesus since 1957, Fr. O'Donovan is a specialist in systematic theology and holds advanced degrees in theology and philosophy from Fordham University, Woodstock College, and the University of Münster, Germany. At the time of his election to serve as president of Georgetown, he was a professor of systematic theology at Weston Jesuit School of Theology in Cambridge, Massachusetts, a visiting fellow at the Woodstock Theological Center on Georgetown's campus, and a member of Georgetown's Board of Directors.

Under his leadership in the past twelve years, Georgetown University has continued to flourish and grow as a world-class university with a vibrant Catholic and Jesuit identity. As president, Fr. O'Donovan has sustained and enhanced Georgetown University's traditions of scholarship, faith, and service—advancing teaching and research, strengthening the University's commitment to educating "men and women for others," and ensuring that Georgetown serves as a strong non-profit citizen in Washington, D.C.

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

Ranked among the top 25 universities in the nation every year in the 1990s, as well as in 2000-2001, Georgetown has continued to strengthen academic excellence and deepen its longstanding commitment to teaching and research.

Georgetown's outstanding students continue to achieve distinction nationally, earning some of the most prestigious awards in higher education, including 11 Rhodes Scholarships, 7 Marshall Scholarships, and 8 Luce Foundation Scholarships since 1990. Georgetown's Law Center ranks first in the nation in the number of graduates who go into public interest and public service law. And 64 judicial clerkships have recently been awarded to Law Center graduates.

At the School of Medicine, students continue to perform exceptionally well in residency assignments they receive through the National Residency Matching Program. In 2000, more than half of graduating seniors received their first choice for residency, and 80 percent received one of their top two choices. These figures are higher than the national average.

SUPPORT FOR FACULTY

Fr. O'Donovan has funded faculty-development grants for interdisciplinary research