June 29, 2001

SELF-DETERMINATION FOR SIKH HOMELAND DISCUSSED ON CAPITOL 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 predominately Christian Nagaland and predominantly Muslim Kashmir. During his speech, Aulakh no. 1 stated 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." 

Indonesia is certainly 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 Kashmir 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 original 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, overheard 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 and can aid 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, Nagalim, Kashmir, and the other nations seeking their freedom in South Asia. This is the best way to help them. Unfortunately, that is the reality of "the world's largest democracy." 

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 government

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. They give us the Harimukt 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 a holy state to keep the state India. According to figures published in The Politics of Genocide by human-rights leader Inderjit Singh Jalal, conference of the Movement Against State Repression, a new report from Jalal'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 $100 million in cash bounties to police officers for killing Sikhs. One such bonus was paid to a policeman who murdered a three-year-old Sikh boy. One victim of killing Sikhs who later showed up alive, raising the question: Who did the police really murder? Unfortunately, there is often no way to answer the questions. Activist Jaswant Singh Khalra exposed the fact that the Indian government picked up over 50,000 Sikhs, tortured them, killed them, then declared their bodies "unidentified." 

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 Mr. Machkevitch
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 testifies that voices of tens of thousands of the Kazakhstan Jews have been once again heard by our American friends.

Yours Sincerely, A. Mackevytch.

President.

RETRIEVAL 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

Mr. WEXLER. Mr. Speaker,

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. 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 the Catholic University of America, 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 serving 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 Lupe 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 our medical students 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.