

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to honor Angela Berg for her efforts to educate the public regarding the importance of childhood immunization. Her work as greatly contributed to the overall welfare of the children in the state of Nevada. I wish her the best in her future endeavors.

CONGRATULATING NORM SIELING

HON. GIL GUTKNECHT

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 26, 2006

Mr. GUTKNECHT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Mr. Norm Sieling of Lake Crystal, Minnesota, on his induction into the Minnesota Future Farmers of America Hall of Fame.

The Minnesota Future Farmers of America strives to make a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for premier leadership, personal growth and career success through agricultural education. By maintaining the ideals of the past and incorporating the ideas of the future, the Minnesota Future Farmers of America continually seeks new, innovative ways to join agriculture and education with today's world of technology. The Hall of Fame is an honor reserved for those alumni who are a living example of this mission.

For his commitment to these ideals, Mr. Norm Sieling was inducted into Minnesota FFA Hall of Fame. As an agriculture teacher for 39 years in Lake Crystal, Minnesota, and a mentor for new agriculture teachers at the University of Minnesota, Mr. Sieling has demonstrated his dedication to the future of agriculture. He has helped students to achieve their goals, while encouraging the expansion of the agricultural industry.

I extend my sincere congratulations to Mr. Sieling on receiving this achievement. His dedicated service to the young farmers of Minnesota and the agricultural community is greatly appreciated.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO FRANCES WRIGHT

HON. JON C. PORTER

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 26, 2006

Mr. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of Frances Wright, a resident of Henderson Nevada, who died at the age of 101.

Born Fanny Schneider on Feb. 14, 1905, in Poland, she was the third of four children of Louis and Molly Schneider. Her family came to the United States when she was 6 months old. Her father was a tailor for an upscale men's clothier on Temple Street in Los Angeles. By the time she was 10, Frances was an aspiring child actress who took the stage name of Fanny Snyder. She claimed to have had a big part in the classic and controversial 1915 silent film "The Birth of a Nation" and often told friends that she enjoyed working on the film, which paid 50 cents a day and included a box lunch.

Fanny attended Los Angeles Polytechnic High School where she lettered in volleyball,

swimming and softball and was captain of those teams. She also was senior class president. Her yearbook listed her as most likely to become the "first woman president of the United States." After graduating in 1921, Fanny became a part of the flapper scene while attending business school. In 1927 she married car salesman David Wright. They were married for 71 years. He died in 1998.

Adept at poker, mah-jongg, canasta and pan, Fanny was a longtime regular in Southern California card rooms. From the early 1950s until the late 1990s, she would alternate residences between Los Angeles and Las Vegas. She worked at Bains and Sloats, a women's clothing store on the Las Vegas strip, but Fanny's real love was hanging around Strip resorts, getting a deep tan at the poolside and hobnobbing with celebrities. She was a frequent patron at the Sahara's Casbah Lounge when Louis Prima and the Mary Kay Trio performed there.

Unconventional to the end, Fanny took her doctors' advice last month to start using medical marijuana so she would get "the munchies" and eat to bulk up her thin frame. Fanny credited her longevity to being a good athlete in her youth, maintaining a good diet and taking a shot of bourbon at 4 p.m. every day.

In addition to her daughter, Wright is survived by a son, Ronald Wright of Los Angeles; six grandchildren; six great-grandchildren; and one great-great-granddaughter.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to recognize the life of Frances Wright on the floor of the House.

SIKH ACTIVIST ARRESTED FOR MAKING SPEECH—BETRAYAL OF DEMOCRATIC PRINCIPLE OF FREEDOM OF SPEECH

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 26, 2006

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I was distressed to note that on April 20, Sikh activist Daljit Singh Bittu was arrested after making a speech. He was charged with sedition and "making inflammatory speeches." Mr. Bittu spoke out against the acquisition of the land of poor farmers by Punjab on behalf of private business firms. We have had cases in this country where the government has taken land by eminent domain for private usage, Mr. Speaker, and no one ever gets arrested for speaking out against it. Radio and television commentators across the spectrum have opposed this and they are still on the air. Yet in India, speaking out against this can now get you arrested.

Mr. Bittu is a proponent of freedom for Khalistan, the Sikh homeland that declared its independence from India on October 7, 1987. Recently, Dr. Jagjit Singh Chohan, another Sikh activist, was arrested for predicting on television that Khalistan will be free by 2007. All he did was make a prediction. Is that a crime? If that is a crime, then the jails will overflow with sportscasters, weather reporters, psychics, and others who predict things routinely.

In addition, leaders of Dal Khalsa have been arrested for holding marches, making speech-

es, and raising a flag. A former member of Parliament was also arrested. It looks like the late General Narinder Singh was right when he said that "Punjab is a police state."

This is unacceptable, Mr. Speaker, especially as the United States and India move towards greater cooperation in numerous endeavors. We must insist on the full expression of democracy and basic human rights there if we are going to do business with India as a normal member of the family of free nations. And the essence of democracy is the right to self-determination.

The time has come to stop our aid and trade with India until it stops arresting people for making speeches, raising flags, and holding marches. The time has come for the U.S. Congress to put itself on record in support of freedom and self-determination for all the nations of South Asia. In 1948, India promised a free and fair plebiscite on the status of Kashmir. No such vote has ever been held in "the world's largest democracy." Why don't we insist on a simple democratic vote, with monitors, in Kashmir, in Punjab, Khalistan, in predominantly Christian Nagalim, and wherever people seek their freedom from India? As long as we turn a blind eye to the repression, the repression will continue. We must be the ones to strike a blow for freedom. Only when all people in the subcontinent enjoy freedom fully will there be stability and peace there.

Mr. Speaker, the Council of Khalistan recently published a press release on the arrest of Daljit Singh Bittu. I would like to place it in the RECORD at this time.

DALJIT SINGH BITTU ARRESTED FOR MAKING SPEECH—WHERE IS FREEDOM OF SPEECH IN INDIA?

WASHINGTON, DC., April 26, 2006.—Indian police arrested Daljit Singh Bittu, leader of the Shiromani Khalsa Dal, on charges of sedition and "delivering inflammatory speeches" at Fatehgarh Channa. Sardar Bittu was arrested on April 21 from his home in Ludhiana. He was held by the police, who sought "foreign currency" and a CD of his speeches.

"Where is the freedom of speech in India?" asked Dr. Gurmit Singh Aulakh, President of the Council of Khalistan. "How can a democratic state arrest people for making speeches? This shows us again that there is no place for Sikhs in India."

India proudly bills itself as "the world's largest democracy" and its constitution guarantees freedom of speech. But the arrest of Sardar Bittu is the latest incident in which people have been arrested for making speeches, holding marches, or raising a flag. "The drive for freedom is alive and strong in Punjab," he said. "What kind of democracy arrests people for demanding freedom?" asked Dr. Aulakh.

Leaders of Dal Khalsa have been arrested for sponsoring marches in Punjab in support of a free Khalistan, the Sikh homeland that declared its independence from India on October 7, 1987. In addition, Dr. Jagjit Singh Chohan was arrested for making a statement in which he made the prediction that Khalistan will be free by 2007. "Since when is making a prediction a crime in India?" Dr. Aulakh asked. "Will the weathermen in Delhi now be arrested for predicting rain?"

"The time is now to begin a Shantmai Morcha to liberate Khalistan," said Dr. Aulakh. "India is showing its weakness with these arrests," he said. "As Professor Darshan Singh, a former Jathedar of the Akal Takht Sahib, said, 'If a Sikh is not for Khalistan, he is not a Sikh.'" Every day in prayer Sikhs recite "Raj Kare Ga Khalsa," which means "The khalsa shall rule."