

ANNIVERSARY OF KHALISTAN'S
INDEPENDENCE

HON. PETER T. KING

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 29, 1995

Mr. KING. Mr. Speaker, on October 7, 1987, the Sikh Nation took its destiny into its own hands by declaring the independence of Khalistan. I am very pleased to salute the Sikhs of Khalistan on this anniversary.

The Sikh Nation ruled Punjab in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and was supposed to receive its own country when the British freed India in 1947. Though promised by India that their freedom would be protected, those promises collapsed like a house of cards. As a result, no Sikh has ever signed the Indian constitution and the Sikh Nation has struggled ever since then to regain its sovereignty.

I find it appropriate that as the anniversary of Khalistan's independence approaches, the government of Canada is re-opening its investigation into the 1985 explosion of an Air India jetliner which killed 329 people to determine if there was any involvement by the Indian government.

In this light, American support for Khalistan's independence is crucial. I commend the Council of Khalistan for the work it is doing to free the Sikh Nation and I join my colleagues in congratulating the Sikh Nation on the anniversary of Khalistan's declaration of independence.

I am placing into the record a review of *Soft Target*, the book that describes the Air India case, by David Kilgour, a Canadian Member of Parliament, and an article from *Awaze Quam* by Dr. Gurmit Singh Aulakh, President of the Council of Khalistan.

SHOULD THE U.S. BE TRADING WITH INDIA?

WASHINGTON.—Dr. Gurmit Singh Aulakh, President of the Council of Khalistan, today condemned India's downing of its own airliner ten years ago. June 23 marks the tenth anniversary of the attack, which killed 329 people. "This was a tragic event," said Dr. Aulakh. The Sikh Nation extends its deepest sympathies to the families of the victims. This act was brutal terrorism in its most naked form.

Agents of the Indian regime openly blamed the Sikhs for the attack even before it was known to the public that it had happened. But in *Soft Target*, journalist Brian McAndrew of the Toronto Star and Zuhair Kashmiri of the Toronto Globe and Mail, show conclusively that the Indian regime blew up its own airliner.

In the book, an agent of the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) is quoted as saying "If you really want to clear the incidents quickly, take vans down to the Indian High Commission and the consulates in Toronto and Vancouver, load everybody up and take them down for questioning. We know it and they know it that they are involved." According to the book, the Indian consul general in Toronto, Surinder Malik, identified and "L. Singh" whom Malik said was a Sikh activist in Canada, as the culprit. This occurred when the police had just found the passenger register. But according to Kashmiri and McAndrew, Malik took his wife and daughter off that flight shortly before it departed. An auto dealer who was a friend of Malik's also cancelled his reservation at the last minute.

The book also reports that less than a year before the Air India bombing, 29 people were

killed and 32 injured in an airplane bombing Madras which also appears to have been planned by Indian Intelligence. According to *Soft Target* "CSIS found the similarities between the Madras plot and the bombing—aboard Air India remarkable." Additionally, according to Kashmiri and McAndrew, "CSIS was astounded that such similar plans could be hatched in opposite parts of the world. It would not be so astounding though, if the plans emanated from the same source—namely, from within the Indian intelligence service."

"Brutal terrorist acts like the Air India bombing should prevent any country from receiving American aid or trade," said Dr. Aulakh. "Events like this only remind us that India is a brutal tyrant which will stop at nothing to achieve its aims. If America is a moral country, it must cut off all aid to India." Dr. Aulakh said.

Recently, India has emerged as a new U.S. business partner despite evidence that it is collapsing. Several Swiss drug companies pulled out last year due to the unstable market and the Washington Post reported last fall that it takes the average Indian three days just to buy a box of Corn Flakes. Yet the U.S. and India have exchanged visits from high-level officials in pursuit of increased trade between India and the United States.

The Indian regime has murdered over 120,000 Sikhs since 1984. It has also killed over 43,000 Kashmiri Muslims since 1988, over 150,000 Christians in Nagaland since 1947, and tens of thousands of Assamese, Marupuris, and others. According to the U.S. State Department, over 41,000 cash bounties were paid to police officers between 1991 and 1993 for killing Sikhs.

Many people are beginning to see the breakup of India as inevitable. Dr. Jack Wheeler of Freedom Research Foundation, who foresaw the Soviet breakup, predicted last year in the newsletter *Strategic Investment* that within ten years, Indian "will cease to exist as we know (it)."

On October 7, 1987, the Sikh nation declared the independent country of Khalistan. No Sikh has ever signed the Indian constitution. Sikh ruled Punjab from 1710 to 1716 and from 1765 to 1849. In the February 1992 state elections in Punjab, only 4 percent of the Sikhs there voted, according to *Indian Abroad*. On December 26, former Member of Parliament Simranjit Singh Mann spoke to a crowd of 50,000 Sikhs calling for a peaceful, democratic, nonviolent movement to liberate Khalistan. He asked those attending to raise their hands if they supported freedom for Khalistan. All 50,000 did so. For that speech he was arrested on January 5 under the new-expired Terrorist and Disruptive Activities Act (TADA), despite the fact that the Punjab and Haryana High Court has ruled that speaking out for Khalistan is not a crime. Mr. Mann remains in illegal detention in a windowless cell after more than five months.

"The continuing detention of Sardar Mann shows how frightened India is of an idea," said Dr. Aulakh. "Just talking about freedom for Khalistan terrifies the brutal tyrants of New Delhi. But freedom for Khalistan and all the nations living under brutal Indian occupation is inevitable," said Dr. Aulakh.

"India is not one nation," he said, "It is a conglomeration of many nations thrown together for administrative purposes by the British. It is last vestige of colonialism. With 18 official language, India is doomed to disintegrate just as the former Soviet Union did." Dr. Aulakh said, "The Sikh Nation's demand for an independent Khalistan is irrevocable, irreversible, and non-negotiable. But we are willing to sit down with the In-

dian regime anytime to demarcate the boundaries of Khalistan. A peaceful resolution to this issue is in India's interest. It is time for India to recognize the inevitable and withdraw from Khalistan and all the nations it brutally occupies."

WHAT LAY BEHIND THE AIR-INDIA DISASTER

(By David Kilgour)

This book will be received with hostility by External Affairs Minister Joe Clark and his departmental advisers on India, the Indian High Commission in Ottawa and segments of the RCMP and CSIS. Canadians who cling to the romantic but fast-fading notion that the present government in New Delhi is a beacon of hope for a non-violent and democratic world will also be skeptical.

Basing their conclusions partly on information leaked by RCMP, CSIS and Metro Toronto Police investigators, journalists Zuhair Kashmiri and Brian McAndrew contend in *Soft Target* that during most of the eighties senior Canadian Cabinet ministers and their officials—who were obsessed with winning the favor of the two Gandhi governments for trade, Commonwealth and North-South reasons—were easily duped by Indian agents operating within Canada. This manipulation, begun partly because India's Congress I Party needed the Sikhs as scapegoats to win votes on a law-and-order platform, resulted in a large community of hard-working and enterprising Canadians becoming estranged from both Ottawa and a good deal of Canadian society.

A particularly refreshing feature of *Soft Target* is its treatment of Sikhism, a 500-year-old faith few Canadians know much about. The founder, Guru Nanak, believed in one God, a classless democracy and equality of the sexes. A later guru built the Golden Temple in Punjab, probably more spiritually important to Sikhs worldwide than the Vatican to Catholics or Mecca to Moslems. The last and most influential guru, Gobind Singh, first persuaded many Sikhs to wear the turban and four other faith symbols largely so that they could not deny their religion when persecuted for it. The Sikh homeland, which at its peak stretched from Tibet to Afghanistan, was lost in 1839 when its ruler converted to Christianity and came under the control of England's ubiquitous Queen Victoria.

The first Sikhs who in 1904 managed to settle on Canada's West Coast, despite MacKenzie King's effort, as deputy labor minister, to bar all Indian immigrants until 1947, experienced much hardship. By the eighties, however, 200,000 to 250,000 Sikhs were prospering across Western and Central Canada, when Indira Gandhi ordered the attack on the Golden temple. She had first detained hundreds of suspected Sikh separatists and, in 1981, unleashed a surveillance operation against expatriate Khalistani supporters in Canada and elsewhere.

Two cases examined here are the shooting of Toronto policeman Chris Fernandes and the Air-India disaster. About the Fernandes killing, the authors conclude that *agents provocateurs* from the Toronto Indian consulate, seeking to discredit Sikhs generally among Canadians, in effect engineered the violence at the demonstration where Fernandes was shot. The vice-consul had inflamed some of the participants, had predicted in advance that violence might break out and even hired a friend's son to photograph the event. Canadian public opinion predictably sided with the Indian and Canadian governments against the Sikhs.

The worst mass murder in Canadian history occurred near Ireland for years ago, killing 329 Air-India passengers, many of them Canadian citizens, and crew. Many people concluded that Canadian Sikhs had

placed a bomb on board, but a nation-wide investigation, costing an estimated \$60-million, has left the crime still unsolved.

According to Soft Target, some senior CSIS officials and one RCMP officer eventually concluded that an Indian intelligence service was probably the real culprit. After all, a number of persons associated with the Indian government had cancelled their reservations on the doomed flight. And why did the Indian consul-general in Toronto have a near-perfect account of what happened so soon after the event?

Moreover, a similar bombing had occurred at the Madras airport in southern India about a year earlier, most probably caused by the Third agency, an Indian intelligence group created in the early eighties to win support for Indira Gandhi's government by encouraging Sikh extremists in Punjab. One group at CSIS concluded from the exclusively circumstantial evidence available that most likely the Third agency ordered the bombing, knowing that suspicion would fall on Sikhs generally and Canadian ones in particular. Another CSIS group inferred that the planting of a bomb was not authorized in New Delhi, but originated solely with local security agents.

Some Canadians became convinced that Talwinder Singh Parmar, head of a tiny extremist Sikh group based in Vancouver, the Babbar Khalsa, was the Air-India murderer. The RCMP, say Kashmeri and McAndrew, eventually decided that Parmar was an agent of the government of India. They query why, among numerous contradictions, a major financial backer of Parmar in Vancouver received a \$2 million loan from the State Bank of India (Canada). By early 1989, Parmar had disappeared, and Joe Clark finally ordered several Indian diplomats to leave. Until then, as detailed carefully in Soft Target, Clark and his officials had accommodated the Indian government repeatedly in ways that seemed to have the effect of poisoning the minds of Canadians against Sikhs.

This controversial book examines some important issues and is largely convincing. All who want Ottawa to do the correct thing for correct reasons in both domestic and foreign policy should read it.

IS AMERICORPS WORTH KEEPING?

HON. NEWT GINGRICH

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 29, 1995

Mr. GINGRICH. Mr. Speaker, I think you will find Susan Molinari's article on AmeriCorps informative:

IS AMERICORPS WORTH KEEPING?

(By Susan Molinari)

Volunteerism is a tremendously American tradition. Few of us, however, would characterize a volunteer as someone who is paid (more than minimum wage) receives medical benefits and child care allowances, and gets a \$5,000 education stipend.

Welcome to the AmeriCorps world of volunteerism.

The Clinton administration's year-old AmeriCorps program is riddled with problems, not the least of which is that it's too expensive to administer. That's why the Senate followed the House's lead and voted on Tuesday to completely de-fund AmeriCorps. The government simply must stop making financial commitments it can't keep, especially when we have to rob other needed programs to do so.

OTHER PROGRAMS SUFFER

Despite that fact that we were able to fund the 20,000 AmeriCorps "volunteers," we could not, for instance, fully fund either the Pell Grant or the Stafford Loan program, both of which help thousands more.

For every AmeriCorps participant who got education dollars, five students could get Pell Grants. Factor in other, noneducation costs for one volunteer to participate in AmeriCorps, and the number of Pell Grants that could be funded jumps to 18.

Some of AmeriCorps' high costs are directly attributable to the way this "volunteer" program is administered. The non-partisan, independent General Accounting Office estimates that it costs \$27,000 per participant to run the program, and this figure jumps to \$33,000 when the dropout rate is factored in.

AmeriCorps' overhead, including \$2 million in payments to a public relations firm, accounts for some of the more than \$10,000-per-participant cost overruns from the \$17,000 originally estimated. More than half the cost of the program goes to pay for the bureaucrats who administer it.

According to the GAO, the price tag to the federal government for one AmeriCorps volunteer is \$15.30 per hour, including salary, health and child care benefits. This doesn't include the education stipend, training or administrative overhead. When you plug in the money cities, states and private sources kick in, the cost per hour for one volunteer's time jumps to \$19.60, again minus education stipend, training and overhead. Originally, this number was supposed to be \$6.43 per hour.

While government costs soar way over initial projections, private contributions have been much lower than expected. Rather than picking up half the costs, as was promised at the outset, private funds make up only 7% of the cost for each volunteer, the GAO now estimates.

Rather than costly new government bureaucracies, we have a better way to encourage charity and foster community spirit. For decades we have used the tax code to create just such an atmosphere, through deductions for charitable contributions. And we have a better way to fund the education of middle and lower-income students—by fully funding existing programs such as Pell Grants, to the extent resources will allow.

I admire the 20,000 young men and women who have joined AmeriCorps, as I admire the 89.2 million Americans who volunteer—without pay—their 19 billion hours worth of time each year. Trying to encourage volunteerism through a big-government approach, however, does more to encourage bureaucrats than community service.

AmeriCorps participants do worthy work, but the real substance of American-style volunteerism is proven every day by those who are willing to give their time to make others' lives better.

MEDICARE REFORM

HON. E de la GARZA

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 29, 1995

Mr. DE LA GARZA. Mr. Speaker, I would like to speak today about the subject of Medicare. It is a topic that has been in the headlines and on the news every day now for weeks. It is on the minds of almost every constituent I see. It is among the foremost issues we are addressing here in this body, and definitely, I think it

would be safe to say, is the current major concern of seniors across America.

The GOP has put out a plan to cut Medicare. Based on what is known or perhaps I should say not known in terms of legislative language being unavailable, this plan is one which it seems will have a devastating impact on the most vulnerable of Americans—senior citizens.

In a letter I received from the Families USA Foundation it spoke about how seniors will lose guaranteed health protections that they have today. It spoke about how these individuals will lose out-of-pocket health cost protections at the same time that pending proposals would double Medicare premiums. We're talking about out-of-pocket health costs which already consume more than one-fourth of seniors' incomes.

What this says to me is that something is drastically wrong—that this is not the path to pursue.

Allow me quote from a letter I received this week from a Texas senior:

As a Senior Citizen and drawing Social Security, which I earned, I would like to input my viewpoint on Medicare. I am more fortunate than some of my widow friends in the amount that I get each month, but with the price of living today it is not very much. Out of this Social Security deducts \$46.00 per month and believe me this covers very little, so in order to pay for health care I am forced to take a supplemental policy that costs me \$65.00 per month. If Congress cuts any part of this Medicare care it will force all of us to go on the county medical care for the indigent. Can you imagine what that would do to the whole country if all the people on Medicare had to go that way. Most of us have worked hard all our lives and paid our bills, but what the government has done . . . is unforgivable . . . and NOW they want to put us all on WELFARE.

This is typical of what I am hearing. People are frightened. People are scared. And rightly so.

My party is closely identified with Medicare. Democrats first conceived of Medicare and led the effort to enact the program into law. We have been its champions ever since. This program has been a success, helping to provide health care to millions of Americans who otherwise could not afford it. That is not bad as so many today would have us believe. It is good. If changes need to be made then our goal must be to work together to determine what it is we need to do that is positive and will continue to protect our Nation's seniors. That is what I am wholeheartedly committed to doing.

INTRODUCTION OF BILL TO INCREASE DEDUCTION FOR HEALTH INSURANCE COSTS OF SELF-EMPLOYED INDIVIDUALS

HON. SUE W. KELLY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 29, 1995

Mrs. KELLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce legislation that will restore equity and fairness in the tax treatment of the nation's small business entrepreneurs. The Self-Employed Health Fairness Act amends the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to increase the deduction for health insurance costs of self-employed individuals to 100% of such costs.