

was extended 'til 26th May '96. On 26th May 96 Balbir Singh was sent to Jalandhar jail under judicial custody. A UNI date lined story from Jalandhr of 25th May 96, quoting police interrogation reports that Balbir Singh was part of a larger militant conspiracy to indulge in disruptive activity and also to eliminate moderate Akali leaders.

The HRW investigation team is satisfied that Balbir Singh is innocent and all charges against him be dropped immediately. He should be allowed to return to his country.

The HRW is satisfied that the Panjab Police wants to keep the spectre of Sikh militancy alive so that it can continue to enjoy the extra constitutional powers vested with it.

The Police force also would like the community to stay divided, and so. The continuous uncovering of plots, of militants out to assassinate Akali Leaders. For a rallying together of all sections of Sikhs is seen as a development that would culminate in a drastic reduction of extra constitutional powers.

HARSHINDER SINGH
Advocate
AMRIK SINGH
Vice Chairman
J.S. DHILLON
Chairman

HONORING JACK BRAS

HON. BILL BAKER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 29, 1996

Mr. BAKER of California. Mr. President, in an age in which heroism and human dignity sometimes seem like notions from a bygone era, we need to be reminded of what personal character and long-term commitment mean. It is the men and women who each day obey the law, work hard, raise children, and contribute to their communities who are the true heroes of American life.

Jack Bras is such a person. Born in 1929 in Okemah, OK, young Jimmie Jack Bras moved with his family to California at the age of 7 and went on to graduate from the University of California at Berkeley in 1952 with a degree in architecture. He served his country in the Army and then married his wife, Flo, in 1959.

In 1964, he opened his own architectural firm in Pleasanton, CA, in the heart of the San Francisco region's east bay area. Since then, he has planned and remodeled literally scores of facilities, from banks and firestations to professional buildings and private homes. One cannot travel around the east bay without seeing the outstanding architecture of Jack Bras.

In addition, Jack has been active in a wide range of civic activities, including the Pleasanton Chamber of Commerce, the Valley Memorial Hospital Board, and the United Way. In many of these positions, he has served as chairman, president, or board member. And he has always served with the public interest in mind.

Jack and Flo have raised their family and conducted their business in a way that has brought credit not just to them, but to the greatest east bay community. As Jack prepares to retire as he nears his 67th birthday, I wanted to take this opportunity to recognize him in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. Unsung heroes deserve their own songs, and today I am proud to join in the chorus of my constituents who are celebrating Jack's life and friend-

ship. I wish Jack and Flo every good thing in all the days ahead, and am pleased to salute them for all they have done to make the east bay the wonderful place it is.

INDIA CONFIRMS MASS CREMATIONS OF SIKHS

HON. DAN BURTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 29, 1996

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, once again India's genocide against the Sikhs has been exposed. Just Monday, July 22, India's Central Bureau of Investigation [CBI] told the Supreme Court that it had confirmed that "bodies tagged as 'unidentified' by Punjab Police had been disposed of surreptitiously during 1990-95," according to the India Express of July 23.

The CBI told the court that it had prima facie evidence of almost 1,000 cremations by the police, and its investigation is ongoing. However, police officials are making it very difficult for the CBI to get information. The court said that if this behavior continues, it will constitute contempt of court. According to human rights activist Jaswant Singh Khalra, who first exposed the mass cremations, over 25,000 young Sikh men have disappeared and subsequently been cremated by the police.

Mr. Speaker, these are very significant admissions by the Indian regime. An agency of the Indian Government is admitting that the police were involved in the murder of Mr. Khalra, that the mass cremation scheme is ongoing, and that police officials are trying to cover up these atrocities by burying the information. The justices of the Supreme Court labeled these acts "worse than a genocide." They said that "we shudder to think that such a thing could happen in a democracy."

These events prove not only that India is a long way from being a real democracy, but that it could even be branded an authoritarian police state which commits acts of genocide against the diverse peoples living under its rule. Is it any wonder that so many of them are struggling to free themselves from this brutal regime? I urge my colleagues to consider carefully whether this is the kind of country we should be propping up with hard-earned dollars of the American taxpayers.

I thank Dr. Gurmit Singh Aulakh, president of the Council of Khalistan, for bringing this report to my attention. As you know, Dr. Aulakh and his organization have worked for several years to secure freedom for Khalistan, the Sikh homeland which declared its independence on October 7, 1987. The case of the cremations, as well as the beating of a Sikh leader in the Delhi airport, and the continuing detention of an American citizen on what have now been proven to be false charges, show why this struggle is vital to the survival of Sikhs and others in the South Asian subcontinent. The Council of Khalistan has issued a press release on this story, and I would like to place this in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. It is time to end the oppression in India.

[From the Indian Express, July 23, 1996]

COPS CREMATED 1,000 AS UNIDENTIFIED

NEW DELHI, July 22.—The Supreme Court was today told by the CBI that it had found enough material and evidence to show that

as many as 1,000 bodies tagged as "unidentified" by the Punjab Police had been disposed of surreptitiously during 1990-95.

A 74-page preliminary report submitted by the CBI to a division bench comprising Justice Kuldip Singh and Justice Saghir Ahmed has stated that on the basis of the material collected during the probe ordered by the court, it had prima facie found that a total of 984 bodies had been cremated by the police on the ground that they were "laawaris" (unidentified).

Expressing their "horror and shock" at the finding the judges in a brief order directed the CBI to continue its inquiry into the matter and issue a general direction to the public authorities or government officers to hand over any information regarding the issue to the CBI.

The court ordered the DIG (Border) Punjab Police, B.S. Sandhu to hand over all relevant records regarding the cremation of bodies of unidentified persons to the CBI without any further delay. The direction came after the additional solicitor general K.T.S. Tulsi told the court that there was some delay in those records being handed over to the CBI.

The court warned that any further delay in handing over the records to the CBI by Sandhu would amount to violation of its orders and would attract contempt of court.

The judges observed that this incident of disposal of bodies of unidentified persons was "worse than a genocide."

"We shudder to think of such a thing happening in a democracy," the judges said.

Adjourning the hearing in the matter to October 7 to enable the CBI to submit its final report the judges asked the CBI to speed up the probe.

In another report the CBI told the court that it had investigated into the murder of a human rights activist Jaswant Singh Khalra and had found several policemen were involved in the case.

It sought the court's permission also to file three separate cases in the killings of three other persons by Punjab policemen.

"WORSE THAN A GENOCIDE," SAYS INDIAN SUPREME COURT

WASHINGTON, DC, July 24.—According to a report in yesterday's Indian Express, India's Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) today admitted in court that it had amassed evidence that "bodies tagged as 'unidentified' by the Punjab Police had been disposed of surreptitiously." In a 74-page preliminary report on its ongoing investigation, CBI admitted that it had "prima facie found that a total of 984 bodies had been cremated by the police" after being labelled "unidentified."

The Court ordered local police chiefs to turn over any information they have on the subject to CBI. The justices warned that any further delay in turning over these records would be considered contempt of court.

On September 6, 1995, Jaswant Singh Khalra, General Secretary of the Human Rights Wing (Shiromani Akali Dal), was kidnapped by the Punjab Police after publishing a report showing that over 25,000 young Sikhs had been abducted by the regime, tortured, killed, then declared "unidentified" and cremated. After the report was published, the police chief of the Tarn Taran district told Mr. Khalra, "We made 25,000 disappear. It would not be hard to make one more disappear." The CBI reported to the court that Mr. Khalra was murdered in custody, and that it "had found several policemen were involved in the case," according to Indian Express.

Calling these cremations "worse than a genocide," the justices also stated that "We shudder to think of such a thing happening in a democracy."

"This is a major admission by the Indian regime," said Dr. Gurmit Singh Aulakh, President of the Council of Khalistan. "The CBI report has begun to lift the veil that has hidden the truth from the outside world," he said. "Finally they have conceded that the police have undertaken mass cremation of Sikhs. This clearly demonstrates that India is not the democracy it claims to be, but a tyranny that is running a campaign of ethnic cleansing against Sikhs and others."

"This is just one more piece of evidence that there is no place for Sikhs in an Indian 'democracy' that has murdered over 150,000 Sikhs since 1984," Dr. Aulakh said. "Only by liberating Khalistan from this reign of terror will we secure the blessings of liberty for the Sikh Nation," he said. Khalistan is the independent Sikh country declared on October 7, 1987. The Council of Khalistan, as its government in exile, leads the peaceful, democratic, nonviolent struggle for an independent Khalistan. "It is time for Sikhs to claim their right to be free," Dr. Aulakh said.

THE WEST INDIAN CELEBRATION

HON. BARBARA B. KENNELLY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 29, 1996

Mrs. KENNELLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the achievements of the Connecticut West Indian community as they celebrate the independence of nations throughout the Caribbean.

The centuries, the West Indies received immigrants and settlers from every area of the world. These varied influences have mixed throughout the years to create a uniquely diverse cultural heritage. Once dominated by colonial powers, the people of the Caribbean islands have gained their independence, starting with Jamaica in 1962 and culminating with Nevis in 1983.

Celebration '96, enthusiastically supported and participated in by Connecticut residents, will be held from July 25 through August 3. The celebration is a yearly gala to promote and interpret Caribbean culture in the Northeast region, as well as to highlight and showcase the unity and cooperation among the Caribbean people.

West Indian Celebration '96, is led by the West Indian Celebration Committee, which is comprised of Marva Douglas, Mark Bailey, Anastasia Couloute, Barbara Diggs, and Egan Bovell. Special thanks also go to members of the activities committee: Joann Gibson, Neville Smith, La'mour Howell, Veronica Airey-Wilson, Olive James, Dennick Miller, Brenda Chester, Errol Smith, Dee Flowers, Keith Carr Sr., Martin Nelson, and to the West Indian Social Club of Hartford, Inc., the Caribbean American Society of Hartford, Inc., the Jamaica Progressive League, Inc., the Trinidad and Tobago American Society, the St. Lucia American Society of Hartford, Inc., the Sportsmen's Athletic Club of Hartford, Inc., the Caribbean Ladies Cultural Club of Hartford, Inc., the Guyanese American Cultural Association of Hartford, Inc., the Barbados American Society of Hartford, Inc., and the Connecticut Haitians American Society.

I would like to congratulate the United States' second largest West Indian community for not only their achievements, but their positive community presence and involvement. I encourage them to continue to celebrate their heritage that enriches the lives of all Americans.