

IN MEMORY OF GEORGE MONROE
ALLEN

HON. IKE SKELTON

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 11, 1999

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, on Wednesday, January 13, 1999, the State of Missouri lost a distinguished citizen. It is with great sadness that I inform the House of the death of George Monroe Allen of Harrisonville, MO.

Mr. Allen worked in the banking industry for 49 years. He served 21 years as president of the Citizens National Bank and then at the Commerce Bank of Harrisonville until his retirement in 1976. After his retirement Mr. Allen was elected State Representative of the 124th District of Missouri and served there until 1986. He also served with the Harrisonville Fire Department for 55 years, including 33 years as fire chief. An Army veteran, Mr. Allen served his country with distinction during World War II, earning the Bronze Star for Valor.

Mr. Allen was an active member of the community. He was a member of the First Baptist Church, member and past commander of both the VFW Post #4409 and the American Legion Post #42, Cass Masonic Lodge #147 A.F.&A.M., past president and member of the Kiwanis Club, Harrisonville Civic Association, and the Harrisonville Area Chamber of Commerce.

I know the Members of the House will join me in extending heartfelt condolences to his wife, Kathleen; his son, Nelson; his daughters, Linda and Trudy; his three grandchildren; and his great-grandson.

HINDU NATIONALISTS CONTINUE
TO ATTACK CHRISTIANS IN
"SECULAR" INDIA

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 11, 1999

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I was disturbed by recent reports that there has been renewed violence against Christians in India. First a missionary and his two very young sons were burned to death in their jeep, then another nun was raped. Now the bodies of two more Christians have been found in the state of Orissa. Hindu nationalism is on an out-of-control rampage in India!

The Sunday, February 7 issue of the Washington Times reported that the Archbishop of New Delhi, Alan de Lastic, blamed "mercenaries" for these hate crimes. He called on the government to take strong action to stop these things from occurring. These "mercenaries" are associated with organizations like the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP), a militant Hindu organization that comes under the militant, extremist Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS). The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), the party that leads the governing coalition, is also part of the RSS.

Several Christian churches, prayer halls, and religious missions were destroyed in the last couple of months by Hindu extremists affiliated with the VHP. How can the Indian government be expected to take strong action

against the perpetrators of these vicious acts when the perpetrators are part of their own political network?

The violence forced many Christian congregations to cancel New Year's celebrations for fear of offending the Hindu militants, which could lead to further violence. Is this the secularism that India boasts about? Clearly, there is no religious freedom for these Christians in India.

Unfortunately, these are just the latest incidents of violence against Christians in India. Four nuns were raped last year by a Hindu gang. The VHP described the rapists as "patriotic youth" and called the nuns "antinational elements." To be Christian in secular India is to be an antinational element! At least three priests were killed in 1997 and 1998, and in 1997 police opened fire on a Christian festival that was promoting the theme "Jesus is the Answer."

Apparently, the Hindu Nationalists are afraid that the Dalits, or "Untouchables", the aboriginal people of South Asia who are at the bottom of the caste structure, are switching to other religions, primarily Christianity, thus improving their status. This undermines the caste structure which is the foundation of the Hindu social structure.

The Indian government has killed more than 200,000 Christians since 1947 and the Christians of Nagaland, in the eastern part of India, are involved in one of 17 freedom movements within India's borders. But the Christians are not the only ones oppressed for their religion.

India has murdered more than 250,000 Sikhs since 1984 and over 60,000 Muslims in Kashmir since 1988, as well as many thousands of other people. The holiest shrine in the Sikh religion, the Golden Temple in Amritsar, is still under occupation by plainclothes police, some 14 years after India's brutal military attack on the Golden Temple. The previous Jathedar of the Akal Takht, Gurdev Singh Kaunke, was killed in police custody by being torn in half. The police disposed of his body. He had been tortured before the Indian government decided to kill him.

The Babri mosque, the most sacred Muslim shrine in the state of Uttar Pradesh, was destroyed by the Hindu militants who advocate building a Hindu temple on the site. Yet India proudly boasts that it is a religiously tolerant, secular democracy.

This kind of religious oppression does not deserve American support. We should take tough measures to ensure that India learns to respect basic human rights. All U.S. aid to India should be cut off and we should openly declare U.S. support for self-determination for all the peoples of the subcontinent. By these measures we can help bring religious freedom and basic human rights to Christians, Sikhs, Muslims, and everyone else in South Asia.

Mr. Speaker, I submit an article on the archbishop's statement from the February 7 Washington Times into the RECORD.

[From the Washington Times, February 7, 1999]

MERCENARIES BLAMED FOR ATTACKS IN INDIA

NEW DELHI—A prominent Catholic archbishop yesterday blamed "mercenaries" for a spate of attacks on Christians here and blamed the Indian government or tardy action against the perpetrators.

New Delhi Archbishop Alan de Lastic, in a scathing attack on national and state governments, called for justice for the growing

number of Christian victims of murder, rape and battery in India.

A nun was raped Wednesday night in the eastern state of Orissa where Australian missionary Graham Staines and his two young sons were burnt to death in their car by a Hindu mob on January 22.

The rape and the Staines' murders followed a spate of anti-Christian violence in the western state of Gujarat over Christmas.

Radical Hindu groups linked to Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee's ruling BJP party have been blamed for inciting the attacks.

IN HONOR OF THE 25TH WEDDING
ANNIVERSARY OF JAMES AND
CLARE CLARK

HON. CURT WELDON

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 11, 1999

Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the 25th wedding anniversary of my life-long friend, James Clark, and his wife, Clare. Jimmy and Clare Clark were married on February 15, 1974.

Jimmy and I grew up together in Marcus Hook, Pennsylvania, and his wife, Clare, grew up just a few blocks away from my wife, Mary, in Wilmington, Delaware.

Jimmy and Clare have devoted many years of their lives to public service. Jimmy and I served together as members of the Viscose Fire Company in Marcus Hook, Pennsylvania. We fought fires together, and established a bond of friendship and trust that can never be broken. He followed in my footsteps, first as a member of the fire company, and later as chief of the company. He later went on to become Chief of the Borough of Marcus Hook Fire Department.

Clare previously worked for the Wilmington, Delaware Bureau of Police, and served the Viscose Fire Company for many years as a member of the Ladies Auxiliary.

Jimmy currently is employed by Epsilon Products Company in Marcus Hook, Pennsylvania, and Clare is employed by Christiana Care in Wilmington, Delaware.

Jimmy and Clare are terrific people, dedicated to their family and concerned for their neighbors and friends. They are leaders in their community. America needs more people like them.

Mr. Speaker, in this era where we seem to have rediscovered the importance of marriage and family, it is all together fitting and proper for us to honor this couple on the achievement of this significant milestone. I am proud to represent the Clarks in the United States Congress, and I ask you and my colleagues to join with me in congratulating them on the 25th wedding anniversary.

CONGRATULATIONS TO PAMELA
CRUZ AND MATTHEW COPUS

HON. HEATHER WILSON

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 11, 1999

Mrs. WILSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Pamela Cruz and Matthew Copus, who have achieved national recognition for exemplary volunteer service in their