

VAISAKHI GREETINGS TO THE
SIKH NATION

HON. DAN BURTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 10, 2002

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, this Saturday, April 13, is Vaisakhi, the birthday of the Sikhs. It marks the day on which the last of the Sikh gurus, Guru Gobind Singh, consecrated the Khalsa Panth. It is the Sikhs' most important holiday. I would like to take this opportunity to wish the Sikhs in America, in Khalistan, and around the world a happy Vaisakhi Day.

This important occasion is usually marked with parades and services in the Gurdwara. It should also be a time for the Sikh Nation to focus on freedom.

Sikhs have made many contributions to this country. They have been leaders in agriculture, law, medicine, and many other fields. One Sikh, Dr. Dalip Singh, a mathematics professor from California, served two terms in this House from 1959–63. He was the first person from the subcontinent to serve in Congress.

As is the regular practice, Dr. Gurmit Singh Aulakh, President of the Council of Khalistan, has issued a Vaisakhi Day greeting to the Sikh Nation. He urges the Sikhs to use this occasion to begin a peaceful movement to reclaim their lost sovereignty and freedom. I urge all my colleagues to read this outstanding letter.

The time has come for America to cut off its aid to India and to support a free and fair plebiscite on independence in Punjab, Khalistan, in Kashmir, in Christian Nagaland, and in the many nations seeking their freedom from India. These are the best measures to ensure freedom, peace, security, and prosperity in South Asia.

VAISAKHI MESSAGE TO THE SIKH NATION, MAR. 25, 2002.

KHALSA JI: Wahe Guru Ji Ka Khalsa, Wahe Guru Ji Ki Fateh!

This is a time of celebration of our 303rd anniversary of the Khalsa Panth. It is also time to look back at our history. The Guru gave sovereignty to the Khalsa Panth. ("In grieb Sikhin ko deon Patshahi.") Banda Singh Bahadur established the first Khalsa rule in Punjab from 1710 to 1716. Then there was a period of persecution of the Sikhs. Again Sikhs established a sovereign, independent rule from 1765 to 1849, when the British annexed the Sikh homeland, Punjab, into British India.

To regain freedom from the British, Sikhs were on the front line of the fight. The Sikh Nation gave about 80 percent of the sacrifices during this freedom struggle when they formed only 1.5 percent of the Indian population. At the time of the independence of India, Sikhs were equal signatories to the transfer of power from the British. Muslim leader Mohammed Ali Jinnah was very wise and well educated and he did not trust the majority Hindu leadership. He got an independent Pakistan for the Muslims. The Sikh leadership should have gotten an independent country for the Sikhs at that time, but they were fooled by the Hindu leadership of Nehru and Gandhi so Sikhs took their share and joined India on the promise that they would have the glow of freedom in the northwest part of India.

Khalisa Ji, we have seen this "glow of freedom" in the form of the attack on the Gold-

en Temple in June 1984, when over 20,000 Sikhs were killed in Punjab in a single month. The next massacre of Sikhs occurred after the assassination of Indira Gandhi in Delhi. There was a mass murder of Sikhs throughout India, including Delhi. The Sikhs were pulled out of trains and burned alive. Sikh truck drivers were pulled out of their trucks. Tires were put around their necks by Hindu militants and they were burned to death. In Punjab, this genocide continued under Beant Singh's government. Sikhs were arrested, tortured, and then cremated and their bodies were declared "unidentified."

Since 1984, over 250,000 Sikhs have been murdered. 52,268 are rotting in Indian jails under TADA, which expired in 1995. Many of them have been in illegal custody since Operation Bluestar in 1984. Only last month, 42 Members of the U.S. Congress wrote to President Bush to get these political prisoners released. Jaswant Singh Khalra, who exposed the government killing of Sikhs in fake encounters, became a victim of the Indian police himself. He was kidnapped outside his house and murdered in police custody. He documented 6,018 Sikhs who were secretly cremated by the government in three cremation grounds, Patti, Tarn Taran, and Durgiana Mandir. Subsequently, Punjab Human Rights Organization (PHRO) chairman Justice Ajit Singh Bains said that about 50,000 Sikhs were secretly cremated in this manner. Even Akal Takht Jathedar Gurdev Singh Kaunke was murdered by SSP Swaran Singh Ghotna and then his body was disposed of.

The Badal government was forced to conduct an inquiry into the killing of Jathedar Kaunke. It was done by three Punjab police officials under the leadership of DIG Tiwari. He submitted a report to the Badal government, which has not been made public as of today. How could a democratically elected Akali government hide the murder of the Akal Takht Jathedar by not releasing this report, which was conducted by its own order?

The Badal government was the most corrupt one in Punjab's history. They invented a new term for bribery: "fee for service." If you didn't pay the fee, you didn't get the service. There was a fixed amount of money for government jobs. Bags of money were received by Mrs. Badal in return for these jobs. The Punjab economy deteriorated under Badal and the Punjab government had its largest debt ever. It is bankrupt now. Badal made three promises to get elected. He promised to free the political prisoners, to punish the police officers who carried out atrocities against the Sikh Nation, and to appoint a commission to investigate atrocities. He did not keep any of them.

The Sikh leadership is completely under Indian government control, whether it is the Akali leadership of Badal, Tohra, Mann, and others or the Congress leadership of Punjab under Captain Amarinder Singh or former Chief Minister Mrs. Bhatthal. Changing parties and faces every election will not solve the problems of the Sikh Nation. Congress is no better than the Akalis and the Alkalis proved to be the worst enemies of the Sikh Nation. How could an Akali government keep 52,268 Sikhs in jail without charge or trial for the last 16 years? It is shameful and a black mark on the present Akali leadership. They have cashed in on the sacrifices and good will of the pre-independence Akali leadership.

Khalisa Ji, the only solution to this quagmire is the formation of a Khalsa Raj Party under new, honest, dedicated, and committed leadership. The time is now to do it. Let's not waste time and prolong the suffering and agony of the Sikh Nation under the present corrupt Akali leadership which is controlled

by the Indian government and is determined to wipe out the Sikh Nation and the Sikh religion. The only remedy is to sever our relationship with Delhi completely, once and for all, and declare the independence from India and start a peaceful agitation to free the Sikh homeland, Punjab, Khalistan.

The victory of the Congress Party was a massive rejection of the Akalis, who were elected five years ago to reject the Congress Party. However, the Congress Party remains the enemy of the Sikh Nation. In the last two elections, the Sikh Nation has soundly rejected both parties. Neither supports the interests of the Sikh Nation; neither can be trusted by the Sikh Nation. The time has come to discard the present Akali leadership that has betrayed the Sikh Nation.

We must press for action against the police officials who carried out the police kidnapping and murder of human-rights activist Jaswant Singh Khalra. These would be good first steps for the Sikh leadership and for the new government in Punjab. But we must continue to pursue our ultimate goal of freeing the Sikh homeland, Punjab, Khalistan.

The Sikh Nation is sovereign and it must have its sovereign, independent country. Guru gave sovereignty to the Khalsa Panth. Remember "Raj Kare Ga Khalsa." Sikhs can never forgive or forget the desecration of the Golden Temple. This is the history and tradition of the Sikh Nation. The time has come to form a Khalsa Raj Party to liberate Khalistan. The new Sikh leadership must launch a Shantmai Morcha to liberate our homeland. The only way the Sikh Nation can prosper is to free the Sikh homeland, Punjab, Khalistan. The freedom of the Sikh Nation will bring prosperity, stability, and peace to Punjab and to South Asia.

Panth Da Sewadar,

Dr. GURMIT SINGH AULAKH,
President, Council of Khalistan.

TRIBUTE TO MAYOR DONALD
FRACASSI

HON. JOE KNOLLENBERG

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 10, 2002

Mr. KNOLLENBERG. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to Mayor Donald F. Fracassi, city of Southfield, and thank him for his extraordinary contributions to southeastern Michigan. A long-time community activist, every person with whom he has worked and the people of Southfield, Michigan, are eternally grateful for all he has accomplished in his more than three decades of public service.

Dean of Southeast Michigan mayors, Donald has also been a Southfield businessman since 1957. He is chairman of the South Oakland County Mayors Association and founder of the Eight Mile Boulevard Association. Mayor Fracassi has also been involved in the National League of Cities, Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG), and the Michigan Association of Mayors and Metropolitan Affairs Corporation.

Mr. Speaker, it is clear that Donald Fracassi is a man of great dedication and commitment to his community. The Jewish War Veterans and Ladies Auxiliary, the Southfield Business and Professional Women's Club, and the Air Force Association Straubel Chapter #369 have all recognized his outstanding service. Mayor Fracassi has also served as the Honorary Co-Chair of the United Negro College Fund Mayors' Scholarship Ball since 1996, and serves