

killed by the Indian governments regardless of the political party in power. It is time to stop American aid to India and to support self-determination for all the people of South Asia in the form of a plebiscite on independence so that their rights are not subject to the whims of militant Hindu nationalists.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to place the text of the BBC report into the RECORD at this time.

[The British Broadcasting Co., Mar. 8, 2002]

PROFILE: THE VISHWA HINDU PARISHAD

(By Rajyasri Rao)

The Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) was founded in 1964 by a group of senior leaders from a hard-line Hindu organization, the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), to give Hindus what they believed would be a clearly defined sense of religious identity and political purpose.

HINDU HARDLINERS HAVE GROWN MORE VOCAL

Its founders felt the need to present Hinduism in a rigorous though simplified form which would be comparable to most other world religions.

The superiority of other faiths was believed to stem from their being far less diffuse and more uniform than Hinduism.

But its critics call the VHP a hardline Hindu outfit with unmistakably close ties to its parent organization, the extremist RSS, whose objective to 'Hinduise' the Indian nation, it shares.

Central to the RSS ideology has been the belief that real national unity and progress will come only when India is 'purged' of non-Hindus, or, when members of other communities subordinate themselves 'willingly' to 'Hindu superiority.'

LINKED GROUPS

The VHP has tended to tone down the rhetoric of Hindu supremacy and even make an occasional distinction between fellow (Muslim) citizens of the present and (Muslim) 'marauders' of the past.

But the ambition of establishing a resurgent Hinduism by inculcating what some historians call a carefully constructed common 'Hindu spirit' is very much central to the VHP.

THE TEMPLE PROJECT ENJOYS A LOT OF SUPPORT

This is also something it shares with the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), which currently leads the Indian Government at the centre.

Earlier known as the Bharatiya Jana Sangh (BJS), the BJP was established in 1951 as a political wing of the RSS to counter rising public revulsion after the revered independence figure Mahatma Gandhi was assassinated by a former RSS member.

Some commentators say the party came close to obliteration in the 1960s with the Congress led by the charismatic and secular Jawaharlal Nehru, leaving little room for hardline communal politics.

But a political emergency announced by Nehru's daughter, Indira Gandhi, in 1975 enabled the BJS leaders, Atal Behari Vajpayee and LK Advani among them, to gain near stardom after serving brief prison sentences. Many women have joined the hardliners' campaign.

But it didn't really emerge as a political presence until the early 1980s.

A series of events in that decade including the mass conversion of lower-cast Hindus to Islam pushed the BJP's close affiliate, the VHP, to the forefront.

Historians say the VHP-led Hindu right considered the mass conversion of "dalits" or lower-caste Hindus to Islam to be an unforgivable insult.

The dalits, for centuries beholden to the upper castes, outraged Hindu hardliners by daring to convert at all, and moreover, convert to Islam.

The VHP saw this as a serious threat to its notion of Hinduism.

It proceeded to whip up Hindu support for a re-defined communal force, organising a series of religious meetings, cross-country marches and processions through the 1980s.

This phase coincided with the launch of an electoral strategy by the BJP to corner and hold on to the "Hindu" vote.

TEMPLE CONTROVERSY

Following the success of their campaign, senior VHP leaders announced at a religious meeting in 1984 their programme to "liberate" a site in Ayodhya from an ancient mosque to make way for a temple to the Hindu god Ram.

SOME 'MODERATE' HINDU LEADERS SUPPORT

THE VHP

Analysts say this announcement heralded a turning point in the history of the Hindu nationalist movement.

The VHP has since then claimed that the site belongs rightfully to Hindu worshippers who believe that the mosque stood on the birthplace of the god, Lord Ram. Although the claim does not stand up to substantial archaeological or historical scrutiny, the VHP and BJP are seen to have made possible the creation of a shared Hindu symbol that cuts through most divisions in Hindu society.

IN SUPPORT OF NATIONAL HOSPITAL WEEK

HON. PATSY T. MINK

OF HAWAII

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 14, 2002

Mrs. MINK of Hawaii. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of National Hospital Week, a yearly event that focuses public attention on the numerous contributions hospitals make to our communities.

National Hospital Week began in 1921 when a magazine editor suggested that more information about hospitals might alleviate public fears about "shrouded" medical institutions that used "unusual" equipment and procedures.

This year's National Hospital Week theme, "Where Miracles Happen Every Day," recognizes health care workers, volunteers, and other health professionals dedicated to making hospitals open to our communities 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

In my state of Hawaii, the health care workforce was one of the few sectors of the economy that grew in the 1990's. Due to the dramatic growth in this area, one out of every 15 employed Hawaii residents works in the health care industry. The State of Hawaii has 2.5 physicians per 1,000 residents (compared to 2.1 nationally). Unfortunately, the number of nurses declined during the nineties, and they now shoulder an even larger burden as they work to help everyone who must visit our hospitals.

As a result of the hard work by these people, my state has achieved a health status that is the envy of many other states. The State of Hawaii has longer life expectancies, lower rates of cancer, and lower hepatitis rates.

The same dedication to improving the health of our nation can be found at the nearly 6,000

registered hospitals located throughout the United States. In 1999, America's hospitals discharged roughly 35.5 million people. This staggering workload is handled by highly qualified professions and volunteers who have dedicated their lives to helping others.

I fully support National Hospital Week and extend my warmest expression of gratitude to the staff and volunteers who work in our nation's hospitals.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO LUCILE SUGDEN

HON. MIKE ROGERS

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 14, 2002

Mr. ROGERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the accomplishments of Mrs. Lucile Sugden of Lansing, Michigan, who will be honored on Sunday, June 2, 2002, by South Baptist Church and the Lansing community for her years of service, including 75 years of faithfully serving as a Sunday School teacher.

For 35 years, Mrs. Sugden and her late husband, Dr. Howard Sugden, ministered to the members and community of South Baptist Church in Lansing. During her years of service, Mrs. Sugden's witness has inspired and motivated many Christian families.

Even today, Lucile Sugden, who celebrates her 95th birthday on May 31, 2002, continues to teach a weekly Sunday School class at South Baptist. She also leads a weekly Bible study at her apartment complex.

Described by those who know and love her as a true Woman of God, Mrs. Sugden is a role model for staying active in our golden years. She swims regularly in a local pool and even evangelizes those she meets in the hot tub. She has also been seen each summer in recent years zipping around on a jet ski watercraft on Lake Michigan.

Long before her jet ski days, Lucile Sugden became a dedicated Tiger baseball fan. Twice honored at Tiger games in Detroit, she is fiercely loyal and devoted to her Tigers.

Today, we extend our admiration and respect to Lucile Sugden of Lansing, Michigan. Her life truly reflects the direction of II Timothy 2:15 which tells us: "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."

INTRODUCTION OF THE CHARITABLE CONTRIBUTION BILL

HON. DAVID WU

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 14, 2002

Mr. WU. Mr. Speaker, September 11 showed us the horrors of this world. But it also showed us the good in human nature. Americans have been incredibly generous with their time and money in response to the terrorist attacks. Numerous charitable organizations were started within hours of the attacks to help the families whose lives were suddenly torn apart. People took time off from work to assist with feeding the emergency rescue crew digging through the rubble. And over \$1 billion dollars has been raised to assist in these efforts.