

Meanwhile, reports indicate that so far the Punjab police has taken 1,222 Akali workers into custody. Of these 934 belong to Shiromani Akali Dal, 234 to Sarb Hind Shiromani Akali Dal, 50 to Shiromani Akali Dal (Amritsar) and one owes allegiance to Mr Ravi Inder Singh. The remaining three belong to the Mehta faction of the AISSF.

Of these, the maximum arrests of the Badal men were made in Sangrur (73), followed by Majitha (64), Tarn Taran (60) and Patiala (62). Rashmi Talwar and Ashok Sethi in their reports from Amritsar said the police in a pre-dawn swoop entered the Golden Temple complex on the pretext of searching all three serais—Guru Nanak Niwas, Guru Hargobind Niwas and Mata Ganga Niwas.

When the police arrived to get the three serais vacated to ensure implementation of the orders, among those evicted were 50 schoolchildren in the age group of six to eight years from Lucknow. The police parties which were headed by Mr Jagdish Khara and Mr R.S. Ghuman, both DSPs, had a verbal altercation with the SGPC workers who resisted the attempts of the raiding party to get the serais vacated. Mr Harbant Singh and Mr Ajaib Singh, Secretary of the SGPC, and personal assistant to the SGPC chief, respectively, refused to budge holding that the orders were not specific to the SGPC and “devotees” could not be evicted from a religious complex.

The SGPC Chief, Prof Kirpal Singh Badungar, who had to rush to Amritsar from Bathinda, after the police entry into the complex, assailed the government action maintaining that it was a direct attack on the most sacred Sikh shrine and the Congress Government was bent upon disturbing communal peace and harmony.

The police officials managed to get computer printouts of the names and addresses of 2,000 devotees staying in the serais.

Hundreds of policemen in top anti-combat gear laid a siege to the Golden Temple complex. The mounted police has also been deployed around the complex.

Talking to The Tribune over the cellphone, Capt Kanwaljit Singh said that that action of the police in the morning and again in the evening of searching serais and evicting yatrias was a serious “violation of the sanctity of the Golden Temple complex.” The action of the government amounts to gross interference in the religious affairs of the Sikhs and could lead to serious complications besides disturbing communal harmony and peace in the state.”

He said a number of SGPC members and dal workers had already managed to sneak into the complex.

Professor Badungar told newsmen that in case the police entered Teja Singh Samundari Hall on the day of the election meeting, the repercussions would be “drastic”.

He said the government was gripped by a “fear psychosis” and its nervousness was evident from the desperate steps it was taking. He maintained that the national and international media would be permitted to cover the executive committee elections as he disapproved on any NDA observers to oversee the elections. No other SGPC employee would be allowed inside the meeting hall.

The SGPC chief said that non-bailable warrants issued against former SGPC chief Jagir Kaur by a Kapurthala court was an indication of the desperation of the state government.

Meanwhile, Mr. Sukhdev Singh Bhaur, General Secretary, SHSAD supported the orders issued by the District Magistrate but held that these orders should be applicable in case of “bad elements” and not the devotees.

The SHSAD was ready for a truce with Mr. Parkash Singh Badal provided he agreed to

apologize at Akal Takht and accepted Bhai Ranjit Singh as Jathedar of Akal Takht. He claimed that 50 SGPC members were strongly behind the SHSAD.

Senior Akali leader and close aide of Mr. Parkash Singh Badal, Capt Kanwaljit Singh claimed that the SAD has formulated its secret strategy to bring all 120 SGPC members to Teja Singh Samundri Hall on November 12 to elect the President and the executive committee. Talking to newsmen this evening at Bhai Gurdas Hall after managing to enter the city in disguise. He said the reign of terror unleashed by the Amarinder Singh government on Akali leaders and workers were trampling upon their democratic rights.

Capt Kanwaljit Singh said Mr. Badal, along with all 120 members, would land at Rajasansi Airport tomorrow for the SGPC general house election meeting. Party leaders and workers would ensure that all SGPC members manage to enter the Golden Temple complex on that day.

He claimed that the ex-parte disqualification of SGPC members by the SGJC was likely to be set aside by the Punjab and Haryana High Court tomorrow.

Discounting the rumors of a patch-up between Mr. Badal and Mr. Tohra, Capt Kanwaljit Singh said there was no scope for any compromise. The Badal candidate would win hands down, he asserted.

The arrival of the Jathedar of Akal Takht, Giani Joginder Singh Vedanti, here this evening has raised speculation about an appeal being made by him for a patch-up between the two Akali stalwarts to avoid a confrontation even as the Congress Government has queered the pitch with heavy deployment of the police around the complex.

SELECTIVE SERVICE VOLUNTEERS

HON. BOB SCHAFFER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 14, 2002

Mr. SCHAFFER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Mr. George C. Everett of Fort Collins, Colorado; Mr. Ralph L. Spellman of Yuma, Colorado; and Mr. Dale H. Shoemaker Sr. of La Junta, Colorado on their appointments to Selective Service Local Boards 006 and 024 in Greeley, Colorado, and 026 in Pueblo, Colorado respectively.

Local board members have the distinction of receiving an appointment by the Director of Selective Service in the name of President George W. Bush, and on the recommendation of Governor Bill Owens. Patriotic Americans, these board members serve their country by volunteering their time to assist the government in selecting men suitable for military service in the event of a draft. If a draft commences, these citizens would decide who would receive deferments, postponements, or exemption from military service based on the individual registrant's circumstances and beliefs.

The Selective Service System is America's defense manpower “insurance policy” in a still dangerous and uncertain world. The service performed by a Selective Service Board Member provides a vital link between the community and today's military. His hard work helps guarantee claims filed by young men for deferments and exemptions will receive fair and equitable consideration if a future crisis requires reinstatement of a draft.

Congratulations to these dedicated volunteers on their appointments. I urge the House

to join me in extending its thanks to the three men for their commitment to their country.

THE LAND OF THE PLENTY

HON. CONSTANCE A. MORELLA

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 14, 2002

Mrs. MORELLA. Mr. Speaker, those of you who were with us last evening recall that I mentioned that this month is the two-year anniversary of the report that came out called “The Land of Plenty.” This was a report of the Congressional Commission on Advancement of Women, Minorities, and Persons with Disabilities in Science Engineering and Technology Development. It is legislation that I introduced a number of years ago, and like so much of what we know, you have to be tenacious and diligent and patient and persevere. The legislation established a commission that looked comprehensively at the challenge of under-representation in America's science and engineering workforce and the educational pathway that feeds into it. The commission called for the establishment of a public/private partnership to take America into acting to redress the stunning imbalance in America's technical talent pool. In their report to Congress, BEST presented their findings on September 26, 2002 at 8:15 a.m. in the Cannon Caucus Room, 345 Cannon House Office Building, Washington, D.C., Representatives CONNIE MORELLA and EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON, BEST National Leadership Council Co-Chairs, presiding. (Following are edited comments. The full testimony is available at www.bestworkforce.org.)

BUILDING ENGINEERING AND SCIENCE TALENT

BLUE RIBBON PANELS, INTERIM PROGRESS

REPORT: TO CONGRESS

September 26, 2002

Present: CONSTANCE A. MORELLA, (R-MD) National Leadership Council Co-Chair; EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON, (D-TX) National Leadership Council Co-Chair, Allan Alson, superintendent, Evanston Township High School; Dan Arvizu, senior vice president, CH2M Hill; Earnestine R. Baker, Meyerhoff Program UMBC; Alfred Berkeley, vice chair, NASDAQ Stock Market, Inc.; Rita Colwell, director, National Science Foundation; Cinda-Sue Davis, director, WISE, University of Michigan; Marye Anne Fox, chancellor, North Carolina State University; Eugene Garcia, professor, Arizona State University; Shirley Malcom, head, Education Directorate, American Association for the Advancement of Science; Willie Pearson, Jr., professor, Georgia Institute of Technology; Anne Petersen, senior program director, W.K. Kellogg Foundation; Paula Rayman, professor, University of Massachusetts; Claibourne Smith, president, Delaware Foundation for Science and Math Education; Richard Tapia, professor, Rice University, Deborah Wince-Smith, president, Council on Competitiveness; also present, John Yochelson, BEST, testimony into RECORD: Shirley Ann Jackson, president, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute.

PROCEEDINGS

MORELLA: Women, African-Americans, Hispanics, Native Americans, persons with disabilities make up two-thirds of our workforce but they hold only one-fourth of the jobs in science, engineering, and technology. We perceive this really as a vulnerability that threatens the living standards of all