

of Engineering Companies in honoring Thompson Engineering for its outstanding work with the Mobile Landing project. The landing and its facilities will prove to be another valuable asset to the City of Mobile, its citizens and visitors provided by Thompson and its talented and distinguished team of designers and contractors. I personally thank and recognize Thompson for its continued dedication to the City of Mobile and the State of Alabama.

INDIAN POLICE COLLECTING DATA
ON CHRISTIANS

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 18, 2003

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I was disturbed to read an article in the Hindustan Times saying that Indian police are collecting data on Christians in Gujarat. Gujarat is the site of the massacres of Muslims last March in which 2,000 to 5,000 Muslims were killed. Hasn't Gujarat seen enough trouble?

According to the report, the All-India Christian Council submitted a memorandum to the state police chief detailing the survey. The police are seeking information on family sizes, job profiles, sources of funds, and even whether the person is a first-generation Christian and/or has converted. At least 25 Christian institutions have been questioned in just a few days. The article quotes Bishop Gregory of Rajkot as saying that he was asked "about the number of Christians and institutions here." Father Cedric Prakash of the United Christian Forum for Human Rights predicts that "this survey may be a buildup to the anticonversion bill."

India has already outlawed conversions to any religion but Hinduism in two states. Recently the ruling BJP has begun an effort to make that national.

This is outrageous, Mr. Speaker. It is a major violation of religious freedom, which is one of the main pillars of a democracy. Instead, India is again acting like a Hindu fundamentalist theocracy.

In 1997, a Christian festival on the theme "Jesus is the answer" ended when the police fired their guns at it to close it down after they received complaints that the festival was converting people. Missionary Graham Staines and his two sons, ages 8 and 10, were murdered while they slept in their jeep. The murderers surrounded the jeep and chanted "Victory to Hannuman," according to contemporaneous news reports. None of these people has been held accountable. Now an American missionary, Joseph Cooper, has been expelled from India after being severely beaten by Hindu nationalists.

Since 1998, Christian priests have been murdered, nuns have been raped, churches have been burned as they were in the Old South during segregation, Christian schools and prayer halls have been violently attacked. Since India's independence in 1947, its forces have murdered over 200,000 Christians. They have also murdered over 250,000 Sikhs since 1984, over 85,000 Kashmiri Muslims since 1988, and tens of thousands of Dalits, Bodos, Assainese, Manipuris, Tamils, and other minorities. Many lowercaste Hindus are converting to Christianity and other religions and now the BJP is passing laws to prohibit this.

Mr. Speaker, these are the acts of a theocratic tyranny, not a real democracy. We must impose the sanctions appropriate for a violator of religious freedom. We must also stop our aid and trade with India until it begins to allow the exercise of basic human and religious rights. And we must support self-determination for all the people of South Asia as the best way to bring real freedom, peace, stability, and prosperity to that troubled region.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to place the Hindustan Times article into the RECORD at this time.

[From the Hindustan Times, Mar. 9, 2003]

GUJARAT CHRISTIANS ALLEGE SURVEY OF
FAMILIES

(By Rathin Das)

AHMEDABAD, March 8.—The Gujarat Police have reportedly started a discreet survey of Christians in some parts of the state, seeking information on family sizes, job profiles and sources of foreign funds. The All-India Christian Council, which submitted a memorandum to the state police chief on Friday, is planning to move the High Court over the issue next week.

State Director General of Police K. Chakravarthy told the Hindustan Times that no statewide survey had been ordered. He added, however, that some information might have been sought from some people on the orders of district police chiefs.

A senior home department official echoed the state police chief. He told the Hindustan Times that no survey of Christians had been ordered. "It may be a survey about foreign funds and its use, but that is applicable for institutions of all communities," he said.

But despite official denials, community leaders alleged that policemen came calling at some houses in Ahmedabad, Sabarkantha, Banaskantha and Kutch districts over the past few days and asked about the antecedents and assets of Christian families.

Community leaders also said at least 25 Christian institutions and families had been questioned over the past few days. Police personnel who visited Christian institutions, they said, wanted information on the number of Christians in the area and other details, like the sources of their funds. Bishop Gregory of Rajkot, who was questioned by the police on Friday, said: "I was asked about the number of Christians and institutions here." The police also asked him to contact the nearest police station if he needed help. Bishop Gregory told this correspondent.

The police have also asked some Christians whether they converted voluntarily or under pressure, and whether they were first-generation Christians.

"This survey may be a build-up to the anti-conversion bill the government wants to introduce in the state assembly during this session," said Father Cedric Prakash of the United Christian Forum for Human Rights.

One church leader in Saurashtra was asked whether Christians would hold demonstrations if the anti-conversion bill is introduced in the assembly, sources said.

Individual Christians are scared to speak to the press as many of them are in government employment. In the wake of the attack on Christians and the burning of churches in the Dangs district around Christmas 1998, the state intelligence department had ordered a similar survey, but abandoned it after a petition was filed in the Gujarat High Court.

Minority report:

July 1998—Copies of the New Testament burnt in a Rajkot school;

Oct 1998—Christian congregation attacked in Vadodara;

Dec 1998—Government threatens to stop grants to Christian schools;

Dec 1998—Churches razed in Dangs district;

Jan 1999—PM visits Dangs, calls for national debate on conversions;

Feb 1999—Secret survey ordered, first of Christians, later of Muslims;

Jan 2000—Government lifts ban on employees joining RSS.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO SUE JONES

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 18, 2003

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize Sue Jones of Pagosa Springs, Colorado for her outstanding service to the citizens of Pagosa Springs and the many student athletes of the Archuleta School District. For the last nineteen years, Sue has helped organize Pagosa Springs' Annual Blow-out charity softball tournament, and I would like to acknowledge her efforts before this body of Congress and this nation.

For eleven years, Sue has been the tournament's director. Each year over thirty teams come from all over the four-corners region to participate in the tournament, generating thousands of dollars for the local economy, in addition to charity contributions. For the first ten years of the tournament, proceeds went to support the Spanish Fiesta Scholarship Fund, then for two years to St. Jude's Children's Hospital. For the last seven years proceeds have gone to local school athletic programs.

Just over the past three years, Sue has raised enough money to allow the Pagosa Springs school athletic department to purchase baseballs, a radar gun, volleyballs, score clocks, weight room equipment, and wrestling shoes. She also contributed to a band competition trip to the Air Force Academy. During the school year, Sue donates countless hours to school athletic programs as a scorekeeper.

Mr. Speaker, it is a great privilege to recognize Sue Jones for her enduring commitment to the boys and girls of Pagosa Springs before this body of Congress and this nation. Sue recognizes the importance of athletic programs and competition in the development of well-rounded and conscientious young citizens. Her energy and service have provided students of the Archuleta School District invaluable support for their athletic dreams.

THE ASSASSINATION OF SERBIAN
PRIME MINISTER ZORAN

DJINDJIC ON MARCH 12, 2003

HON. JOSEPH CROWLEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 18, 2003

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express outrage at the assassination of the Serbian Prime Minister Zoran Djindjic. This assassination represents a hideous and appalling crime that was intended to block reform and democratization endeavors. The United States has strongly endorsed Djindjic's reform-minded approach, his advocacy of democratic values and his struggle to propel Serbia into

modern Europe and the Western world of democratic nations.

As a student in Belgrade he was jailed after joining a non-communist student organization protesting against Marshal Tito's communist rule. In the late 1990s, Djindjic emerged as the leading figure in the opposition movement against Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic.

Congress had a vital interest in ending Milosevic's dictatorship in Serbia, and Djindjic was instrumental in helping engineer the demise of this evil ruler. Djindjic played a crucial role in the arrest of Milosevic, and he later courageously sent the dictator to the United Nations war crimes tribunal in The Hague. When Milosevic was handed over to the tribunal in 2001, the Prime Minister pushed aside the objections of other senior Serbian politicians, and he was prepared to confront the harsh criticism by Serbian nationalists.

The prosecutors at the United Nations tribunal regarded him as their best hope to deliver fugitive Serbian war criminals indicted by the court. At the time of his tragic death, Djindjic had been preparing to arrest Milorad Lukovic and his associates, some of whom are suspected of committing war crimes and belonging to an underworld group accused of dozens of murders and kidnappings.

By promoting economic and democratic reforms, Djindjic was further instrumental in realizing the U.S. goal of bringing and maintaining stability on the Balkans. Djindjic saw the need for reform and taught his people to understand the demands and rewards of integrating Serbia into the world of peaceloving democracies. He urged the Serbian people to confront and work up its own past in order to manage the difficult task of democracy building. Djindjic understood the challenge to tackle these difficulties instead of denying them even if they are unpleasant. His death represents a major setback to the fight for democratic stability in this important transitional phase.

I express my condolence to the people of Serbia and to Serbian-Americans on the sad and tragic death of Zoran Djindjic, whose courageous endeavors to bring democracy to Serbia must not be forgotten.

TRIBUTE TO ARTHUR VALENTINE YAROCH

HON. JO BONNER

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 18, 2003

Mr. BONNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the life of Arthur Valentine Yaroch, who passed away March 5, 2003, at the age of 73. Mr. Yaroch, who served with distinction as the director of finance for the City of Mobile under former Mayor Arthur Outlaw, was a pillar of the Mobile community and will be deeply missed.

Art Yaroch, a native of Detroit, was a long-time resident of Mobile and Ono Island. After earning a bachelor's degree in business administration, he worked as a member of the controller's staff at Uniroyal Tire Co. and then as a comptroller with Borden, Inc. Art then moved to Mobile and became the executive vice president of Colonial Sugars.

In March 1989, Art was appointed as the City of Mobile's finance director and resigned

at the end of that year. He also served on the board of directors of The Lighthouse, as membership chairman of the Baldwin County Republican Party and as treasurer of the Pleasure Island Republican club. Art Yaroch was a devoted parishioner of St. Thomas by the Sea Catholic Church in Orange Beach where he was an usher and past member of the parish council.

Mr. Speaker, it is my great honor to pay tribute to the life of Art Yaroch. He was my friend and he will be sorely missed by all who knew him. Art is survived by his lovely wife, Isabel; two sons, Arthur and Steven; two daughters, Lauri Ann Grove and Susan Courtney; two brothers; two sisters and eight grandchildren. I would like to extend my prayers and deepest sympathies to his entire family and many friends.

SAVE THE LIFE OF DEVINDER PAL SINGH BHULLAR

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 18, 2003

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, Devinder Pal Singh Bhullar is about to be put to death in India for a crime even India admitted he didn't commit.

I thank my friend Dr. Gurmit Singh Aulakh, President of the Council of Khalistan, for bringing this shameful case to my attention. The Council of Khalistan put out a very informative press release on the case.

The chief judge of a three-judge panel from India's Supreme Court found Mr. Bhullar not guilty of the crime of which he was accused, involvement in a bombing. The judge ordered Mr. Bhullar's release. Instead, the Indian government tortured Mr. Bhullar until he signed a fake confession. Now they are trying to put him to death.

Unfortunately, this is just the latest episode in India's abuse of minorities, which has been well documented in Congress by many of my colleagues and me. This brutal atrocity against justice must be stopped.

The Bush Administration should demand Mr. Bhullar's release, or at least a new trial. In addition, they should impose sanctions on India, cut off its aid and trade, and put this Congress on record in support of self-determination for the Sikh Nation of Khalistan and the other 16 minority nations seeking their freedom from India. This should be done in the democratic way, through a free and fair plebiscite. It is time for India to start acting like a democracy, and it can start by sparing the life of Devinder Pal Singh Bhullar.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to enter the Council of Khalistan's press release on Bhullar into the RECORD at this time for the information of my colleagues and the public.

[Council of Khalistan—Press Release, Feb. 25, 2003]

DEVINDER PAL SINGH BHULLAR'S LIFE MUST BE SPARED

INDIAN CONSTITUTION ONLY PROTECTS MAJORITY HINDUS MINORITIES ELIMINATED, DIRECTLY OR BY COURTS

WASHINGTON, D.C.—The impending execution of Devinder Pal Singh Bhullar shows that the Constitution of India only protects the majority Hindu population, according to

Dr. Gurmit Singh Aulakh, President of the Council of Khalistan, which leads the Sikh struggle for independence from India. Dr. Aulakh called on the President of India to stop the execution. Bhullar was accused of a 1993 bomb blast near the Youth Congress office in Delhi in which 20 people were killed. Congress leader M.S. Bitta lost a leg in that attack.

The presiding Judge of a three-Judge bench in the Supreme Court of India found Professor Bhullar, a political activist, 'Not Guilty' and directed that he be released. However, Professor Bhullar was convicted based on a forced confession obtained through torture, which was retracted. On that basis India wants to impose capital punishment on Professor Bhullar. Sajjan Kumar and H.K.L. Bhagat, who personally incited the murder of thousands of Sikhs in Delhi, got off scot-free without any punishment. Even by Indian standards, this is an outrageous miscarriage of justice.

"The Bhullar case is merely the latest example of how India eliminates minorities," said Dr. Aulakh. Indian police arrested human-rights activist Jaswant Singh Khaira after he exposed their policy of mass cremation of Sikhs, in which over 50,000 Sikhs have been picked up, tortured, and killed, then their bodies are declared unidentified and secretly cremated. Then Mr. Khaira was murdered in police custody. His body was not given to his family. Similarly, the police murdered former Jathedar of the Akal Takht Gurdev Singh Kaunke. His body was not handed over to his family.

Last spring the Indian police stood aside under orders while militant Hindus murdered 2,000 to 5,000 Muslims in Gujarat. Australian missionary Graham Staines was murdered a few years ago by VHP activists. Staines and his two young sons were burned to death while they slept in their jeep. Their killers surrounded the jeep and chanted "Victory to Hannuman," a Hindu god. After the murder, Staines's widow, who was working with lepers, was expelled from India. No one is ever punished for these atrocities. Nuns have been raped, priests have been murdered, and Christian churches have been burned by the fanatic, fundamentalist Hindu nationalist militants.

"It is clear from these actions that India is not the democracy it claims to be," said Dr. Aulakh. "Instead it is a tyrannical Hindu theocracy where minorities die or disappear," he said. "There is a consistent pattern of Indian government efforts to protect its tyrannical rule over the minorities of South Asia."

The Indian government has murdered over 250,000 Sikhs since 1984, more than 200,000 Christians since 1948, over 85,000 Muslims in Kashmir since 1988, and tens of thousands of Tamils, Assamese, Manipuris, Dalits (the aboriginal people of the subcontinent), and others. More than 52,000 Sikhs are being held as political prisoners. The Indian Supreme Court called the Indian government's murders of Sikhs "worse than a genocide." On October 7, 1987, the Sikh Nation declared the independence of its homeland, Punjab, Khalistan. No Sikh representative has ever signed the Indian constitution. The Council of Khalistan is the government pro tempore of Khalistan, the Sikh homeland. The Sikh Nation demands freedom for its homeland, Khalistan.

"Only in a free and sovereign Khalistan will the Sikh Nation prosper. In a democracy, the right to self-determination is the *sine qua non* and India should allow a plebiscite for the freedom of the Sikh Nation and all the nations of South Asia," Dr. Aulakh said.