

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.