

We can support this cause by stopping U.S. aid to India until human rights are fully observed for all people there and by declaring our support for a free and fair vote on the subject of independence for Khalistan, for Kashmir, for Nagalim, and for all the minority nations of South Asia.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to put the Council of Khalistan's open letter on the upcoming elections into the RECORD at this time.

COUNCIL OF KHALISTAN,
Washington, DC, February 4, 2004.

OPEN LETTER TO THE KHALSA PANTH
PARLIAMENT DISSOLVED; ELECTIONS COMING
SIKHS MUST STOP SUPPORTING CORRUPT
BADAL, WHO DIMINISHED IMAGE OF SIKH NATION
ONLY IN A FREE KHALISTAN CAN SIKHS
PROSPER AKALI LEADERSHIP CONTROLLED BY
INDIAN GOVERNMENT

DEAR KHALSA PANTH: WAHEGURU JI KA
KHALSA, WAHEGURU JI KI FATEHI!

The Indian government has dissolved Parliament. New elections are coming, perhaps as soon as March. Elections under the Indian Constitution will not free the Sikh Nation. Use this opportunity, however, to elect committed, honest Sikhs who are committed to freeing Khalistan to Parliament. Do not support Badal or the Akalis. They are corrupt and have betrayed the Khalsa Panth. Not even a single Akali protested the unprecedented corruption of Badal. They have disgraced the name of the old Akalis who sacrificed their lives for the well being of the Sikh Nation.

The Guru gave sovereignty to the Sikh Nation. ("In Grieb Sikhin Ko Deon Patshahi.") The Sikh Nation must achieve it. We always remember it by reciting every morning and evening, "Raj Kare Ga Khalsa." Now is the time to act on it. Do we mean what we say every morning and evening?

The fire of freedom still burns strong and bright in the heart of the Sikh Nation. Last year Sikhs openly held seminars in Punjab on the subject of Khalistan. This is a very good sign and we salute the people who participated in these seminars. They are keeping the flame of freedom lit. Now I urge Sikhs to unite and take action to liberate our homeland, Punjab, Khalistan. It is time to start a Shantmai Morcha to liberate Khalistan from Indian occupation.

Never forget that the Akal Takht Sahib and Darbar Sahib are under the control of the Indian government, the same Indian government that has murdered over a quarter of a million Sikhs in the past twenty years. The Jathedar of the Akal Takht and the head granthi of Darbar Sahib toe the line that the Indian government tells them. They are not appointed by the Khalsa Panth. The SGPC, which appoints them, does not represent the Sikh Nation anymore. They have become the puppets of the Indian government and have lost credibility with the Sikh Nation. Otherwise they would behave like a real Jathedar, Jathedar Gurdev Singh Kaunke, rather than like Indian government puppet Jathedar Aroor Singh, who gave a Siropa to General Dyer for the massacre at Jalianawa Bagh. These institutions will remain under the control of the Indian regime until we free the Sikh homeland, Punjab, Khalistan, from Indian occupation and oppression and sever our relations with the New Delhi government.

Yet the Akali Dal continues to support Badal, even though he was prosecuted and jailed for his corruption. According to India-West, the Punjab Vigilance Bureau carried out raids on Badal's properties for several months and filed a charge-sheet in a local court charging Mr. Badal with siphoning off Rs. 784 million, the equivalent of \$17 million in U.S. money, during his five years as chief

minister. The article says that Mr. Badal and his family hold assets of Rs. 43.26 billion (nearly \$1 billion), most of which are located outside India. Half the population of India lives below the international poverty line. About 40 percent live on less than \$2 per day.

The Badal government was the most corrupt one in Punjab's history. They sold jobs for a fixed fee. They came up with a new, dignified term for bribery: "fee for service." If you didn't pay the fee, you didn't get the service. The Chief Minister's wife was so experienced that she could pick up a bag of money and tell how much money was in it. Parkash Singh Badal was a disaster for Punjab and a disgrace to the Sikh Nation. How can the Akali Dal, which is supposed to represent the interests of the Sikh Nation, continue to support him?

Badal's corruption brought Punjab to bankruptcy. He was bankrupt morally and religiously as well as bankrupting Punjab financially. It is time for new leadership that shows the moral fabric a Sikh is supposed to have. Badal has destroyed the moral fabric of the Sikh religion. What happened to the concept of fairness and honesty?

The Akalis who protest Badal's prosecution are morally degenerate. They are destroying the moral fabric of Sikhism as a religion and a society. They should be ashamed of themselves. In addition to stealing from the people of Punjab, Mr. Badal worked against the cause of Sikh freedom. Badal was under the complete control of his masters in New Delhi, the militant, fundamentalist Hindu nationalist BJP. He has a long record of betraying the Sikh Nation.

The Akali Dal conspired with the Indian government in 1984 to invade the Golden Temple to murder Sant Bhindranwale and 20,000 other Sikh during June 1984 in Punjab. If Sikhs will not even protect the sanctity of the Golden Temple, how can the Sikh Nation survive as a nation?

The Akali Dal has lost all its credibility. The Badal government was so corrupt openly and no Akali leader would come forward and tell Badal and his wife to stop this unparalleled corruption. That is why the Akali Dal was defeated in the elections by the Congress Party. The Sikh Nation never can forgive or forget the attack on the Golden Temple. The Congress Party is the enemy of the Sikh Nation. Badal was so corrupt that the Sikhs had to vote for their enemy, the Congress Party, rather than Badal and his henchmen because there was no other party to vote for.

Because Sikhs are slaves in India, there is nobody to defend the Sikh interests internationally. Recently, an issue came up of the French banning the wearing of turbans in school. If Khalistan were free, the Sikh Nation could call the French Ambassador and tell him to stop this harassment of Sikhs. Our Ambassador to France would tell the French government the same thing: the turban is part of the Sikh religion and Sikhs should not be harassed.

Remember the words of Professor Darshan Singh, former Akal Takht Jathedar: "If a Sikh is not a Khalistani, he is not a Sikh." Sikhs should vote only for candidates who are prepared to do so. Otherwise, you are just voting to condemn your children and grandchildren to continued slavery under brutal Brahmin theocratic rule.

The time to achieve our independence is now. India is not one country. It has 18 official languages. Soon Kashmir will be free from Indian occupation. Now America is involved in it. As L.K. Advani predicted, "When Kashmir goes, India goes." We agree with him.

When I met President Bush on December 5, he personally told me, "I am aware of the Sikh and Kashmiri problem and we stopped India and Pakistan from going to nuclear

war." The Sikh diaspora has a moral responsibility to help the Sikh Nation to achieve its sovereignty by freeing Khalistan from Indian occupation.

The time has come to liberate our homeland. It is the only way that we can prevent further degenerations of the Sikh Nation like the Badal regime. Sikhs must claim their birthright by liberating Khalistan. Only by freeing Khalistan will we put an end to this corruption and restore control of Punjab and its assets to the people, to whom it rightfully belongs. A free Khalistan is a must for the survival of the Sikh nation and will provide an optimal environment for the Sikh Nation to progress to its optimum potential politically, religiously, and economically.

Panth Da Sewadar,
Dr. GURMIT SINGH AULAKH,
President, Council of Khalistan.

HONORING JULIE DEMARIA

HON. ZOE LOFGREN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 24, 2004

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today, to honor Julie DeMaria and her family, and the people of San Jose on the establishment of Operation Care and Comfort.

Operation Care and Comfort is a self-funded, all-volunteer organization whose sole purpose is to supply care packages to the men and women of our military serving overseas. Since last summer Julie rallied neighborhood volunteers and businesses to donate items, including T-shirts, pins, hats and food items to send in the care packages. Most importantly, hand written letters of support are included in each package to the troops, showing our gratitude, and support for their service to our country.

Because of Julie's efforts, the San Jose community has now shipped over 27,500 pounds of care packages to our troops and she is still going! Her devotion to her community and love for her country does not go unrecognized.

On behalf of the House of Representatives, I want to thank Julie DeMaria, her family, and all the volunteers in the San Jose Community involved in Operation Care and Comfort for their service to the United States.

REMEMBERING LUCILLE
WESTBROOK

HON. MIKE ROSS

OF ARKANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 24, 2004

Mr. ROSS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this time to rise in honor of the life and lasting memory of Lucille Westbrook. Lucille, a fifth-generation Arkansan, was born in the small town of Nathan, attended Nashville public schools, and spent her life as an involved citizen, advancing issues dearest to her and worked to preserve the heritage of her community and state. She passed away Saturday, January 31, 2004, at the age of 86.

Described by those who knew her well as "brilliant" and "beloved", Lucille was a well known face and name to the citizens of Howard County. Early in her life, she worked for