

Mr. Speaker, earning the esteem of the B'nai B'rith deserves this body's recognition because it is a widely respected organization dedicated to the community it shares with people of all faiths. It is a privilege for me to stand before the House of Representatives to honor an individual like Charles "Rusty" Flack, Jr. I offer my deepest congratulations to him on his becoming a recipient of a Community Service Award, and I urge my colleagues to join Seligman J. Strauss Lodge No. 139 and me in extending our gratitude and admiration to a remarkable citizen who has distinguished himself as a businessman and a civic leader.

KERRY STATEMENT CALLING
SIKHS TERRORISTS A MISTAKE

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 24, 2004

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, as an American and a Democrat, it was not good news when I was informed by Dr. Gurmit Singh Aulakh, President of the Council of Khalistan, that Senator JOHN KERRY, the frontrunner for my party's nomination for President, had made a speech in Oklahoma on January 31 in which he described the Sikhs as terrorists. This is a mistake on Senator KERRY's part and one I hope he will correct promptly.

I have been following South Asian affairs for some time now and I can tell you that Sikhs are committed to freedom. I have met members of the Sikh community here in the United States, which is half a million strong, and they are hardworking people who are dedicated to their families, their religion, America, and freedom for their Sikh brothers and sisters back home in Punjab, Khalistan.

The Indian government has been oppressing the Sikhs ever since independence. Shortly after India got its independence, the Indian government sent out a memo describing Sikhs as "a criminal class" and ordering police to take special measures to suppress them. This is shameful. Since 1984, India has murdered over 250,000 Sikhs, according to the Punjab State Magistracy and human-rights organizations. They hold over 52,000 political prisoners. Some have been in illegal custody without charge or trial for 20 years, Mr. Speaker. Two decades! Is that a democratic way to do things?

India's propaganda machine is working overtime to maintain this false picture of Sikhs as a "criminal class" devoted to terrorism. They have even hired two lobbying firms, expensive ones, to carry out this work. Unfortunately, it appears that they managed to misinform the Senator from Massachusetts on this matter. I am sure he will correct himself soon, and I urge him to do so.

In the meantime, Mr. Speaker, it is up to us to do what we can to press for democracy in the subcontinent. Cutting off India's aid would be a good start. This is one of the most effective ways to promote basic human rights for everyone in South Asia. Another very effective means would be to call on India to hold a free and fair vote on the question of independence, the democratic way. By doing this, we help bring the glow of freedom and the blessings of liberty to everyone in that troubled part of the world.

I also call on Senator KERRY to recognize the legitimate aspirations of the Sikhs and the others fighting to free themselves from the yoke of Indian oppression. That they are doing so by peaceful, democratic, nonviolent means shows that the Indian government's picture of them as terrorists is false. I await the Senator's correction.

Mr. Speaker, at this time I would like to add the Council of Khalistan's letter to Senator KERRY requesting a correction and repudiation of his statement to the RECORD so that people can see the real situation in South Asia.

COUNCIL OF KHALISTAN,

Washington, DC, February 11, 2004.

Senator JOHN F. KERRY,

U.S. Senate,

Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR KERRY: I am writing to you today on behalf of half a million Sikh Americans and over 25 million Sikhs worldwide to say that your remarks equating Sikhs with terrorists were offensive to the Sikh community. While giving a speech in Oklahoma, you referred to "the Sikhs in India" as an example of terrorism.

Sikhism is an independent, monotheistic, revealed religion, not a part of any other religion. Sikhs are distinctive by our religion, language, and culture from any other people on Earth.

Sikhs ruled Punjab from 1710 to 1716 and again from 1765 to 1849. Sikhs, Hindus, Muslims, and Christians all participated in the government. Sikhs are a separate nation and people.

At the time of India's independence, three nations were to receive sovereign power: the Muslims, who got Pakistan, the Hindus, who got India, and the Sikhs. Sikhs took their share with India on the solemn promise that Sikhs would enjoy "the glow of freedom" in Punjab and no law affecting Sikh rights would be passed without our consent. Instead, almost as soon as the ink was dry on India's independence, Nehru sent out a directive describing Sikhs as "a criminal class" and ordering police to take extraordinary measures against us.

Since June 1984, India has murdered over 250,000 Sikhs, according to figures compiled by the Punjab State Magistracy and human rights groups and published in the book *The Politics of Genocide* by Inderjit Singh Jaijee. A report from the Movement Against State Repression (MASR) shows that India admitted to holding 52,268 Sikhs as political prisoners. Some have been in illegal custody since 1984! Tens of thousands of other minorities are also being held as political prisoners, according to Amnesty International. Indian forces carried out the March 2000 massacre in the village of Chithisinghpura, according to two independent investigations. Indian forces were caught red-handed trying to set fire to a Sikh Gurdwara and Sikh homes in a village in Kashmir. Sikh and Muslim villagers joined hands to stop them.

The book *Soft Target*, written by two Canadian journalists, Zuhair Kashmeri of the *Toronto Globe and Mail* and Brian McAndrew of the *Toronto Star*, shows conclusively that the Indian government blew up its own airliner in 1985, killing 329 innocent people, to blame it on the Sikhs and have an excuse for more repression.

Other minorities such as Christians and Muslims, among others, have also felt the lash of Indian repression. Over 300,000 Christians in Nagaland have been killed by the terrorist Indian regime. Nuns have been raped, priests have been murdered, churches have been burned, schools and prayer halls have been destroyed, all with impunity. A mob of militant Hindus affiliated with the parent organization of the ruling BJP mur-

dered missionary Graham Staines and his two sons by burning them to death while they slept in their jeep, all the while chanting "Victory to Hanuman," a Hindu god. India threw missionary Joseph Cooper from Pennsylvania out of the country after he was beaten so severely that he had to spend a week in the hospital. A Christian religious festival on the theme "Jesus is the answer" was broken up by police gunfire.

Almost two years ago, Muslims were massacred in Gujarat while police were ordered to stand by and do nothing, according to Indian newspaper reports. One newspaper quoted a policeman as saying that the Indian government planned the massacre in advance. This is an eerie parallel to the 1984 massacre of Sikhs in Delhi, in which police were locked in their barracks while the state-run radio and television called for more Sikh blood.

An Indian Cabinet minister was quoted as saying that everyone who lives in India must either be a Hindu or be subservient to Hindu. This kind of religious fanaticism as state policy is dangerous and anti-democratic. We would not want it in America; why should we support it in India?

On October 7, 1987, Sikhs declared their independence from India, naming their new country Khalistan. We are committed to liberating Khalistan by peaceful, democratic, nonviolent means. History shows that multinational states such as Austria-Hungary, the Soviet Union, and India are doomed to fall apart. We intend to see that this happens peacefully, in the manner of Czechoslovakia, not violently like Yugoslavia. Yet simply supporting a sovereign, independent Khalistan is what India calls terrorism.

The 20,000 Sikhs who were murdered in the June 1984 attack on the Golden Temple and 37 other Sikh Gurdwaras throughout Punjab were not terrorists. They were seeking refuge from the Indian government's tyranny. Yet the Indian government insists on describing them as "terrorists," as if repeating it often enough will make it true.

Senator Kerry, we respectfully request that you apologize to the Sikh Nation and the Sikh community in the United States for your remark. I urge you to support measures to bring freedom to all the people of the subcontinent. Sikhs share the commitment to freedom you showed when you fought in Vietnam and in your service in public office. There was even a Sikh member of Congress in the late 1950s, Dalip Singh Saund of California. We look forward to working with you in the future to bring the blessings of liberty to everyone in the subcontinent.

If you would like any further information or would like to meet about these issues, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Dr. GURMIT SINGH AULAKH,

President, Council of Khalistan.

HONORING THE VIETNAMESE
BHIKSHU BUDDHIST COUNCIL'S
CEREMONIAL REMEMBRANCE OF
MASTER MINH DANG QUANG

HON. ZOE LOFGREN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 24, 2004

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the San Jose Vietnamese Bhikshu Buddhist Council's annual remembrance of Buddhist Master Minh Dang Quang.

According to the Bhikshu Buddhist Council, Master Minh Dang Quang founded the indigenous Vietnamese Buddhist Order "Tang Gia

Khat Si", normally referred to in English as the Mendicant Buddhist Order, in Southern Vietnam. This order represents a unique combination of Theravada and Mahayana Buddhism. On the Second day of the Second month in the Year of the Horse (1954) during a time of political turmoil, Master Minh Dang Quang went missing and the Monks and Nuns of this order observe his disappearance each year as a religious ceremony.

According to the Bhikshu Buddhist Council, this year marks the 50th anniversary to celebrate the long-lasting work of Buddhist Master Minh Dang Quang and his founding of the Vietnamese Sakya Muni Dharma School of Buddhism. Although, Master Minh Dang Quang is not with us today, his followers continue their Master's teachings in Vietnam and all over the world.

I am pleased to know that in my City of San Jose, California, the Vietnamese Bhikshu Buddhist Council can freely meet, worship, and practice their faith without fear of persecution.

But that is not enough. We must demand that all Buddhists around the world, and others attempting to practice and worship their faith, are able to do so freely without fear of persecution.

We must continue passing legislation like the Vietnam Human Rights Act to promote freedom and democracy in Vietnam and House Resolution 427 that praises the courageous leadership of the Unified Buddhist Church of Vietnam and the urgent need for religious freedom and related human rights in Vietnam.

We cannot sit idly by as the Vietnamese government continues to oppress its people while hiding behind the veil of free trade. On this special day, I recognize the 50th Anniversary of the remembrance of Buddhist Master Minh Dang Quang and reassert my commitment to fighting for human rights in Vietnam.

IN LASTING MEMORY OF DR.
DONALD L. MILLER

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 honor the life of Dr. Donald L. Miller. He lived a life devoted to the love, care and education of others and leaves a legacy carried on by the many lives he touched; either directly through personal relations or indirectly through his efforts to improve the quality of health care now available to Arkansans.

Dr. Miller was born in Little Rock, received his doctorate of medicine from the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences, and spent nearly his entire life devoting energy and vision to the improvement of health care in Arkansas.

Dr. Miller was a member of numerous community, university, and professional committees and organizations including the American Medical Association, the American College of Physicians, and the First United Methodist Church. However, it was his work with Area Health Education Center programs that gained him the greatest notoriety. Dr. Miller served as an influential force in getting the program under way in the state and became Director of the Pine Bluff Area Health Education Center.

As Director, he earned the esteem of his fellow members of the American College of Physicians, who would write that "his greatest achievement has been the development of the most productive AHEC program in Arkansas." In 1995, they presented Dr. Miller with the Robert Shields Abernathy Award for Excellence in Internal Medicine in recognition of his achievements and sustained commitment to the program.

Under the vision and leadership of Dr. Miller, countless students as well as residents of internal medicine and family practice are more adequately trained in the various technical aspects of health care through the work of the Pine Bluff AHEC. As a result, many quality physicians have been attracted to the area where they now provide quality health care to the citizens of Southeast Arkansas. It is yet another indication of the broad impact Dr. Miller has had on his state, his community, and his fellow citizens.

My thoughts and prayers are with his wife, Peggy, and his daughters, Mollie, Sheila, and Karen. I extend my sincerest sympathies to them and can only hope that we find some solace in the lasting legacy of Donald Miller as his spirit lives on in each of us.

HONORING THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF
LT. COL. ROBERT L. REINLIE

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 24, 2004

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Lt. Col. Robert L. Reinlie for his tireless fight for his fellow veterans.

Lt. Col. Reinlie and the late William O. "Sam" Schism engaged Col. George "Bud" Day, Medal of Honor recipient and former POW, as their attorney. By becoming a plaintiff in a 1996 lawsuit, Lt. Col. Reinlie challenged the United States government to honor healthcare commitments made to WWII/Korea era military retirees.

Lt. Col. Reinlie's extraordinary farsighted vision recognized the need for a plan to support his legal efforts. Lt. Col. Reinlie took it upon himself to begin organizing, what later became the Class Act Group.

With untiring and aggressive pursuit, Lt. Col. Reinlie's efforts were extended into a nationwide grass roots network that was instrumental in forging Congressional legislation favorable to military retirees. Lt. Col. Reinlie helped initiate this grass roots initiative through billboards, letter writing campaigns, demonstrations, phone and fax communication blitzes, meetings, marches, web sites, letters to editors, press releases, all geared to influencing Congressional attention. His dynamic and selfless leadership and commitment drove him to a presence in Class Act Group office spaces, even when extensive surgery was imminent and during extended rehabilitation.

His tireless dedication served as a contributing and encouraging factor for his attorney, Col. Day, and the legal fight to the United States Supreme Court. This fight led by Lt. Col. Reinlie was a major contributing factor to the military retiree medical benefit now referred to as TRICARE for Life and The Senior Pharmacy Program. The WWII/Korea era mili-

tary retiree fight is not over and Lt. Col. Reinlie, at the young age of 82, is still in the battle to honor his fellow veterans.

Mr. Speaker, I, on behalf of the United States Congress, salute Lt. Col. Reinlie. With the encouragement and significant contribution from his wife Marilyn, he reflects a great credit upon himself, our Nation, and the courage of soldiers that gave us the freedom we enjoy today. I offer my sincere thanks for all that he has done for Northwest Florida and this great Nation.

TRIBUTE TO JOE ESPINOZA

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 24, 2004

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, it is with profound sadness that I rise before you today to pay tribute to the life and memory of Joe Espinoza, who passed away recently at the age of ninety-two. Joe embodied the ideals of patriotism, integrity and love of family that we, as Americans, have come to expect from our public servants. As his family mourns the loss, I believe it is appropriate to remember Joe and pay tribute to his contributions to his city, state and country.

Joe began his service to this nation as a Marine in World War II, and following an honorable discharge, returned to Colorado where he and his wife, Melissa, opened their family restaurant and bar, El Patio. He entered a life of public service in 1978 when he was elected Mayor of San Luis, an office he held for three terms. During his tenure, Joe enjoyed the distinction of being the town's oldest mayor. He is survived by two sons, Josito and Abby; four daughters, Theresa, Margaret, Joetta, and Claudine; twenty-two grandchildren, thirty-one great-grandchildren, and one great-great grandchild.

Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to rise before this body of Congress and this nation to pay tribute to the memory of Joe Espinoza. He was a beloved family man and public servant who also made numerous contributions to his community. The San Luis community and the State of Colorado will truly miss Joe, and my thoughts go out to his family during this difficult time of bereavement.

CHARLES ADONIZIO, JR. HONORED
POSTHUMOUSLY BY PITTSBURGH
SUNDAY DISPATCH

HON. PAUL E. KANJORSKI

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 24, 2004

Mr. KANJORSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to draw the attention of my colleagues in the U.S. House of Representatives to the life of my very good friend, the late Charles "Cugsy" Adonizio. On Sunday, February 8, 2004, the Pittsburgh Sunday Dispatch honored his life with the Joseph Saporito Award for Lifetime of Service to Greater Pittston. A loving husband to Helen for 57 years and the father of six children, Charles Adonizio, Jr. passed away last October at the age of 88 years old.

The editor of the Sunday Dispatch, Ed Ackerman, recently wrote an excellent story outlining the life of this community-spirited man