



Attn: President Barack Obama

August 14, 2012

The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr President,

I PLEDGE AGAINST HATE CRIME: Appeal for Action Following Terror Attack on Sikh Gurdwara in Wisconsin

I am a resident of the United States of America who wishes to express my shock and sadness caused by the terror attack on a Sikh Gurdwara (place of worship) on 5th Aug 2012 in Wisconsin, USA, killing six worshippers and injuring many, including, a brave police officer. I was touched by your gesture of flying the US flag at half-mast at the White House and at all government buildings and embassies on 10th August 2012. It demonstrated that an attack against one set of Americans would be viewed as an attack against all Americans. I believe, however, more needs to be done to combat hate crimes. Through this letter, I wish to support an appeal from the UNITED SIKHS, a non-profit organization that has been recognized for its humanitarian efforts, that a specific set of actions be taken to address hate crime violence.

The Wisconsin terror attack was a senseless act of violence and a tragedy that should never befall any community. Hate has many forms and Sikhs, in particular, have suffered from implicit and explicit prejudice due to the uniqueness of their visual identity. Ignorance breeds prejudice and it is unacceptable. Hate crime is an issue that impacts us all and we must join with members of all faiths, creeds, races and sexual orientation to beat it. These crimes tear at the very fabric of America, specifically, the idea that we are all equal under God to share in the same freedoms provided by the Constitution of this, the greatest nation on earth. In the words of Martin Luther King, Jr.: "Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that" and **"We must live together as brothers or perish together as fools."** Guided by these thoughts, I would urge you to consider what further can be done to protect innocent citizens and whether there needs to be a strengthening of the legal, educational and cultural diversity frameworks to protect everyone, from hate violence.

As a starting point, I respectfully suggest, that greater resources be allocated to improving our educational system so that not only will our children be more aware of the global world they increasingly live in, but, they will also be more aware of the wonderful diversity this country is proud to have nurtured. Second, the United States should consider providing greater assistance to organizations, such as the ADL and the Southern Poverty Law Center, that tracks members of the KKK and related neo-nazi groups. Further, I ask that your government classify hate groups, who openly espouse violence against others and the government, as what they are, domestic terrorists. Additionally, regardless of how these hate groups are classified, it makes little sense for members of such groups to be allowed to join our noble armed forces, where they gain the skills necessary to carry out their violent ambitions. It not only sullies the reputation and efforts of our brave soldiers, but, also threatens the safety of those who may have to rely upon them in service or those who may have to confront them as law enforcement. One only have to ask Lt. Brian Murphy, as to whether law enforcement officers face a greater risk from such individuals.

With these efforts, my hope is that the United States will remain the greatest nation on earth, where members of all creeds, faiths, races and sexual orientation will find not only tolerance, but, that their freedoms are protected and where hate based violence is considered rare, rather than a distinct possibility. Thank you for taking the time to read this letter and hear my concern. God Bless America.

Yours faithfully,



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