

Levesque, Jennifer

From: Sukhdeep Singh [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, February 28, 2021 11:56 PM
To: cityclerk
Subject: Meeting: 03/01/21 Comment on Consent Item H-12

Comment on Consent Item H-12:

Mayor and Council,

I write to you in opposition of the anti-India resolution on the basis that it interferes with politics of a foreign nation based on blatant misrepresentations of farm bills. While I don't expect City Staff to be experts on international commodities, this resolution incorrectly states that the laws would "dismantle minimum support prices for crops." This is found nowhere in the 3 bills, yet this lie was spread on social media, sensationalist news sources, and now official city documents.

If you had watched Fox News during Obama's presidency you would have heard words like Communist, Marxist, and socialist take-over. If you had watched MSNBC during Trump's tenure, you would have heard fascist, Nazi, Hitler, and Mussolini.

The wild baseless claims that PM Modi, with an 80% approval rating, of "silencing Sikhs" is laughable while in the same breath highlighting protests and international coverage. The last PM, Manmohan Singh, is a Punjabi Sikh of the opposing political party who also supports these common sense laws. The US State Department supports them as it will give farmers more options to sell their product to.* Does the council find it odd that farmers of only 2 states are protesting, and not the other 26?

What the farm bills actually do is protect India's environment by placing limits on unregulated pesticide dumping into rivers, slow depletion of water tables with unsustainable farming practices, and improve air quality with modest limits on crop burning. Biomass burning generates 20% of India's pollution compared to 30% by all vehicle exhaust.** Pollution is India's 3rd leading cause of death.*** Why does this council think that Merced's residents deserve clean air and water but not India's?

Individual support for protesters and partisan leanings should be made on private social media, not on the city's behalf. If passed, it should be known that this council will criticize a democracy and its police officers, violate its autonomy, and inflame divisions between the South Asian community of Merced. However, it has remained silent on authoritarian regimes such as China's treatment of Uyghurs, and a military coup in Myanmar where soldiers are firing live ammunition on protestors.

Harpreet Dhillon, Merced

Sources:

* https://www.business-standard.com/article/current-affairs/us-backs-india-s-new-farm-laws-says-it-will-improve-efficiency-of-markets-121020400113_1.html

**<https://cprindia.org/news/6569#:~:text=However%2C%20the%20main%20sources%20contributing,movement%20and%20construction%20activities%2C%20open>

<https://www.cfr.org/blog/matter-particular-concern-indias-transition-biomass-burning>

***https://www.business-standard.com/article/current-affairs/air-pollution-kills-1-2-mn-indians-in-a-year-third-biggest-cause-of-death-119040300300_1.html

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