

SIKH EDUCATION & RESEARCH CENTRE OF WINDSOR

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Nov. 9, 1992

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QUESNEL DETACHMENT

Mr. K. S. Warnica, Inspector for
R.D.J. Epp, Superintendent
Officer Commanding
Prince George Subdivision R.C.M.P.
1323-5th Avenue
Prince George, B.C.
V2L 3L6

Dear Mr. Warnica:

We wish to thank you for allowing Constable Dhillon of your Quesnel Detachment to be here in Windsor during our workshop and banquet of November 7, 1992.

The attached front page article of Windsor Star says it all. On behalf of our centre and the general Windsor community, please accept our heartfelt appreciation for your efforts and approval to make this all possible.

Constable Dhillon displayed exemplary behaviour while here in Windsor and was an instant hit with the young and old alike. His attitude and outlook on life would certainly lead one to believe that he is an asset for the Quesnel detachment and the RCMP as a whole. He certainly displays the highest of standards and established practices of the RCMP life and we commend him for same.

Once again, many thanks for your consent and cooperation to make it all possible.

Yours Truly,

Gurinder Singh
Director

c.c. N.C.O. In Charge, Quesnel Detachment, RCMP, 348 Reid St.,
Quesnel, B.C.

c.c. Cst. Dhillon, Quesnel Detachment

Mountie—

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and attendance at the banquet represented many groups within the city.

Asked what Dhillon remembered most vividly about his experience, he told the story of his initial posting to Quesnel, B.C., where a toy image of himself in uniform — complete with turban — arrived at his post before he did. A couple in Regina had sent a plush, custom-made toy with a note wishing him good luck.

DHILLON SAID his memories — many painful — are the moments that count and that his troopmates and town have accepted him as a police officer, not a turbaned law enforcer. He encouraged all people to rely on inner strength and self-evaluation to challenge the status quo.

"We need to give children dreams; that everything is attainable," he said.

Broadbent, appointed president of the International Centre for Human Rights by Prime Minister Brian Mulroney in 1990, spoke of the need for Canadians to recognize what is good for the community as a prerequisite for human rights. He cited the recent nationwide referendum on the Charlottetown agreement as an example of too many people wanting their share of the pie — not caring if others get theirs.

"Democratic people should ask not what we can get, but what we can give," Broadbent said.

The International Centre for Human Rights operates 150 projects in more than 50 countries around the world. Broadbent said his role in the organization is to "be there for people working on the front lines with human rights, like Dhillon."

WINDSOR'S FRANK Chauvin was given special recognition for his work in the area of humanitarian aid at home and abroad. Chauvin, who said he lost "so-called friends" when he adopted a black son and took Vietnamese boat people into his home, said he is familiar with the taste of racism and that it is not palatable.

"The scales of justice do not balance," Chauvin said. "But I think that with every effort I do, I tilt them a little."

Also addressing the banquet was Laurie Wiseberg, executive director of the International Human Rights Documentation Network. Wiseberg spoke of political killings and the need for continued monitoring and pressure on governments committing atrocities.



JAIKARAN PREET SINGH, along with his dad, Amarjit Singh, centre, meets Baltej Singh Dhillon *Star photo/Nick Brancaccio*

Turban-clad Mountie hailed as inspiration

By Jacqueline Smrke/Staff Reporter

Baltej Singh Dhillon, the man who sparked a nationwide controversy in 1991 over the right to wear a turban as part of his RCMP uniform, received a hero's welcome during a weekend visit to Windsor.

Dhillon — garbed in the familiar red Mountie uniform, an off-white turban replacing the regular-issue cap — was among the guest speakers at a human rights banquet held by the Sikh Education and Research Centre of Windsor.

"Racism is a disease that eats away at the very fabric that holds this country together," Dhillon said. "In the end, it turns a human being into an unforgiving enemy."

SATURDAY'S BANQUET at Place Concorde topped off a series of workshops focusing on the quest for human rights. And while Dhillon shared the guest speaker podium with Ed Broadbent, the former federal NDP leader, it was the tenacious RCMP officer who stole the spotlight.

Nothing could equal the awe in the eyes of young Sikhs who shyly approached Dhillon, who has become a visible role model in their lives. Others too, would express their admiration for Dhillon and what he stood for.

"**YOU'RE NOT ONLY** an inspiration to the young Sikhs, but to all," said Teresa Fracas while shaking hands with Dhillon.

Fracas, an early childhood teacher, said it's impor-

tant for young children to hear about Dhillon's hard-won fight and to take the message home to their families.

And that's exactly what organizers were hoping to achieve.

The workshops, presented in co-operation with Multiculturalism and Citizenship Canada, were aimed at promoting a better understanding, friendship and mutu-

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— Baltej Singh Dhillon,
RCMP officer

al respect of the Sikh community, while fostering goodwill among the public.

There are 400 members of the Sikh community in Windsor and an estimated 500,000 in Canada. About 100 people attended the conferences throughout the day

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