

pass if it had been considered on its own. Being able to cut that kind of unnecessary spending out of a bill is essential to be prudent in how we spend taxpayer money, to get the Federal budget under control, and to restore public faith in Congress. The line-item veto was supposed to be a way to deal with that. But while the diagnosis was right, the proposed remedy went too far—further than the Constitution permits. That's why it's been struck down in court.

Our bill is a better prescription—one that will work and that will pass constitutional muster.

Under our bill, whenever the President wants to cut a particular spending item in an appropriations bill, he would be able to require Congress to reconsider and vote separately on rescinding that item, under tight deadlines and without amendment.

So, like the line-item veto act, our bill would let the President throw a bright spotlight onto spending items and have Congress vote on them separately, up or down, without changes and in full public view. Since the wasteful spending we're trying to get at is the kind of project that would never pass on its own, this process will be a completely reliable and effective way to block that kind of waste of taxpayer money.

Our legislation is patterned after, but stronger than, the enhanced-rescission authority passed by the House in 1993. Unlike the 1993 bill, our approach does not let the Appropriations Committee come up with its alternative way to rescind the same amount of money that would be cut by the President's proposed rescission. Our legislation requires that the actual rescission proposed by the President—that one, without any amendment, and with no alternative to it—be voted on by the Congress.

Unlike the line-item veto, our bill is constitutionally sound. It does not attempt to give to the President the basic law-making authority that the Constitution vests solely in the Congress.

Constitutionally, the line-item veto act could not be effective—it wasn't real. This bill would give the President authority that could be used effectively—it is real.

The administration has said it will ask the Supreme Court to reverse Judge Jackson's decision striking down the line-item veto. I do not believe appeal will be successful. Judge Jackson's unusually emphatic opinion makes it clear that he was completely convinced that the line-item veto is profoundly unconstitutional. I'm confident the Supreme Court will agree.

We in the Congress ought to pass this new bill. That way, when the Supreme Court does sound the final death knell for the line-item veto act, we will have an effective, constitutionally valid alternative in place and ready for use. A majority of Congress wants a mechanism to cut out of appropriations bills that spending that could not withstand a separate up-or-down vote; the President wants that mechanism; a majority of the American people wants us to have that mechanism. This bill will give us that.

INDIA MUST STOP KILLING SIKHS

HON. GERALD B.H. SOLOMON

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 15, 1997

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to wish the Sikh Nation a happy Vaisakhi Day. Vaisakhi Day is the birthday of the Sikh Nation, the anniversary of its founding by Guru Gobind Singh in 1699. The Sikhs have always been a tough, freedom-loving people, and I take this opportunity to salute them.

However, not everyone shares my enthusiasm for the Sikh Nation's love of freedom. From 1984 to 1992, according to the Punjab State Magistracy, which represents all the local judges in the state of Punjab, the Indian regime murdered more than 200,000 Sikhs. Since then, the Punjab Human Rights Organization reports that more than 50,000 have been murdered by the brutal Indian regime. That means that in excess of a quarter of a million freedom-loving Sikhs have been murdered since 1984 by "the world's largest democracy."

One recent case will illustrate the brutality of India's methods in occupied Khalistan. On March 15, a 26-year-old Sikh named Kashmir Singh, who was the publicity secretary of the Akali Dal—Amritsar—in the district of Hoshiarpur, was picked up in the middle of the night along with his father. The police threw them into a van. Somewhere down the road, Kashmir Singh's father was thrown from the van while it was still moving. Kashmir Singh was then tortured and murdered and his body was dumped at the Hoshiarpur district hospital at 4 in the morning for a post mortem.

The police falsely claimed that Kashmir Singh was killed in an encounter with the police. This claim is so ridiculous that even the pro-Government newspaper the Indian Express could not accept it. The Indian Express described the murder of Kashmir Singh as a cold-blooded killing.

Unfortunately, the murder of Kashmir Singh is not an isolated incident. It is part of a pattern of intimidation designed to put a fear psychosis in the minds of Sikhs both in Punjab, Khalistan and outside in order to scare them into dropping their demand for freedom. An ongoing incident which has been closely watched in this Congress is the case of Jaswant Singh Khaira, who was kidnaped by the police on September 6, 1995, after he published a report exposing the fact that over 25,000 young Sikh men have been abducted by the regime, tortured, and murdered, then their bodies have been declared unidentified and cremated. In many cases the family members have never been notified. The Punjab and Haryana High court described this policy as worse than a genocide.

Eighteen months after Mr. Khaira was kidnaped, Khaira's whereabouts remain unknown. The Khaira case and his findings are discussed in detail in a video released last year called "Disappearances in Punjab," produced by a Hindu human rights activist named Ram Narayan Kumar. Recently, Mr. Kumar was himself detained overnight at the Delhi airport when he attempted to fly to Austria to be with his wife. The regime even detained an American citizen, Balbir Singh Dhillon, for 9 months on trumped-up charges, apparently

because he advocates an independent Khalistan.

Mr. Speaker, these are not the tactics of a democracy. The oppression of the Sikhs, the Muslims of Kashmir, the Christians of Nagaland, the black "untouchables" known as Dalits—the aboriginal people of the subcontinent, the Assamese, Manipuris, and others continues at a feverish pace.

On October 7, 1987, the Sikhs declared their independence from India and named their independent country Khalistan. India has responded to the peaceful movement to liberate Khalistan by stepping up the repression.

This kind of repression is not acceptable in any country. It especially offends us when that country proclaims its commitment to Democratic values. In that light, it is appropriate for the United States to take measures to bring democracy to all the people of South Asia. We should publicly declare our support for an internationally supervised plebiscite on the question of independence for Khalistan, similar to the periodic votes we hold in Puerto Rico. The United States should also cut off all aid to India. These actions will begin to bring freedom to the subcontinent.

A SHOCKING TRAGEDY

HON. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 15, 1997

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Speaker, I am placing the Council of Khalistan's press release on a recent tragedy into the RECORD. Press reports have recently stated that in attempting to capture an alleged terrorist, Indian police officers killed two adults and a 3-year-old child. The death of a 3-year-old child must shock the conscience of the international community.

I call on the Indian Government to conduct a full and exhaustive investigation into this tragedy and to punish all those responsible. Justice delayed is, truly, justice denied. We must always remember, in the eloquent words of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., that an injustice anywhere is an affront to justice everywhere. [From the Council of Khalistan, Dec. 17, 1996]

INDIAN REGIME MURDERS 3½-YEAR-OLD LABELS TODDLER "TERRORIST"

WASHINGTON, DC.—A story in the December 10 issue of *The Hitavada*, an Indian newspaper, reported that a 3½-year-old Sikh boy was murdered by the police, then the police claimed that he was a "terrorist" who was killed in an "encounter."

According to the story, the police murdered little Arvinder Singh, his father Jaswinder Singh, and the young boy's maternal uncle along the Grand Trunk Road to collect bounty money which was offered for the killing of militants. These Sikhs were not militants. The family has not been given the bodies because they were cremated. The police attached phony identities to the bodies of these victims using the names of known militants. Then they claimed bounty money for killing these militants. When the boy's grandfather brought a complaint against the police, Punjab and Haryana High Court Justice Iqbal Singh stated that a three-year-old boy could not be a "terrorist," according to the article. According to the *Hitavada* article, witnesses were coerced into supporting the police version of the incident by testifying that the bullets which killed these Sikhs did not come from the police weapons.

The court ordered India's Central Bureau of Investigation to investigate the killing of little Arvinder Singh and to submit its report promptly.

"If India has to murder a 3½-year-old child to keep its brutal, corrupt empire together, then freedom for Khalistan cannot be far behind," said Dr. Gurmit Singh Aulakh, President of the Council of Khalistan. Khalistan is the Sikh homeland which declared its independence on October 7, 1987. "This incident is a clear reflection of the immorality of the Indian regime and the character of the Punjab Police, who do not hesitate to kill their brothers and sisters to make themselves rich," Dr. Aulakh said. "They do not realize that they are pushing future generations into the darkness of continued repression," he added.

Dr. Aulakh called on the U.S. government to take strong measures to punish this brutality. "I urge the Administration and Congress to cut off U.S. aid to India, place an embargo on India like the one America had on South Africa before Apartheid ended, and support freedom for Khalistan and all the other freedom-seeking nations of the subcontinent," he said. "This kind of brutal repression is unacceptable. Freedom-loving nations like the United States must not tolerate it," he said.

"If Indian police are killing toddlers like Arvinder Singh and labelling them as terrorists," Dr. Aulakh said. "Then the world has a moral and legal obligation to isolate India until they are ready to join the ranks of civilized nations and peacefully end its occupation of Khalistan and other South Asian nations; so that democracy in South Asia can be a reality and not a well cultivated lie."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. CASS BALLENGER

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 15, 1997

Mr. BALLENGER. Mr. Speaker, had I been present for rollcall votes 72, 73, 74, and 75 last week, I would have voted "yea." I am a cosponsor of H.R. 1003, the Assisted Suicide Funding Restriction Act of 1997, and applaud the leadership for bringing it to the floor for early adoption.

REDESIGNING THE SYSTEM

HON. BILL ARCHER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 15, 1997

Mr. ARCHER. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of myself and my good friend, the distinguished Majority Leader DICK ARMEY of Texas, I would like to submit for the RECORD an OP-ED on tax reform that ran in today's Washington Times. Today is the Federal income tax filing deadline for all Americans. Every April 15, we are reminded how much of our incomes are taken by the Federal Government and how long it takes us to figure out how much we owe.

Congressman ARMEY and I are united in our dislike for the current tax system. It is unfair, burdensome, complicated, and inefficient. We need a system that is far simpler, fairer, honest, encourages growth and rewards savings and investment.

The American people overwhelmingly favor a change in the current system, but we cannot radically overhaul our flawed income tax without the President joining our efforts. On April 15, tax day of 1997, the distinguished majority leader and I submit our OP-ED for the RECORD to let America know we stand on the side of real, substantial tax reform.

REDESIGNING THE SYSTEM

(By Bill Archer and Dick ArmeY)

Along with the millions of Americans who have struggled to meet the April 15 income tax filing deadline, we support overhauling today's federal income tax. While the April 15 deadline reminds us all of our cumbersome tax system, its problems are with us every day of the year.

Last month's Federal Reserve decision to raise interest rates amounts to a devastating indictment of our current tax system. In effect, the Fed declared that in our current tax and regulatory environment, we are unable to handle anything more than a meager 2.4 percent growth rate without risking higher inflation.

This, to us, is unacceptable. Rather than resigning ourselves to continuing low growth rates, we believe it is time for bold change. When Congress' Joint Committee on Taxation invited a diverse group of economists to consider tax reform, everyone agreed our economy would grow faster with either a national consumption tax espoused by Bill Archer, chairman of the tax-writing Ways and Means Committee, or under House Majority Leader Dick ArmeY's flat tax. We must replace our existing tax code with a system that is fair, honest, vastly simplified and more conducive to economic growth.

Our current tax system is complicated and unfair—it must be eliminated. It imposes, by conservative estimates, \$200 billion in annual compliance costs and immeasurable anxiety on American taxpayers. By punishing work, savings and investment, the current code hampers the creation of new and better jobs and reduces growth in take-home pay. In addition, due to high taxes, last year it took average American workers until May 7 to earn enough to pay their federal, state, and local tax bills.

Not only is our tax code burdensome, it is also fundamentally unfair. The current federal income tax is riddled with special-interest loopholes that allow people with similar incomes to pay vastly different amounts in taxes. According to a recent IRS study, some people earning more than \$200,000 a year pay no taxes at all.

Even if you do have to pay taxes, chances are you are not paying the correct amount. Money magazine hired 45 professional tax preparers to fill out a hypothetical family's 1996 return and they gave 45 different answers, for how much that family owed in taxes. In fact, only a quarter of the tax preparers came even within \$1,000 of the actual taxes due. Mistakes and inequity are inevitable so long as we keep our ridiculously complicated code.

We have and will continue to discuss our respective proposals to fundamentally restructure how the federal government collects taxes and how we can work together to replace the current tax system. As a result of our discussions, we have reaffirmed our support for legislation to completely replace the current tax system with a new, simple and fair system that:

- Applies a single, low rate to all Americans.
- Requires a supermajority of both chambers of Congress to raise taxes.

- Provides tax relief for working Americans.
- Protects the rights of taxpayers and reduces tax collection abuses.

- Eliminates the bias against savings and investment and promotes economic growth to

create jobs and opportunities for our children and our grandchildren.

We are committed to working together to elevate the debate on comprehensive tax reform and to lay the groundwork in Congress for the enactment of tax reform legislation that meets these principles. Unfortunately, the Clinton administration has so far shown an unwillingness to substantially change our federal income tax. In February, the congressional leadership wrote the president urging him to submit a tax overhaul proposal by May 1. We will continue to ask the Clinton administration to face up to its obligation to beleaguered taxpayers and offer its own tax reform proposal.

Eliminating the current tax system and replacing it with a simpler, fairer, pro-growth system won't be easy. A recent study showed that Washington's lobbying industry employs 67,062 people, making it the largest private sector employer in the nation's capital. The livelihood of these well-funded special interests depends on preserving their favored treatment in the tax code. If we want to enact meaningful tax reform, America must prevail over Washington special interests.

While we may prefer slightly different paths to reach true tax reform, we stand firmly united in our resolve to replace today's antiquated tax system. There is no greater legacy we can leave our children.

TRIBUTE TO MS. EARTHA KITT

HON. JAMES E. CLYBURN

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 15, 1997

Mr. CLYBURN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to one of South Carolina's outstanding natives, Ms. Eartha Kitt.

Ms. Kitt's personal story reminds me of the famous Harlem Renaissance poet Langston Hughes who posed the question, "What happens to a dream deferred? Does it dry up like a raisin in the sun? Of fester like a sore—And then run? Does it stink like rotten meat? Or crust and sugar over—like a syrup sweet? Maybe it just sags like a heavy load. Or does it explode?"

Luckily, Eartha Kitt never considered deferring her dreams. Born on a cotton plantation in South Carolina, the young Eartha Kitt left the South to live with an aunt in New York at the age of eight. It was there that she blossomed into the magnificent entertainer she is today.

She has danced and sung her way to become one of the country's consummate cabaret performers, taken Broadway and the Silver Screen by storm, and amassed accolades from Tony, Emmy, and Academy Award nominations to receiving her own star on Hollywood Boulevard's Walk of Fame.

Ms. Kitt has also demonstrated her outspoken dedication to her strongly held beliefs. Her vocal opposition to the Vietnam war at a White House luncheon in 1968 resulted in her being blacklisted by the American entertainment community. That setback didn't stop Ms. Kitt from taking her act overseas where she still has a devoted following.

I applaud and commend the contributions this South Carolina native has made to the entertainment industry. Her inspiring career, which had its humble beginnings on a cotton plantation in the deep South, has enchanted audiences around the world. As a result of her accomplishments, Eartha Kitt has become a living legend.