

Waste Policy Act of 1997. This legislation, through its used nuclear fuel management program, would ensure that we can continue to produce energy cleanly at nuclear power plants—many of which are running out of storage capacity for used reactor fuel. This legislation would make us guardians of a cleaner planet. Supporting H.R. 1270 is the right thing to do.

GILMAN SPONSORS LEGISLATION
URGING WAR CRIMES TRIBUNAL
AGAINST SADDAM HUSSEIN,
HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLU-
TION 137

HON. BENJAMIN A. GILMAN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 31, 1997

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I want to take this opportunity to inform my colleagues that today, on behalf of myself and the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. PORTER], I am introducing legislation that calls for the formation of an international criminal tribunal against Saddam Hussein and other members of his despotic and cruel Iraqi regime.

The dictatorship of Saddam Hussein has created an environment of fear and terror within Iraq and throughout the region, with its gross violations of international law and human rights. The people of Iraq are subject to summary and arbitrary execution, torture, and repression of the freedom of speech.

Saddam Hussein is reported to have used chemical weapons to annihilate entire Kurdish villages. Over 182,000 Kurdish civilians disappeared, and over 400 villages have been destroyed in these attacks, known as the Anfal campaigns. The Iraqi use of chemical weapons is the most severe use of such inhumane devices since the First World War. The United States cannot allow such atrocities to go unpunished if we want to prevent the proliferation of these weapons of mass destruction.

Under Saddam Hussein, the Iraqi Government has been particularly active in its persecution of indigenous minority groups. Members of Shiite Muslim groups along with members of the Turkomen minority have been massacred and arrested. Assyro-Chaldean churches have also been destroyed.

A war crimes tribunal will go a long way to eliminate such flouting of international law and treaties. The tribunal would bring Saddam Hussein to justice as well as his henchmen, by prosecuting them for their crimes against humanity. Because the Republic of Iraq is a signatory to both the Geneva Convention and the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, it should be compelled to comply with these obligations.

Moreover, over 600 Kuwaitis who were taken prisoner by Iraqi soldiers during the Persian Gulf war remain unaccounted for. It has been 6 years since the war, and the families of these MIA's deserve answers and the return of their loved ones. Iraq must be made to account for these individuals under the terms of the Geneva Convention.

Accordingly, Mr. Speaker, it is clear that a war crimes tribunal is necessary. I urge my colleagues to join Congressman PORTER and me by cosponsoring this measure, House Concurrent Resolution 137.

IN HONOR OF CONGREGATION
BETH JACOB

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 31, 1997

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay a respectful tribute to Congregation Beth Jacob of Astoria on the 70th anniversary of its founding. The congregation's history is one of perseverance and growth, supported by a foundation of worship, education, and dedication.

Beth Jacob was founded in 1927 by a small group of Hungarian Jews who were determined to have their own congregation. These founders had very little money and could only afford to erect a fragile, one story structure which leaked badly after the first rain. However, the congregants were determined to have a home.

Their weak structure never fell. In fact, it grew, as did the number of people who prayed there. And in 1938, in the midst of the destruction of synagogues throughout Germany, the growing congregation rebuilt their temple.

In 1951, upon the completion of a second story, Beth Jacob truly began to flourish. At this time, it housed a Hebrew school with 126 students and three teachers. The Yeshiva of West Queens also began at Beth Jacob and had to move when its students overfilled the available classrooms. Worshipers filled the synagogue beyond capacity on holidays.

Since the 1960's, the size of the Jewish community in Astoria has decreased. However, Congregation Beth Jacob has maintained its lively atmosphere, providing a center for Jewish life for residents from Astoria and nearby communities.

Consistent with its tradition of growth, Congregation Beth Jacob now has a young new rabbi, Rabbi Zev Itzkowitz, and is always expanding its educational offerings, including adult classes and special programming.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues rise with me in this tribute to Congregation Beth Jacob as it celebrates 70 years of a most vibrant history. I am honored to have such a thriving synagogue in my district, serving as a center for Jewish life and a home for Jewish education and worship.

INDIA'S 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF
INDEPENDENCE

HON. BOB FILNER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 31, 1997

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, August 15, 1997 will mark the 50th anniversary of India's independence, and I, as a United States Congressman, am excited about it.

Why am I excited about another nation's independence? For the same reasons that all Americans should be excited. As the largest democracy in Asia, India is celebrating the very same liberties and values which America cherishes. Over 500 million people turned out for India's free elections. 500 million. That is twice the population of the United States. India is not just a democracy—it is a democratic powerhouse.

I am also excited about India's development as an economic market. As one of the top 10 emerging open markets, India has crossed the threshold of global commercial competition. Large U.S. enterprises such as Coca-Cola, GM, Enron, and Sun Microsystems, among others, are expanding to the Indian Subcontinent, creating employment opportunities for Americans and Indians alike.

Mr. Speaker, America has maintained a strong relationship with India that began long before its independence in 1947. Woodrow Wilson and Franklin D. Roosevelt both championed a free India. We must continue to uphold this friendship and help celebrate this momentous occasion. I urge all Members of Congress and the people of America to join in the festivities sponsored nationwide by Indian-Americans to commemorate India's 50th anniversary of independence. Through this participation, we will strengthen the democratic bonds between our countries and realize the value and potential of India.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 2015,
BALANCED BUDGET ACT OF 1997

SPEECH OF

HON. STENY H. HOYER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 30, 1997

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the balanced budget agreement recently negotiated between the President and congressional leaders. And, while this agreement is not perfect in the eyes of many, it is an example of the democratic process and the consensus building and compromise that it embodies. It is an agreement which incorporates all of the principles which I believe are essential in a budget agreement. In this legislation, we will achieve a balanced budget for the first time in a generation, invest in our people for the future, and provide substantial middle-class tax relief.

Four and a half years ago, we set out on a course toward economic recovery, striving to get our fiscal house in order. And, as we revel in our accomplishments on this day, to finish the job of balancing the budget, we must not overlook the magnitude and importance of the 1993 budget plan. For it was that historic and courageous vote that cut the deficit from \$290 billion in 1992 to a projected \$41 billion this year. That comprehensive budget strategy made difficult spending cuts and raised needed revenues by asking our Nation's wealthiest to contribute to our economic recovery. The leadership of the President and the Democratic Congress in adopting that budget plan has contributed to record economic growth, low inflation, the creation of over 12½ million new jobs in our Nation, and a deficit that has shrunk by more than 80 percent. The bipartisan budget plan that we enact today would not be possible had we not made the tough choices, politically and substantively, that we did in 1993.

Mr. Speaker, there are some today who advocate finishing the job of balancing the budget before we enact tax cuts of any kind. Others in the Congress believe that enacting tax cuts will help spur the economy and contribute to the economic stability we all seek. I believe that this is a sound agreement and a good