

sunset the Federal Tax Code and allow Congress to debate a replacement. I am still hopeful the Senate will do the right thing and take up that bill. However, it is becoming increasingly clear that this is an issue that, if we hope to make serious progress, we must have a serious study. A serious and comprehensive report to Congress and the President will allow us to move forward on this issue with some foundation.

The Tax Code has become so intrusive, it invades the daily decisions of families and businesses. I know this from my own experience in starting and running a small business, as well as from raising a family. As Americans, I know we can do better.

There is no question that fundamental tax reform is desperately needed. The Federal Tax Code is 7 million words long, a patchwork maze of complexity and confusion. It is intrusive, invasive, and overly complex—as my constituents continually remind me.

The majority of Americans now turn to tax professionals to prepare their tax forms. This is hard to believe, but it is true. Many have no choice—they simply do not understand all the tricks and traps. Unfortunately, many of these same tax professionals are calling for tax reform and simplification as well. I have spoken with accountants and tax professionals from my district who have told me of their struggles and uncertainty.

This is not just my district. In 1998, Money Magazine asked 46 tax professionals to calculate a hypothetical family's tax responsibilities. Not one got the correct answer, and no two even got the same answer. When tax professionals do not understand the Federal Tax Code, what about American families?

There are exemptions you may never know you qualified for, and deductions you forgot to take. There are different rates, and different dates by which you need to file different forms to qualify for those rates. There are ways in which money must be moved through a complex series of traps to avoid paying maximum taxes, and there are mine fields of forms you may never have known existed, which you needed to file last week to avoid the fine you just received. And there are people who make their living mapping out the maze and guiding others through this code. I do not fault these people—it is a good living, and they are only dealing with something that we in Congress created. But is this the best we can do? Is this in keeping with a government of the people, by the people, for the people?

The Internal Revenue Service, which is generally made up of honorable men and women, has been given the task of managing this monster. It takes 136,000 people to administer our federal tax laws. The FBI employs less than 30,000—and they combat terrorism.

Since 1986, there have been over 5400 modifications to the Tax Code—and it is still not fixed.

We must return fairness and simplicity to our federal tax policy. I recognize this will not be an easy task, I know that some are comfortable with the way things are, but I believe it is the right thing to do.

I believe we are most secure when we are most free, and the complexity and confusion of the federal tax code hinders our freedom. I am convinced that we can do better.

The journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step. When I came to Congress, I came with a dream of increasing freedom for

people. In this, I continue to dream of a world in which Americans live under a tax code that is simple and fair, a code that makes sense. To get there, it takes courage. To get there, we must take the first step.

I invite my colleagues to cosponsor the Portman/DeMint tax reform commission bill and help us move forward on this issue in a responsible way. We can get a handle on this issue, and get a foothold to move forward with fundamental tax reform. This is what the American people have entrusted us to do, and I ask for your help in securing the future for our country.

KASHMIRI LEADER RAISES AUTONOMY ISSUE—OTHER STATE LEADERS FOLLOW HIS LEAD

HON. DAN BURTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 27, 2000

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, the Chief Minister of Kashmir, Farooq Abdullah, recently called for greater autonomy for the state of Kashmir. However, Abdullah is closely allied with India's ruling BJP, and the BJP government firmly rejected the demand. Other state leaders like Gurcharan Singh Tohra and Simrangid Singh Mann asked Chief Badal to pass a similar measure in the Punjab Assembly.

Under India's constitution, Kashmir was supposed to have a special status, but India has systematically chipped away at it. How would Chief Minister Abdullah make sure that they do not do so under his autonomy plan? The Indian government has imposed President's Rule on Punjab nine times. How would Punjabi leaders ensure that it would not happen again if Punjab has autonomy?

When India forcibly and illegally occupied Kashmir, they promised that there would be a plebiscite on Kashmir's status. That promise has not been kept. The Sikhs in Punjab were promised "the glow of freedom" in Punjab. That promise, too, has been broken. India proclaims its democratic principles loudly, but fails to live up to them when the time comes.

Mr. Speaker, the book *The Politics of Genocide* by Inderjit Singh Jaijee reports that the Indian government has murdered over 250,000 Sikhs since 1984, over 70,000 Kashmiri Muslims, more than 200,000 Christians in Nagalim, and thousands of others. According to Amnesty International, thousands of innocent civilians are being held as political prisoners. Christmas of 1998 unleashed a wave of violence against Christians that has resulted in church burnings and bombings, the murders of priests and missionaries, and other atrocities. Just recently, two extensive, independent studies concluded that the Indian government killed 35 Sikhs in Chithi Singhpora. Amnesty International has also said that India is responsible. How is autonomy going to prevent these things from happening?

America should support self-determination for all the peoples and nations of South Asia. We should act against the atrocities by cutting off American aid against India until basic human rights are enjoyed by all people within its borders. We should declare India a terrorist nation. And we should declare our support for self-determination in South Asia by calling for

a free and fair plebiscite on the question of independence. Not autonomy, but independence. That is the only solution, the only way to bring true freedom to all the peoples and nations of South Asia. If India is truly a democracy, why can't it allow the people of Kashmir to have the plebiscite fifty-two years ago? Why can't it allow the people of Khalistan, Nagalim, and the other nations seeking their freedom to vote on their status the democratic way? Is that too much to ask of democracy?

IN RECOGNITION OF OFFICER MOSES HART, UPON HIS RETIREMENT FROM THE UNITED STATES CAPITOL POLICE FORCE

HON. ALBERT RUSSELL WYNN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 27, 2000

Mr. WYNN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a constituent and one of Capitol Hill's finest, Officer Moses Hart. Officer Hart was appointed to the United States Capitol Police Force on October 15, 1973. He will be retiring on July 31, 2000, after almost 27 years of distinguished service. He has spent his entire career assigned to the House Division of the Capitol Police. For the past 10 years, he has been assigned to the Ford House Office Building. Over these years, Moses has made a tremendous difference in the lives of Members of the House, Congressional staff, and visitors from throughout the world.

I wish him well in his retirement and hope he will take the time to enjoy fishing, one of his favorite hobbies. In addition, I am sure he will devote time to his number one love, barbering. Moses has been a licensed barber for more than 30 years.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in extending our sincerest appreciation and best wishes to Moses Hart upon his retirement for the United States Capitol Police Force.

NATIONAL UNDERGROUND RAILROAD FREEDOM CENTER ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. BARON P. HILL

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 25, 2000

Mr. HILL of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 2919, the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center Act. As the Representative of a Southern Indiana district that housed many "stops" on the Underground Railroad, I am a co-sponsor of this legislation to promote preservation and public awareness of the Underground Railroad and those who helped African American slaves escape to freedom in the North.

As we all know, the Underground Railroad was an informal system of transporting runaway slaves to freedom in the North and Canada. The "stations" of the Railroad were homes of slavery's staunchest opponents, and the "conductors" took the fugitives at night to the next station along the secret routes. The brave individuals who took these runaway