

# west Archer, others call for simple tax system

WASHINGTON (AP) — Congressional Republican leaders, citing the "abysmal quality" of the Internal Revenue Service's management of the tax system, urged President Clinton on Sunday to come up with a broad overhaul by May 1.

In a letter to Clinton, the top Republicans said they wanted a proposal for a tax system that would be simpler, fairer, less intrusive, pro-growth and flexible to technological change.

The new computer "can't cope with the complexities of the system," said Rep. William Archer, R-Texas, chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee.

"It's not just the IRS. It's the system that's got to be changed, and we hope that he'll accommodate that," Archer said on CBS' Face the Nation.

Archer signed the letter along with House Speaker Newt Gingrich, House Majority Leader Dick Armey, Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott, Senate Majority Whip Don Nickles and Senate Finance Committee Chairman William Roth.

The tax code, they said, "has grown so horribly complex that many Americans despair that only someone with advanced degrees can even hope to figure it out."

They said the IRS's continued troubles with a \$4 billion computer modernization program "has a direct correlation to the abysmal quality of the agency's service to the nation's taxpayers."

Clinton has agreed the IRS needs to manage the tax system better but has rejected GOP proposals for a flat tax or for replacing income tax with a national sales tax.

Jack Kemp, Bob Dole's running mate on the last fall's losing Republican ticket and a potential presidential candidate in 2000, said on NBC's "Meet the Press" the country should get rid of the IRS as we know it. We need tax reform in America so that working class families can get true, permanent tax relief and we can get this economy growing again."

Republicans also took issue Sunday with Clinton's plans to cut taxes by \$98 billion as part of his blueprint for balancing the budget by 2002.

Clinton's tax cuts provide a \$500-a-child tax relief, tax breaks for college students and an elimination of capital gains taxes for most people who sell their homes.

They "are too targeted and too small," Senate Budget Committee Chairman Pete Domenici, R-N.M., said on CNN's Late Edition.

Archer too said the president's suggestions did not go far enough. "Republicans are seeking about twice as much in tax relief, and 'the bigger the number the better,'" Archer said.

The administration's point man on the budget, Office of Management and Budget director Franklin Raines, said Republicans have not explained how they would pay for their proposed tax cuts. "We are willing to listen," Raines said, "and we think the American people want us to work out an agreement here in a professional manner."

Clinton travels Tuesday to Capitol Hill to meet with leaders from both parties with the objective of getting budget talks in motion and working out other common legislative goals.

Domenici said that in addition to the level of tax cuts, Republicans are unhappy with Clinton's plan because it leaves 75 percent of the savings that must be made until the last two years of the six-year budget-balancing period. It also does little to address the long-term problems of Medicare and other entitlement programs, Domenici said.

Raines, on CNN, brushed off GOP criticisms. "We've hit our first goal, which was to make this budget alive on arrival," he said. "The second stage is whose priorities will prevail? And I think that's the stage we're in now."

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# Lt. Gov. faces accusations of illegal fund raising

SAN ANTONIO (AP) — A vice president of a state university says he was coerced into donating money to Lt. Gov. Bob Bullock's campaign and later was demoted when he refused to comply with a system-wide fund-raising effort for Bullock.

In total, higher education officials in Texas have contributed \$170,850 to Bullock's campaigns since 1992, the San Antonio Express-News reported in a copyright story Sunday.

The newspaper's survey of Texas Ethics Commission records found contributions to Bullock from 122 university presidents, vice presidents, deans, current and former regents, and spouses of high-ranking officials.

Bullock, who has raised more than \$10 million in the past five years, presides over the Senate and wields much influence over how state money is used, including funding for state universities.

Campaign records on file with the state show that checks came in from officials at 14 of the 15 campuses in the University of Texas System.

On the same days each year, the Friends of the University Political Action Committee and its directors received \$38,050 in donations, with the largest chunk going to Bullock.

Contributions also came from regents and officials from the Waco-based Texas State Technical College system, a Texas A&M official, and two members of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

The contributions came to light after Jude Valdez, University of Texas at San Antonio vice president for extended education, filed a federal civil-rights lawsuit against campus President Samuel Kirkpatrick.

According to the suit, Kirkpatrick told Valdez to write a check for at least \$100 to a political candidate who is not identified in the lawsuit. Valdez complied in 1992, but in 1993, when his check was late, he was effectively demoted, the lawsuit says.

Larry Daves, Valdez' attorney, said the money went to Bullock as part of a systemwide drive that began when UT System Chancellor William Cunningham took office.

"It's particularly offensive to me then that someone, just because of their status as a public employee, could be required to make contributions to particular political candidates," Daves said.

Cunningham released a statement Sunday denying he pressured any system employee into supporting any political candidate. He said he knew of no instance in which he or his staff used state property or resources to support any candidate.

His statement continued, "I am also confident that none of the presidents of the U.T. System component institutions has pressured any of their employees in an effort to support candidates or elected officials."

Kirkpatrick, who has given \$1,325 to Bullock since 1992, denied that he coerced Valdez.

He said he talked "in general" about campaigns with his vice presidents and other high-ranking school officials, who gave Bullock a total of \$4,075.

Bullock, a Democrat, was elected lieutenant governor in 1990 and re-elected in 1994. He could not be reached for comment. Spokesman Tony Proffitt said the Bullock campaign typically receives about 3,000 contributions a month and does not track the dates of donations from organized groups.

"Of course he wouldn't condone anything but a voluntary contribution," Proffitt said.

Ed Sharpe, a UT-Austin vice president and special consultant to Cunningham, told the Express-News that details of the Bullock drive spread by word of mouth among campus officials.

UT-Austin administrators "could either send them (checks) in directly, or provide them to someone. In one case, it was me," Sharpe said. "It is something that is completely voluntary."

Using state time and resources to work on a campaign is prohibited by state law and UT System policies. University of Texas rules forbid employees from coercing students, staff or faculty to take part in politics.

Violators could be terminated. They also could face misdemeanor or felony charges, said Karen Lundquist, general counsel of the Texas Ethics Commission.

Of Texas' five university systems, UT is the largest, with nine academic campuses and six medical school campuses. Total enrollment exceeds 150,000 students.



Bullock

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## The Routier Case

# Family leaves keepsakes behind

DALLAS (AP) — Investigators in the murders of Darlie Routier's sons say some mementos left behind in the attic of the family home point to a lack of interest in the boys on Routier's part.

In November, as detectives finished up their work in the Rowlett home where Devon and Damon Routier were killed June 6, they found some boxes in the attic.

By then, the house had been repossessed and everything from the leather sofa to the big-screen TV had been cleared out.

Investigator Mike Bosillo, who works for the Dallas County district attorney's office, said he was surprised by what he found.

"I couldn't believe it," Bosillo said. "They had boxes of baby pictures. Little trinkets, little toys, little baby clothes — the first pictures they take in the hospital after your baby's born."

"They were up in the attic — totally abandoned," Bosillo said he spent two hours in the attic going through everything.

"It just became much clearer to me that these children were disposable to them," Bosillo said. "Those pictures are the first things I would have taken out of that house. I would have had those pictures in my possession day and night. I would damn near sleep with them, and yet here they were up in this cold attic like so much garbage."

For Bosillo and prosecutors, the photos came to represent Routier's lack of grief for her murdered children.

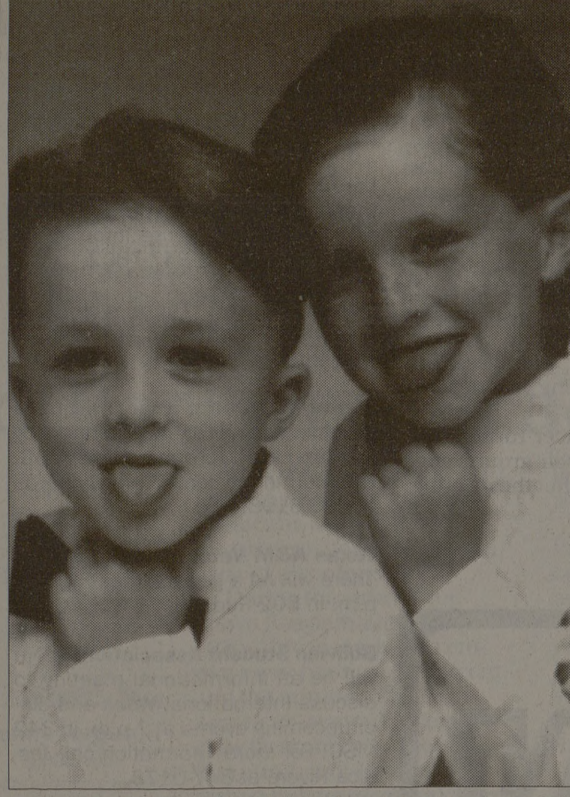
Routier was convicted earlier this month of killing 5-year-old Damon. Sentenced to death last week in that case, she probably will not stand trial in the death of 6-year-old Devon.

Routier's mother, Darlie Kee, said her son-in-law, Darin Routier, just overlooked the boxes. She said the belongings are important to the family and would not be deliberately left behind or thrown away.

"Whatever was in those boxes, we got them now," she said. "We have everything now."

Kee, however, agreed that the boys have somehow become lost amid the tumult of Routier's arrest and trial.

"Because we have had to fight so hard for Darlie, everything has been put on hold," she said. "We have to start dealing with our grief for them."



Devon & Damon Routier stick out their tongues in a 1995 family photo.

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