On August 5, the U.S. House of Representatives overwhelmingly rejected, by a vote of 345-82, all attempts to remove the language of the McDade-Murtha Citizens Protection Act from the Commerce, State, Justice, and Judiciary appropriations bill. The vote represented a stunning victory for justice.

The McDade-Murtha legislation, which had first been introduced as H.R. 3396 on March 5, was designed to ensure that the rules of ethics and standards of conduct applied to all other attorneys, be also applied to the Department of Justice (D.O.J.). It also defines punishable conduct and penalties, and creates an independent review board to monitor compliance.

From the beginning, the bill drew strong opposition from the permanent prosecutorial bureaucracy inside the D.O.J., which has operated with impunity as an out-of-control “political hit-squad” against elected officials, Civil Rights leaders, and political activists deemed threatening to the financial establishment. Indeed, the D.O.J. has functioned as a state-bureaucratic lackey of the financial oligarchy to eliminate any potential resistance to the latter’s slave-labor economic policies.

Efforts to “keep a lid” on McDade-Murtha grew increasingly difficult as the LaRouche movement led a broad and powerful coalition of forces to build support for the bill and ensure that hearings not only take place, but feature the most dramatic cases of prosecutorial abuse, including the judicial railroad of Lyndon LaRouche and his associates, the frameup of John Demjanjuk, and the political targeting of African-American elected officials, known as “Operation Frühmenschen.” LaRouche movement activists launched an intense drive to mobilize elected officials, civic and political...
A Stunning Victory for Justice

activists, and thousands of ordinary citizens across the nation, to contact their Congressional representatives and demand they co-sponsor the legislation.

Efforts to kill the bill were spearheaded by House Speaker Newt Gingrich and an array of D.O.J.-related front groups; by members of Congress with long-standing ties to the D.O.J. permanent bureaucracy; and, finally, by Attorney General Janet Reno herself. But, by the first week of August, the number of co-sponsors of the bill had climbed to more than 200 members of Congress from both parties.

Immediately following the House reading of the McDade-Murtha provisions, which were incorporated as an amendment to Title VIII of the Commerce, State, Justice, and the Judiciary appropriations bill, three Republicans, Asa Hutchinson (R-Ark.), Bob Barr (R-Ga.), and Ed Bryant (R-Tenn.), all former U.S. Attorneys, moved to amend the bill by removing the McDade-Murtha language, thus triggering a floor debate.

Broad Bipartisan Support

What made it so difficult to defeat the McDade-Murtha bill, however, was the fact that it enjoyed broad bipartisan support. So, even when John Conyers (Mich.), the ranking Democrat on the House Judiciary Committee, rose to offer a surprise “perfecting amendment,” broadening the McDade-Murtha provision to apply to independent counsels such as Kenneth Starr—a clear effort to split the bill’s supporters along party lines—other Democrats rose to offer passionate support of the Conyers amendment with appeals based more on the universal principles of justice expressed in the U.S. Constitution, than on rancor between the parties. Members on both sides of the aisle responded. When the vote on the Conyers amendment was called, in a sharp rebuke to Gingrich—and to Starr—it passed 249-182. Forty-eight Republicans voted to support the measure, confirming that many Republicans simply feel that Starr has gone too far.

As the debate continued, one member after another rose to express their outrage, and the outrage of the American people, at the systemic abuse of the judicial process by the permanent prosecutorial bureaucracy inside the D.O.J. Many of the statements were among the most articulate presentations in Congressional history. Later, the House of Representatives passed the Commerce, State, Justice, and the Judiciary appropriations bill in its entirety.

However, the fight is far from over. The overwhelming support for McDade-Murtha seems to guarantee that the public hearings will inevitably occur, when the House returns in September. To ensure this occurs, the Schiller Institute has begun to expand its mobilization against D.O.J. tyranny through a series of broad-based town meetings throughout the nation, to expose the D.O.J. as the financial oligarchy’s enforcer of such slave-labor policies as NAFTA “free trade” and prison privatization.