not be met. This bill will provide for the much needed centralized storage of our Nation's defense high-level waste and spent fuel from our nuclear Navy. This bill goes further than the bill last Congress to address the needs of these facilities, and currently awaits needed action in this House.

Mr. Speaker, the time has come for this House to act promptly and decisively on this issue and send a message to the White House that not only should this legislation not be vetoed, this legislation should be welcomed with open arms, so a critical problem facing America today can be resolved.

ANOTHER LOST OPPORTUNITY IN HAITI?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida [Mr. GOSS] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, a wise man once said: Four things come not back: The spoken word, the sped arrow, time passed, and the neglected opportunity.

As I reviewed the observer reports from this weekend's elections in Haiti, this aphorism came to mind. We all congratulate the Haitians who worked so hard on election day, and those who came out to vote, despite the many factors that might have kept them away from the polls.

But when 20,000 American troops invaded Haiti, as opposed as some of us here were to this action, we all hoped somehow the end result would bear fruit for our troubled neighbors in Hispaniola. Sadly, that opportunity has not been fully realized.

This weekend's elections, the last in a cycle to create the institutions set forth in the 1987 Haitian Constitution, offer testimony to the disappointing reality in that country. Haitians, expressing disillusionment with democracy and certainty that the results were already determined, barely participated in their elections. Observers have placed turnout in the range of a dismal 5 percent.

Why? After five rounds of voting in the past 3 years, many of the Haitian observers spoke with those who echoed sentiments like the Haitian who said: My children cannot eat this vote. They cannot eat democracy. They need food.

Frustrated Haitians told observers I spoke with that ''At least when Duvalier was here, things worked. Today nothing happens. Today the machinery sits and rusts, and the people get nothing. The money comes to Haiti but we do not know where it goes.''

People will recall Duvalier was a brutal dictator. If it is worse than that now, things are not well in Haiti. Still others told observers that ''Everyone here knows already the winner of these elections. These are simply reflections of the situation.''

Three years after the triumphant return of President Aristide, progress on stability and jobs and good governance is as elusive as ever in Haiti. In fact, those of us who have traveled to Haiti over the years are beginning to see disturbing trends. Not only are things not getting better, in many respects they seem to actually be getting worse, despite the $3 billion of taxpayers' investment.

The disappointment goes well beyond the lack of economic growth and new investment. Anxiety about business and personal security remains a part of everyday Haitian life. Since the beginning of this year there has been a series of assassinations, brutal assassinations, aimed at the Haitian national police. As has been the case in the past 3 years, still more political figures have either gone into hiding or have just simply left the country, fearing for their lives because of the rising tide of harassment and violence they encounter. The large population center of Cite Soleil is the site of regular random shooting sprees by armed gangs, and cities like Cap Haitien are subject to regular eruptions from populist organizations.

Beyond this, if one looks at the health of democracy in general, certainly the disenfranchisement of the opposition parties from the electoral process, and likely consolidation of one sector's hold on Haitian institutions, from the local through the national level, adds to the sense that things are not going well in Haiti, and in fact, it is not a true democracy.

Maybe that is why the Pentagon announced yesterday that 200 more paratroopers from the 82d Airborne are being sent from Fort Bragg to Haiti. Frankly, today the Haitian peoples are not the only ones with questions about what is happening in the small Caribbean nations. These realities have some Americans such as myself wondering when to expect the next refugee flow, the next political killing, the next setback in the process of economic reform.

What this means is that those of us who have oversight on the questions of how the United States Government spends America's money have a responsibility to ask some tough and serious questions about what has and what has not been accomplished with the opportunity for progress that our $3 billion and 20,000 troops have provided to Haiti.

The Clinton administration owes us some answers. From there, we are obligated to ask the big question: Why should the American taxpayers continue to send more of their dollars to Haiti? Why? Because while the administration may choose to measure progress in Haiti by whether or not the elections are held, full, free, fair, democratic, and transparent or not, and they were not, Americans know that there is more to the substance of democracy than just the act of holding elections, especially elections that were impacted by armed thugs and blatant intimidation, as was reported this very morning in the Miami Herald.

We need some explanations from the White House. We need them now. We need not to spend any more good money where bad has been invested.

MEMORIES OF TAX RETURNS AND THE IRS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Washington [Mrs. SMITH] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. LINDA SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, this time of the year always brings back memories to me, because for nearly 15 years I was up to my nose in tax returns and trips to IRS for clients. In my other world, I prepared tax returns and taught the changes of the law to tax preparers. It always disturbed me when I would go to Internal Revenue with the expertise of the agents, not all of them but many, but also the amount of information that they had about our private lives.

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So you can imagine that it was more personal for me when Tuesday of this week I got a report that IRS had been snooping again. You see, several years ago there was a report that there was a lot of private snooping going on in private records of individual citizens, some celebrities, some people just like me, by Internal Revenue agents. For what purpose, I do not know. Some were convicted. Not many. But it was a pretty extensive report.

And IRS promised us at that time, whether we be citizens or people that represented citizens before IRS or preparers, that they would stop doing it, that they would rein this practice in and protect the privacy of the ordinary American citizen.

Well, this Tuesday, the document release says they are not doing it. In fact, it was so serious it showed that in 1994 and 1995 alone, there were documented 1515 cases where employees were accused of misusing computers, snooping.

Now, the sad part about this is there were not very many firings. It says in the report that they counseled most of the employees; 472 were counseled, 349 were disciplined, but it does not appear in anything other than a hand slap. Only 23 were fired.

Now, in our country the right to privacy and protection of our private lives is very, very important. That is what makes us America.

Mr. Speaker, we should not have the servants of the people, whether they be police, FBI, whatever, but especially not IRS, violating our privacy.

Next week we will have a bill on this floor that will take care of that. We are not going to put it into a study. We are not going to trust IRS to say, we will do it if you wait. We are going to tell them that they are going to do it.

But how we are going to do it is this way: We are going to say, if you snoop, you have civil penalties and criminal penalties. If you snoop and tell, which is really awful, but that has happened,

you talk about the private lives of citizens, you can go to jail even if you are an IRS employee. Why should they be any different than any other citizen? They are just servants of the people.

Next week is also going to focus on something that has been the compelling issue that brought me into politics originally in the early 1980's.

In the early 1980's, it was actually a State tax increase that doubled the taxes on my small business. I never had more than 125 employees at any one time; but I faced, with regulation and a doubling of my small business tax, laying off employees.

It got my attention. And I realized that American families, whether running a small business, like me, or my employees, could be hurt by government not being able to control spending.

You see, what I saw was our State had doubled their spending percentage nearly regularly over 20 years. What that means is every 2 years the spending increase was 20 percent, 10 percent a year, while the people's ability to pay got up 3 to 5 percent a year.

And as that happened and government grew, it was so easy, you see, to raise taxes instead of control spending, that what we faced were ordinary people, like me, running a small business in Vancouver, WA, facing taxes that we were having one heck of a time paying.

So I ran for office and got mad. I ran for office and I kept changing things. I ran an initiative in our State that said we will control spending and will make it tougher to raise taxes. It always should be a little tougher to raise taxes than to tax the American people, whether it be at the State or Federal level, than to increase spending, because you cannot tell a bureaucracy no.

Mr. Speaker, we passed that as an initiative in our State. And guess what? The spending growth is now 5 percent a year for the public government, and it is more in line with the ability of the people to pay. This worked. It will work when we pass the same measure next week.

On the floor next week will be a supermajority to raise taxes. And it worked in our State. It will work in our Nation. And I encourage watching for that vote and see how Members of Congress vote.

REGARDING JUDICIAL ACTIVISM

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. STEARNS). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas [Mr. DELAY] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to discuss an issue that is of great concern to the American people, and that issue is judicial activism.

Earlier this week, a three-judge Federal appeals court reversed a decision made by Judge Thelton Henderson, who barred the enforcement of the California civil rights initiative.

In reversing that decision, the appellate judge wrote, and I quote, ''A system which permits one judge to block with the stroke of his pen what 4,736,180 State residents voted to enact as law tests the integrity of our constitutional democracy.''

That is exactly right. Judicial activism threatens the checks and balances written into our Constitution.

I want to commend the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. HYDE], the chairman of the Committee on the Judiciary, who just yesterday introduced the Judicial Reform Act. Now, his legislation takes a very important first step in reining in the judicial branch.

Over the last several weeks, I have been attacked by several different groups for suggesting that it is within the constitutional authority of the Congress to impeach judges who willfully ignore the Constitution.

By my reading of the Constitution, it is not only the right of Congress to act as a check on the judicial branch; it is our duty. The Constitution provides that judges may be impeached for conviction of treason, bribery, or other high crimes and misdemeanors.

That phrase has never been completely defined, but there is little doubt that the Founders intended impeachment to be used against judges in certain circumstances.

The first Chief Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court, John Marshall, who was not in favor of judicial impeachment, nevertheless saw it as part of the Constitution. He said, the present doctrine seems to be that a judge giving a legal opinion contrary to the opinion of the legislature is liable to impeachment.

Thomas Jefferson explained, the opinion which gives to the judge the right to decide what laws are constitutional and what not, not only for themselves in their own sphere of action, but for the legislature and executive also in their spheres, would make the judiciary a despotic branch.

Justice James Wilson acknowledged that impeachment can be confined to political characters, to political crime and misdemeanors, and to political punishments.

And even Gerald Ford explained that, when imposing the impeachment of Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas, that an impeachable offense is whatever the majority of the House of Representatives considers it to be at any given moment in history.

Now, unfortunately, on too many occasions the Federal judiciary has strayed far beyond its proper function. In no other democracy in the world do judges who are not elected, who are unaccountable, decide so many political issues.

Mr. Speaker, I do not advocate impeaching judges just because I disagree with them politically. I advocate that Congress, using its clearly defined role within the Constitution, act as a check on the judicial branch of the Government.

The American people are frustrated when one person, one person subverts their will, expressed in a democratic election. They should be frustrated. An independent judiciary is the anchor of our democracy. A despotic judiciary may very well be the downfall of our democracy.

I urge my colleagues to consider all of the tools within our constitutional authority as we take on the very real problem of judicial despotism. One of those tools is impeachment, and, despite the barrage of criticism, I think it is a tool we should consider using.

A NATIONAL DEBATE ON THE INCOME TAX CODE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Louisiana [Mr. TAUZIN] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. TAUZIN. Mr. Speaker, I am also joined today by a friend of mine, the gentleman from Colorado [Mr. DAN SCHAEFER], who will interact with me in this 5 minutes and perhaps even ask unanimous consent for his own time.

We are pleased today to announce to the House and to the American public that as tax day approaches, as April 15 bears down upon us as the date upon which the tax man cometh again into our lives, we are preparing to begin the national debate on the issue of whether or not it is time for us in America to consider ripping the income Tax Code out by its roots, repealing the U.S. income Tax Code in its entirety, along with the IRS, and replacing the entire thing with a simple, straightforward national retail consumption tax.

On April 15, the gentleman from Colorado [Mr. DAN SCHAEFER] and I will be joined by other Members of this body, not necessarily as Members of Congress but as citizens of this country, and we will be joined by many other citizens who will join with us in Boston Harbor for a symbolic reenactment of the Boston Tea Party.

We will be in that harbor on an 18th-century style ship, and we will symbolically put the U.S. income Tax Code into a beautiful box labeled ''Boston tea.'' And we will ceremoniously dump it into that harbor. We are doing it, by the way, with the proper permitting authority, because to leave that income Tax Code in the harbor would surely be a bad example of pollution. But we are going to do this demonstration along with many other Americans to begin this debate.

Is it time to get rid of this income Tax Code that is hurting Americans and hurting American jobs and debilitating the U.S. economy and replacing it with a simple straightforward consumption tax?

The debate will begin on April 15. The ceremony we have in Boston Harbor will hopefully be the start of that debate.

What essentially is wrong with the U.S. income Tax Code? The stories of IRS agents snooping into private businesses, the stories of 4 billion dollars' worth of computers that do not work are just the beginning.