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THE BATTALION CLASSIFIEDS

IRS gets taste of own auditing medicine

WASHINGTON (AP) — It sounds like a taxpayer's dream: The IRS was audited and struggled to explain its own financial records.

"The IRS cannot do some of the basic accounting and record-keeping tasks that it expects American taxpayers to do," said Gregory Kutz, who oversaw the audit released Monday by the congressional General Accounting Office.

GAO said chronic internal revenue service problems resulted last year in millions of dollars in fraudulent refunds, failure to keep track of such basic assets as cars and computers and substandard computer security controls.

"Think of this as not balancing your checkbook with the monthly bank statement, and at the same time having a system prone to er-

ror," Kutz told the House Government Reform Committee's panel on government management at a Monday hearing.

GAO said IRS is unable to keep track of unpaid taxes properly, which means it cannot concentrate collection efforts on the taxpayers most likely to pay. The upshot is that only about \$26 billion of the \$222 billion in unpaid taxes as of October 1998 are likely to be collected, with \$119 billion — a whopping 54 percent — to be written off.

"It's a national scandal," said Rep. Steve Horn, R-Calif., chairman of the government management subcommittee. "It seems to me you shouldn't let people off the hook like that."

IRS officials were quick to take responsibility for the problems,

which they said were largely rooted in the agency's antiquated computer systems that date as far back as the Kennedy administration.

"It seems to me you shouldn't let people off the hook like that."

— Rep. Steve Horn
Chair of government management subcommittee

They were clearly embarrassed by the report, coming as it does as the IRS makes a high-profile attempt

to become more efficient and customer-friendly.

"I am deeply disappointed we failed to meet our obligation," said Donna Cunningham, the new chief financial officer. "It's unacceptable."

The GAO found the IRS did a good job of collecting \$1.8 billion in tax revenue in fiscal 1998. Main problems were found in the agency's administration of a billion annual budget. The IRS had at least \$17 billion in fraudulent and inappropriate funds in the first nine months of 1998. IRS sometimes duplicates funds or fails to compare returns with W-2 forms before they are mailed out within the 45 days.

First Lady's electoral considerations follows path of Eleanor Roosevelt

WASHINGTON (AP) — Run, Florence, run. And what about Edith, Eleanor or Jackie?

Hillary Rodham Clinton is not the only presidential wife ever urged to run for political office.

In the 1920s there were calls to draft President Warren Harding's widow, Florence, for governor of Ohio and President Woodrow Wilson's widow, Edith, for vice president. Some Democrats wanted Eleanor Roosevelt to be the party's vice presidential nominee in 1948. In 1976, Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis, then a book editor in New York, briefly flirted with running for a Senate seat.



CLINTON

These four first ladies declined the overtures. If Clinton actually seeks the Senate seat being vacated by Democrat Daniel Patrick Moynihan of New York, she would be the only first lady to ever run for elective office. She is spending two days in New York City on Wednesday and Thursday, perhaps to test the senatorial waters.

"The difference with Hillary is that she is recognized and respected as a political figure in her own right," says Carl Sferrazza Anthony, a historian of first ladies. "Even though the other four were politically minded, I think they were being drafted as a bridge to their husbands' memory, a symbol of their husbands' legacy."

The political lineage of presidents runs deeper with sons.

Sons of several presidents went on to be congressmen, senators. On the state level,

President Bush's son, Jeb, currently is governor of Florida. Another son, George W. Bush Jr., is governor of Texas and is considering a bid for the GOP presidential nomination in 2000.

So far, Clinton has said little about the "Draft Hillary" campaign. She says only that she's giving it "careful thought," yet she's getting plenty of political advice.

Former New York Mayor Ed Koch says "Run." Former New York congresswoman Geraldine Ferraro advises Clinton to wait, run later for a Senate seat from Illinois and then be the Democrats' presidential candidate in 2008. Former New York Gov. Mario Cuomo wants to see her run, but also suggests she could duck elective office and still be a political force. "Be Eleanor Roosevelt," he advised.

Eleanor Roosevelt is one of Clinton's personal heroes. She has told of conducting imaginary talks with Roosevelt about contemporary problems and the role of the first lady in the 1990s.

The two were born in different centuries, yet have much in common, says Myra Gutin, a historian of first ladies at Rider University in New Jersey. "Both are politically minded. Both are widely respected, but also greatly criticized," Gutin said.

Clinton, the only first lady to chair a presidential commission, was criticized for the secrecy in which her Task Force on Health Reform operated. Roosevelt was the only first lady to hold a government position in her husband's administration. She resigned as assistant director of civilian defense after coming under fire.

U.S. drops 30 bombs on Iraq, communication sites, radar sites struck

MOSUL, Iraq (AP) — A new round of airstrikes hit northern Iraq today, a day after an American attack wrecked an Iraqi pumping station that sends oil through a pipeline to Turkey, officials said.

U.S. F15-Es dropped more than 30 laser-guided missiles this afternoon over the northern no-fly zone in response to several incidents of Iraqi radar tracking on the aircraft, Capt. Michael Blass of U.S. European Command in Germany said.

Missiles struck Iraqi communications sites, relay sites and anti-aircraft artillery sites. No damage was reported to the aircraft, Blass said.

The incidents happened in the vicinity of Mosul, a city about 250 miles north of Baghdad.

Blass denied Iraqi reports that U.S. planes targeted an Iraqi oil pipeline running through Turkey or one of its pumping stations.

Today, the Iraqi government took journalists to an oil pumping station, which appeared to have been destroyed. One person was killed in the attack Sunday and two were wounded, Iraqi officials said.


In Washington, Pentagon spokesman Col. Richard Bridges said officials were investigating whether a link in Iraq's air defense system as well as a link in pipeline operations.

In Turkey, an official at the oil terminal in the province of Ceyhan confirmed the flow of petroleum had stopped after the attack. U.N. officials in Baghdad also confirmed the interruption.

The pipeline, which runs from northern Iraq to Ceyhan, is the only functioning pipeline in Iraq and one of only two outlets for oil exports. The other is the Gulf terminal of Mina al-Bakr.

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