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OPINION

To Build A Better World, Start In Your Own Community

EDITORIAL

Remember cemeteries overseas

On this day, as we honor the one million Americans killed in defense of the United States, many will visit gravesites in cemeteries such as Fort Logan in Denver and Arlington Cemetery outside of Washington, D.C.

Most Americans do not even know about the cemeteries throughout the world that honor our war dead. Families, beginning with this country's entrance in to World War I on April 6, 1917, have been given the choice of having their loved ones buried in one of these cemeteries or having the bodies of their loved ones returned for burial on American soil. These cemeteries provide a solemn reminder to foreigners that Americans have fought and have died on their soil for their freedom. The 24 permanent American military burial grounds and the 22 monuments and markers on foreign soil are sites of remarkable peace and beauty.

These cemeteries are managed by the American Battle Monuments Commission. In appearance and feel they are distinctly like walking into a well-loved and well-cared for military cemetery anywhere in the United States. For Americans traveling abroad, the cemeteries provide a solemn and most memorable reminder of home. There is a landscaped grave area and a nonsectarian chapel at each cemetery. The World War II cemeteries contain sculptures and a museum area with maps of the battles nearby.

Whatever the future holds for this country, we must always remember to treat our war dead with honor and reverence, and the cemeteries managed by the American Battle Monuments Commission definitely fulfill this responsibility.

Open Forum

Willing to pay for wind

Re: "Rate hike could end incentives for wind energy," May 23, Page A1

I was surprised to see Xcel Energy's explanation of the proposed price increase for its Windsource program. Tuesday's article says that the program was designed for those who "want to pay premium rates." Substitute "willing" for "want." Thirty thousand Colorado rate payers signed up because they wanted to support wind, not just pay extra money to Xcel. It also claims that "you never join Windsource to get a break on your electric bill," implying that wind will always be more expensive than fossil fuels. But the point of this article is that Windsource customers have had lower bills due to the program. Can Xcel guarantee low prices of coal and gas-based electricity for the next 50 years? How about five years? No. That's why it passes fuel prices directly to the customer. It's not willing to take that risk. Finally, Xcel says that the cost of wind is going up due to steel prices and other factors. While this is true — and applies to fossil generation as well — no new wind generators have been added to serve Windsource customers since 2001. This should have no impact on the price of the program. Xcel spokespeople should get the facts straight.

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Western Resource Advocates
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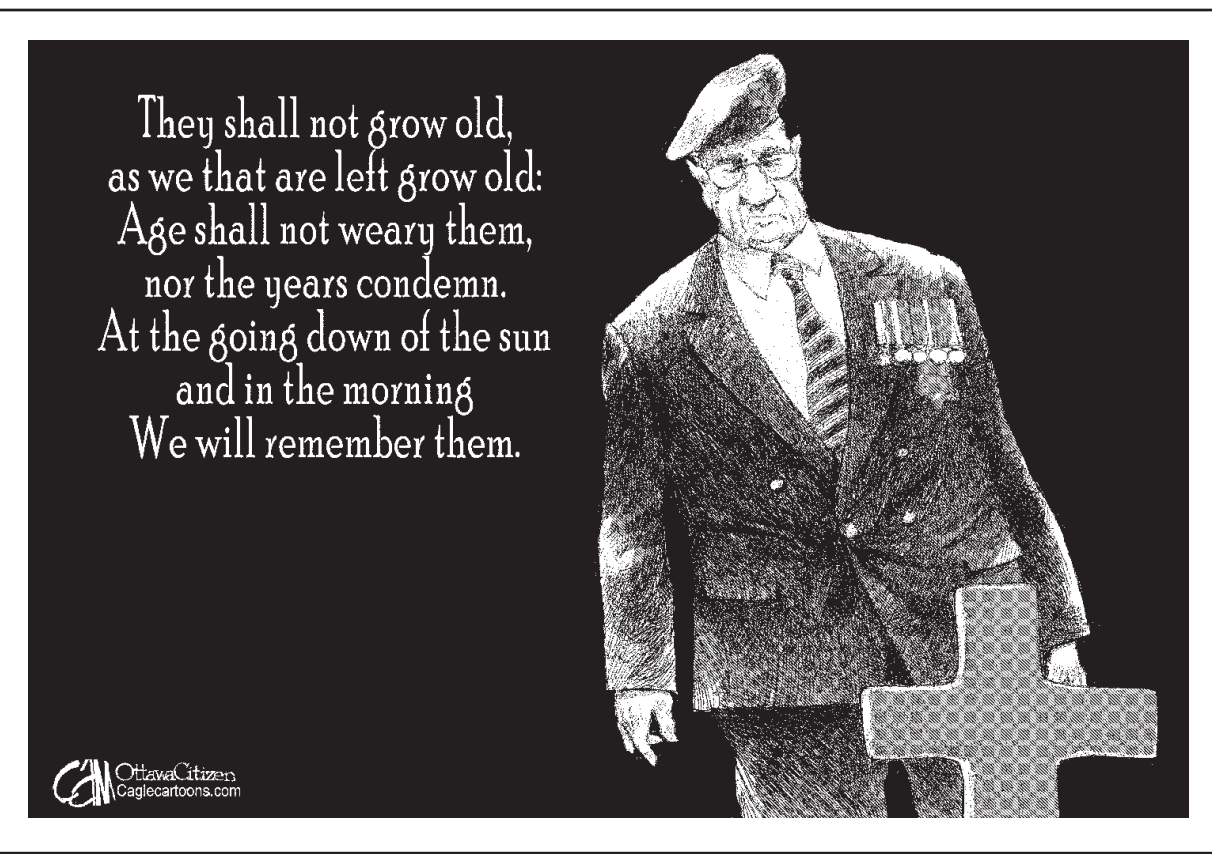
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Argument on immigration

WASHINGTON — This Memorial Day finds the nation's capital consumed by the issue of immigration — a topic that reaches as deep into our history and values as any that could occupy our holiday thoughts.

The debate that unfolded in the Senate over the past two weeks tested notions of sovereignty, explored questions of national character, measured our idealism and tolerance — and carried major political implications for both parties and for America's relationships with its neighbors.

It is a worthy subject and, for the most part, was worthily explored, with almost all the lawmakers acknowledging the difficulty of the choices and the need for action.

Now the issue moves to another arena — one where the level of public scrutiny is much less and the opportunity for mischief-making much greater. At some point soon, the House and Senate will be expected to name conferees to negotiate the vast differences between the bills passed by the two chambers. The chances of roadblocks being thrown in the path are abundant.

Congressional history is rich with examples of strong-willed senators and representatives battling fiercely over the final terms of legislation. These conference committee sessions can be long and brutal, and policy differences are compounded by the institutional jealousies involved. Veterans of Capitol Hill will tell you of conferences where the rivals almost came to blows over custody of the papers containing the final agreements.

Since 1995, when Republicans took control of both sides of the Capitol, the negotiating sessions often have been confined to GOP senators and representatives, with the Democrats locked out along with the press.

That arrangement has been reinforced by the "Hastert doctrine," the policy formally enunciated by House Speaker J. Dennis Hastert



David Broder
Washington Post
Writers Group

House, Senate still trying to hammer out legislation

that he will bring to the floor only bills that are supported by the majority of the Republican caucus. Because of that policy, bipartisan coalitions have become rarities in the House. The emphasis now is entirely on shaping bills in conference that most House Republicans can embrace.

In the case of the immigration bill, that may well spell doom for the kind of broad-based, comprehensive approach endorsed by President Bush and embodied in the Senate version. Conservatives in the House — and Hastert's top lieutenants — have staked out a position calling for immediate major steps to close the border with Mexico. As Bush requested, the Senate bill would link the tighter border enforcement to a new guest worker program, allowing immigrants to come in legally for a time to work available jobs, and create a procedure that permits longtime illegal immigrants to pay a fine and back taxes, learn English and then apply for citizenship.

An odd thing has happened. While the Senate was debating immigration and moving to give the president most of what he wants, the attitude of House Republicans has stiffened. If anything, more of them seem more determined than they

were a month ago to shut the border — and do nothing else. They believe the public is with them.

Rep. Tom Davis of Virginia, a former chairman of the National Republican Congressional Committee, the campaign arm of the House GOP, is symptomatic of the shift. A few months ago, Davis, who represents the affluent Washington, D.C., suburb of Fairfax County, was decrying fellow Republican Jerry Kilgore's tactic in attempting to use anti-illegal immigrant sentiment as a wedge issue in his losing campaign for governor.

Last week, Davis said that even his highly educated and financially comfortable constituents favor the House approach more than the Senate's. "They want a tough bill," he said, adding that immigration has become "a hot issue" for more than "the hard-right."

As a campaign strategist, Davis said, he fears that an impasse over immigration "certainly doesn't help the Republican Congress." With voters already frustrated over Iraq, gasoline prices, and scandals in Washington, the climate for the midterm election is grim. "We need to change things, or it's going to be a long election night," Davis said.

For that reason, he threw out several hints that he hoped Hastert would bend his rule — and open the way for the House to "work its will" on immigration with a coalition of most Democrats and a minority of Republicans.

But with Rep. Jim Sensenbrenner of Wisconsin, the chairman of the House Judiciary Committee and the principal author of the House bill, likely to lead the House negotiators, it's doubtful Davis will get his wish. And it's doubtful that Bush will get his bill.

Write to David Broder in care of the Washington Post Writers Group, Department 500, Washington, D.C. 20071 or davidbroder@washpost.com.

City cleanup was success

By Lore Blattner

Special to the Daily Times-Call

Well, just as I thought, Longmont residents have done another great job this year of cleaning up our town. Hooray to the citizens of Longmont, the kickoff day turned out to be a bright and sunny day and the people of Longmont came out to participate in our annual Clean Up Green Up Campaign.

It was another huge success — 535 bags of trash were collected, along with tires, wood, scrap metal and carpet. In some locations, it took a dump truck to gather it all up.

A very sincere thank you goes to the following people and organizations who contributed in the campaign this year: Nancy Sloan; Longs Peak Disc Golf Club; Joyce Dickinson; Bob Dixon; Boy Scout Troop 66; Emily Lauterbach; Don and Esther Wilson; Sharon Weiss and Longs Peak Group of Colorado Mountain Club; Kate Medina; Rita Levine and Cub Scout Pack 65 and Boy Scout Troop 565; Melinda Yale Meadowvale Homeowners Association; Cub Scout Pack 673, Dens 1 and 5; Riverwalk Mill Village; Paula and Rick Fitzgerald; Jean Cooper; Michael and Erin Drummy; Pai Trunck; Jim Austin and Tatum Wolf; Diana Brooks; Bill and Alice Vermeer; Dona McClain; Natasha Miller; Els and Hank Terao; Megan Williams; Helen M. Brown; Jean Gurule; Russell Rasmussen Family; Leland Keller; Shelby Yee; Codi Johnson; Matt and Shelley Linden; Janet Benter;

Thanks to the residents who volunteered

Asher, Byron and Levi Benter; Aaron Goshell; David Joe and Bayra Goshell; Sean McKell; Kyle McKell; Mia, Larissa and Zal Ron Shoeman; Armen David; Chip Davis; Andrew Lanham; Greg Lanham; Shoino Levison; Levison family and neighbors; Diane Biddle; Haley Biddle; Chelsea Ruff; Becky Hoffman; Niche Homeschoolers; LDS-Church Union Ward Young Women; Helen, Sarah, Rachel, Liesel and Rebecca Sagerburg; Ann, Megan and Blake Brady; Jacqueline, Steve and Jake Hansen; Lynn Johnson; Cynthia Hess; Raymond Fudge; Rebecca Ortega and family; Rhonda Rankin; Richard Fritz; John Cousins; Hevrik V. Larsen; Salemink Trainor; Doug and Lori D. Hewitt; Dean Lehman; Jack Anderson; Ken Moran; Kari and Tyler Grotting; Meadowview 1 and 2 and 7 and 9 Homeowners Association; Jill Franzel; Melba Cutter; Fox Hill Homeowners 2 and 3; the Allen Family; Keeley-Driscoll; Steve Rippel; Jean Ripple; Bill Manion; Bonnie Manion; Christina and Jeremy Haley; Schneeweiss Cole Family; Fagerburg family; Jill Panetta; Sharon O'Neil; Dana Nelson; Shirley Lacock; Kian Piller; Cub Scouts Pack 59 and the Fall River

Communications Council.

Again, this year, the St. Vrain Valley School District was a tremendous help in collecting 63 bags of trash, with 4 school participating: Central Elementary, Northridge Elementary, Niwot Elementary, Fall River and Fall River Elementary Communications Councils. The following 24 teachers and their classes helped: Nora Love, Linda Brown, Erik Selzer, Sandra Adams, Sandy Whisman, Leona Lowrie, Susie Bozella, Margo Chavez, Silvia Rohrbouck, Holly Henry, Monica Schmoker, Tamar vanVliet, Charles Bolster, Kevin Neiswander, Janet Kernes, Sherry Legrand, Amy Sperry, Bridget Witko, Marcie Panega, Missy Wills, Jill Martus, Bob Reid; Kristin Anthony, Barbara Batt and the Student Council of Central Elementary.

I would also thank the City of Longmont's Parks and Forestry Division Staff, Neighborhood Resources Division, the Daily Times-Call newspaper, Longmont Downtown Development Authority and the Longmont Area Chamber of Commerce for all their hard work in helping with this program.

The Arbor Day celebration hosted approximately 1,500 people throughout the day, at Thompson Park and once again, it was tree-mendously fun!

The city of Longmont looks wonderful, much of it due to our dedicated volunteers.

Thanks for helping to make our city a great place to work and live in.

Oh, what a tangled web we weave

By Tom Fitton

Judicial Watch

"All these damn notes we're writing to each other... as if the FBI is watching." This is what Rep. William Jefferson, D-La., said to Lori Mody, a Northern Virginia investor who agreed to wear a wire as part of an FBI sting operation.

Jefferson was making a joke, but it turned out to be a very bad one. The FBI was, indeed, watching.

According to a search warrant affidavit released on May 21, laying out in detail the 14-month probe of Jefferson, the FBI videotaped the congressman accepting \$100,000 from Mody in \$100 bills.

On Aug. 3, 2005, just a few days after Jefferson's prescient remark, FBI agents raided his Northeast Washington, D.C. home. They found \$90,000 in his freezer, crammed into frozen food containers.

Jefferson had planned to use the money to bribe a Nigerian official over a business deal that would have enriched himself and his family.

Jefferson is the latest politician to find his name splashed on the front page of the newspaper, but he is not alone. Consider the rash of scandals involving politicians from both sides of the aisle that have dominated headlines in the last year:

Lobbyist Jack Abramoff pleaded guilty to conspiracy, fraud and a host of other charges on Jan. 3 in exchange for information on his congressional co-conspirators.

Democratic Sen. Hillary Clinton's fundraising operation was fined \$35,000 by the Federal Election Commission for failing to accurately report more than \$700,000 in contributions to her 2000 New York Senate campaign.

Tom DeLay, R-Texas, resigned from Congress after controversy over his alleged role in a series of scandals from bribery to influence peddling, and was indicted twice by grand juries in Texas.

Aides to Rep. John Conyers, D-Mich., alleged their former boss repeatedly violated House ethics rules, forcing them to serve as his personal servants and valets when they were supposed to be doing the government's work.

Former California Congressman Duke Cunningham, R-Calif., was sentenced recently to 8 years in prison for taking more than \$2.4 million in bribes.

Rep. Allan Mollohan, D-W.Va., the ranking Democrat on the House ethics committee, stepped down from this position recently amidst allegations he used his clout to funnel millions of dollars to nonprofit organizations run by his friends.

While these politicians, and others, have continued to abuse the system and violate the law, the ethics enforcement process has been nonexistent.

For too long, members of Congress have looked the other way when their colleagues break the law. This permissiveness has led to the current ethics crisis on Capitol Hill, and it is long past time something be done to fix it.

There are signs the House ethics committee may be sputtering back to life. After a 16-month hiatus, the committee recently announced three new investigations, but to what end?

Will the committee impose substantial punishments for lawbreakers? Or is this just another case of political posturing in an election year? Only time will tell. In the meantime, however, we should keep the pressure on members of Congress to follow these investigations to their just conclusion. The number for the House ethics committee is 202-225-7103.

Tom Fitton is president of Judicial Watch, a Washington, D.C., -based nonpartisan educational foundation that fights government corruption. Visit www.judicialwatch.org for more information.