

EDITORIAL

Act in the
spirit of
Christmas

"Do all the good you can,
By all the means you can,
In all the ways you can,
In all the places you can,
At all the times you can,
To all the people you can,
As long as ever you can."
— John Wesley, English religious leader (1703-1791)

Those words encouraging altruism should speak especially loudly to us as Christmas carols and holly start popping up all over town. As we prepare for eating good meals with our families and sharing gifts, we should remember that some men and women in Longmont may not be able to buy presents for their children or afford a nice meal for the holidays.

This Christmas season, kind Longmonters have many opportunities to offer helping hands to neighbors who are in need.

We can help serve Christmas dinner at a local nursing home.

We can help look over donated toys for the Holiday Basket Program.

We can help families pick up their items on the Holiday Basket Program's distribution day and escort them to the check-out station.

And we can donate to the Family To Family Program, which serves high-need, low-income elderly; disabled adults; families with children; and kids in foster homes, group homes and residential treatment.

In the rush of the holiday season, it's too easy to lose track of our priorities. So, remember to do "all the good you can" and reach out to the less fortunate among us.

For more information about these and other volunteering opportunities, please call 303-444-4904.

Open Forum

New county commissioners
unlikely to change policy

Along with the election of two new Weld County commissioners comes the foreboding of a continuance of the shortsighted land-use policies that have been plaguing southwest Weld County.

The commissioners have given highest priority to encouraging a few large landowners and developers to create dense, scattered, ill-serviced residential projects that will be a future burden on taxpayers in unincorporated parts of the county.

They seem to forget that they are elected to serve the best interests of ALL Weld County residents. These projects do not.

They represent poor planning, usurpation of the statutory role for urban development by towns and cities, and reduction in the quality of life of Weld County residents.

However, in the last analysis, Weld County voters will get what they have uniformly chosen by voting by political party rather than on the positions on issues that the candidates represented.

JOHN FOLSOM
Longmont

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Supporting public safety

By Julia Pirnack

Special to the Daily Times-Call

Our community's investment in public safety received a resounding endorsement last month when Longmont voters approved an increase of 3.25 percent to the city's sales tax rate to fund additional resources for police and fire services.

What's great about this investment is it will fund improvements over the next three years that will continue to increase public-safety services over the long haul. The public-safety tax was not meant

to enable a short-term quick fix; rather, it is designed to provide increased services for years to come.

The city will invest immediately in several additional police officers in 2007 who will be specifically assigned to gang units. Although the

Mayor thanks
city for
approving tax

police department has done a fantastic job in keeping the peace after the gang-related homicide this past spring, it has come with a heavy price tag, resulting from overtime costs and using officers from neighboring jurisdictions.

The new funds provided by the public-safety tax will ensure that the Longmont Police Department will continue to keep the heat on those who attempt to disrupt our community now and in the future.

Our fire department also will benefit from the new tax. Several additional firefighters will be hired next year to increase the level of safety in the city's inner core and to improve emergency response times to all city residents.

While the City Council debated the ballot language and amount of

the public-safety tax we wished to request, we agreed unanimously that the tax was to be used exclusively for public safety. I believe that this guarantee was one of its strongest points. Our conservative financial policies demand that there be an ongoing source of revenue to fund ongoing expenses, which is smart fiscally and is why we could not, in good conscience, put a sunset clause on this tax. It is absolutely critical that after bearing the expense of recruiting and training the finest officers for Longmont, they will be supported and pay dividends to the community long into the future. The voting public can be assured that this money (approximately \$5.3 million in the first year) will be used solely and always to increase public safety, not to simply maintain the status quo.

Longmont voters made a wise and worthwhile investment in our community on Election Day, and your generosity will pay great dividends in 2007 and beyond. Thank you for your support on this important question.

Julia Pirnack is the mayor of Longmont.

Diversifying our portfolio

By Olivia Albrecht

Special to the Baltimore Sun

Today, the United States imports oil at a rate of \$400,000 a minute. It is estimated that by 2030, U.S. energy demands will increase by nearly two-thirds and that by 2050, global energy demand will more than double. Americans must realize the necessity of finding a reliable energy supply in order to sustain economic growth and prosperity in the 21st century and to reduce the security, economic and political risks of U.S. dependence on foreign oil.

The imperative is clear: The United States must develop a diverse energy portfolio, encourage technological advancements and make energy policy a priority on the foreign and domestic fronts. The ever-apparent synergy among geopolitics, diplomacy, environmental concerns, economic fears and domestic policy dictates that Americans must periodically reassess our energy portfolio and seek to diversify our sources — and generate a comprehensive approach to the transnational issues surrounding energy policy.

Nuclear energy is the most promising source of power, and it is making a comeback. In recent months, Washington has been

buzzing with talk about this subject. However, skeptics question how nuclear energy could wean America off oil, given that transportation, not electricity generation, is the primary guzzler of oil.

It is true that oil contributes only 2 percent of U.S. electricity, and nuclear energy generates thousands of megawatts of electricity. Yet analysts agree that as the price at the pump continues to grow, more global consumers will turn away from gas-fueled vehicles and toward alternative-power items to avoid the cost of oil.

Imagine if all car owners in the United States traded in their oil engines for electric cars: The drastic surge in electricity consumption could not be sustained by our current electric-output capability. Nuclear energy is ready to handle the demands created by increased electricity consumption as we free ourselves from oil dependence.

There has been quiet progress on this front. In the last year, the Energy Policy Act was passed, the Glob-

Energy demands
require focus on
nuclear power

al Nuclear Energy Partnership was introduced, additional reactor designs were certified and numerous utilities began the licensing process to build new reactors. But serious nuclear ambitions have not been sufficiently acted upon. Regrettably, each passing year without substantial changes in U.S. nuclear energy pursuits means America falls further behind in this burgeoning sector.

Despite the fact that it operates 103 of the world's 443 reactors, the United States has not ordered a commercial power reactor for decades. The industrial infrastructure that supported America's unsurpassed nuclear industry faded with the end of the Cold War, just as demand for new U.S. nuclear power plants diminished. In contrast, those nations that continued to develop their nuclear industry over the past three decades are positioned to lead the emerging global nuclear renaissance.

Few realize that the United States must build new reactors in order to sustain the nuclear contribution of 20 percent to the nation's electricity total — let alone amping up that amount, as many comprehensive energy plans suggest must occur. The United States will have to build 75 to 110 nuclear power reactors of equivalent power to current reactors over the next 25 years just to sustain nuclear power's current level of contribution. Achieving the status quo would require bringing three new reactors on line by 2012, with six or seven being brought on line in most years between then and 2030. Expanding the industry to contribute 30 percent of the nation's electricity would require approximately 200 new reactors over the next 25 years.

Even if there were sufficient political will to dictate a grand return to nuclear energy, the American industrial base could not meet the demand. This means that Americans would shift energy dependence from foreign oil fields to foreign nu-

clear manufacturing facilities.

The global economic facts are unpleasantly basic: Oil supplies are tight, prices are high, and energy demands are increasing — primarily because of the exploding consumption rates in places such as India and China. Today, the haves and have-nots of the world are being defined in terms of oil supply. The countries with oil have more influence and more money, while the countries needing oil have less leverage and less money. And those countries that need oil but can't afford to buy it are becoming even poorer and are further removed from the center stage of world affairs.

Witness the recent move by three members of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries — Venezuela, Nigeria and Kuwait — to cut oil production to keep prices above \$60 per barrel, increasing uncertainty in the volatile oil market and sustaining the pressure that high oil prices place on the global economy. OPEC's message: As long as the world depends on its oil, we are at its mercy.

Of even greater concern are countries that have energy resources but think they need more weapons, and countries that have weapons but not enough energy. Symbiotically, these two groups have concluded that there is ample business to conduct.

In a rational attempt to guard against the oil cartel, foreign nations, friend and foe, are increasingly looking to nuclear energy as a critical ingredient of their future energy production. They recognize that nuclear energy will stabilize energy prices, reduce pollution and decrease their reliance on foreign sources. If Americans do not engage in this global conversation today, the risks associated with nuclear technology will escalate and the United States will not be in a position to play a leading role in shaping the future of nuclear technology.

If nuclear energy truly is to be a fundamental piece of the U.S.'s diversified energy portfolio, as it should, America must get to work on it — starting today.

Olivia Albrecht, a Fox News contributor, was the John Tower national security fellow at the Center for Security Policy.

Conservative
nominees
DOA in
the Senate?

By Tom Fitton

Judicial Watch

On Nov. 15, President Bush stuck to his guns and re-nominated six conservative judicial candidates who had previously been denied up-or-down votes in the Senate due to Democratic obstruction. The president's loyalty and persistence to these qualified nominees is commendable.

Unfortunately, it is unlikely these nominees will be confirmed by the end of this lame duck session of Congress. And in January, their prospects are even worse. That's when Democrat Pat Leahy will take the reins in the Senate Judiciary Committee. Leahy has said repeatedly and publicly that he will insist on confirming "consensus nominees" to the bench. Translation: Conservatives need not apply.

After Bush announced the re-nominations, Senate liberals accused the president of abandoning his pledge of bipartisanship made the day after the mid-term elections. The polar opposite is true.

It has been the likes of Ted Kennedy, Charles Schumer, Pat Leahy and their liberal allies in the Senate who have turned the judicial confirmation process on its head, obstructing the president's judicial nominees for political reasons. They even resorted to launching judicial filibusters, ignoring the constitutional directive to provide up-or-down votes on all judicial nominees. Why? Not because the nominees were unqualified, but rather because they didn't like the nominees' philosophy of judicial restraint.

So, who exactly is violating the spirit of bipartisanship?

Liberal Democrats' obstructionist strategy is a flagrant violation of the U.S. Constitution and prevents both Republicans and Democrats from voting for good judicial nominees. Ironically, a few of Bush's "controversial" judicial nominees might even garner a majority in a Democrat-controlled Senate, assuming Senate liberals allowed up-or-down votes on their nominations.

But we know what is next. Conservative judicial nominees who are supposed to be judged on their qualifications will be questioned by liberals on their religious views. Nominees who also are supposed to avoid pre-judging cases that might come before their court will be asked by liberals to virtually write speculative decisions during their confirmation hearings.

The politicization of the judicial confirmation process did not begin with this president and this Congress. Radical liberals in the Senate began poisoning the process back in 1987 when, led by Ted Kennedy, they launched a vicious attack against Judge Robert Bork, President Reagan's nominee for the U.S. Supreme Court. But what was once viewed as an isolated case of character assassination has now become institutionalized.

Today, liberals boldly crow about their intent to block conservative nominees for political reasons. (The intellectually dishonest tactic even has a name: "Borking.") And Republicans — who have every reason in the world to stop them — cannot seem to summon the political will.

Remember the so-called "Gang of 14" moderates in the Senate? Seven Republicans broke ranks and brokered a deal with seven Democrats to allow a few of the president's judicial nominees through, while leaving open the possibility of future judicial filibusters. This compromise struck a fatal blow to the president's attempts to push some key conservative nominees by ending Republican attempts to use procedural rules to circumvent filibusters.

Americans all pay a price when good judges don't make it to the bench.

Look no further than the recent New Jersey Supreme Court decision in support of gay "marriage" to see the types of decisions liberal activist judges make. Liberals use judges to accomplish through judicial fiat what they cannot accomplish at the ballot box. One sees it in the state courts, such as New Jersey, and one sees it on the U.S. Supreme Court.

The Senate battle over judges will continue into 2007. When it comes to confirming federal judges who won't legislate from the bench, conservatives should not tolerate obstruction from Senate Democrats and inaction from Senate Republicans.

Tom Fitton is president of Judicial Watch, a non-partisan educational foundation that fights government corruption. Visit www.judicialwatch.org for more information.