

CALIFORNIA WATER WARS

Move forward on desalination

The O.C. grand jury report that calls Orange County’s need for seawater desalination “dire” hits the nail on the head [“Grand Jury: Time to move on desalination plants,” June 7]. Poseidon Water has been working for more than a decade to secure the government approvals necessary to build a state-of-the-art seawater desalination plant in Huntington Beach that will reduce the county’s demand on imported water and protect against drought and natural disaster.

The Municipal Water District of Orange County and Orange County Water District deserve praise. Both public agencies have demonstrated leadership and have been instrumental in moving the desalination project toward the finish line. OCWD is now evaluating a public-private partnership with Poseidon to deliver the project in the most cost-effective way, and Poseidon is committed to a partnership that ensures an environmentally responsible and technologically advanced project that produces a new drinking water supply that is affordable for ratepayers.

As the grand jury noted, for the price of a cup of coffee (albeit a Starbucks Venti), O.C. residents can rest assured that they will have a reliable drought-proof drinking water supply that is available rain or shine 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

Scott Maloni
Huntington Beach
vice president, Poseidon Water



Freshwater is pumped up into the ocean through a slant well drilled at the mouth of San Juan Creek by the Municipal Water District of Orange County. The tapped water is the product of a test study called South Orange Coastal Ocean Desalination Project.

MAKE CONSERVATION A FOCUS, TOO

By all means, build desalination plants in Huntington Beach and Dana Point. They should be brought online as quickly as possible, not only because of a possible disruption in the water supply (earthquake, etc.), but because we will need the water.

There seems to be no end to the building of new residential developments in the county, in spite of record drought, the Delta baitfish situation and the long-term drought condition affecting the Colorado River.

But in the interim, why are we growing grass? This is a

desert, and we should be dealing with this water-intensive situation like Tucson, Phoenix and Las Vegas dealt with it long ago. At the very least, we should ban the watering of grass, with wasteful automatic sprinklers, between the sidewalk and the curb. This represents a tremendous waste of water that should be stopped at once.

Joe Phelps
Irvine

ENVIRONMENTALISTS HAVE HAD THEIR SAY

Thank God for common sense finally emerging through all the rhetoric coming from environmentalists.

The environmentalists have had their say now it’s time to get these facilities permitted and approved and start construction.

Next time you take a nice cold glass of water, we can thank these jurists for their common sense. While we’re at it maybe they can also make some common sense decisions on taking advantage of the infrastructure in place at San Onofre so that in the future, when we have those 100-degree-plus days, we can relay on electricity to maintain our modern lives and keep the lights on.

Bill Ring
Mission Viejo

ELECTION 2014

Good reason for voters to be apathetic

Recent news bemoaned the fact that a very small percentage of the electorate showed up to vote in the California primary on June 3. First, I would like to mention that I have never missed a chance to vote, but I continue to see evidence why this voter apathy seems so prevalent.

The Sunday O.C. Register published two articles that, in my opinion, gives credence to voter apathy. In “A state lacking direction” [Commentary, June 8] the columnist chastised our state politicians for being more concerned about bathrooms and food content than dealing with policies that would bring jobs, ease the drought, improve under-performing schools and deal with crowded roads. In the article,

“Can state Legislature repeal Prop. 187” [Local, June 8], it notes that state Senator Kevin de Leon would like to repeal Proposition 187. In 1994 voters approved Proposition 187. Nearly 60 percent of voters approved it. Prop. 187 sought to end public education, health benefits and welfare payments to illegal immigrants in California.

For those of you who remember, after Prop. 187 passed, it was declared unconstitutional by the California State Supreme Court and never implemented. In other words, Sen. de Leon would like us to change history.

Nothing can make a voter feel more helpless than when the voter overwhelmingly

supports a certain policy and witnesses it being struck down.

Also, it doesn’t help when almost all politicians elected and sent to Sacramento or Washington grandstand, only work to get re-elected and don’t support those who elect them, instead of dealing with the real problems plaguing this country.

Karl Baysinger
Orange

IS PART OF THE PROBLEM GENERATIONAL?

On Election Day I was privileged to work as a member of the election board at a local precinct. In many ways, it was very rewarding. My fellow board members and the vot-

ers who came during the day were impressive in their levels of interest and commitment.

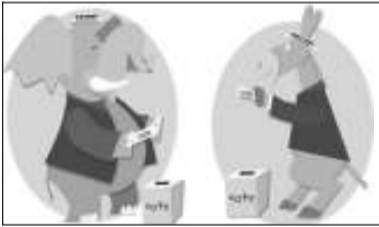
However, it was more than disappointing to find at the end of a 13-hour day that fewer than 100 of the more than 1300 voters registered in the precinct had voted.

Surely there were additional ballots cast by mail, but I still doubt that more than a very low double digit percentage of eligible voters cast their ballots.

Even more disturbing to me was the fact that by observation it seemed to me that no more than three voters that day were under the age of 25. In a state and a country beset with incredible challenges, one wonders what the future holds if this level of indifference were to continue.

Please educate yourselves and vote in November. It really does make a difference.

Ian Campbell
Huntington Beach



MCT ILLUSTRATION

Seriously taking responsibility for our Earth

I wonder how many environmentalists columnist James Poulos actually knows [“The dogmatic environmentalist trusts in government, not God,” Opinion, June 8]? I am involved in an interfaith environmental group with hundreds of participants, and for those I know, their belief in a higher power is a big part of the reason they are so actively involved in environmental issues.

All religions care about the common good and the future for others over their own personal good, which is what religious prophets of all faiths teach and what many believe in. Since the natural world is our life-support system, we

are naturally concerned about all the harm we humans are causing to the planet, and what this will mean for now and for those who come after us. Many also believe we have a responsibility to the other creatures here on Earth, which are disappearing at a very rapid rate.

We know that global climate change is real, and the only reason many are looking to the government is that we are beginning to realize that individual actions and even congregational actions are not going to be enough.

We realize that we need policy changes, and making fossil fuels more expensive would help move us along faster to alternative energy solutions. Saying we trust in government over God is a stretch and just not true.

Margaret Henke
North Tustin

president, the Orange County Interfaith Coalition for the Environment

DDT FACTS AND FICTION

I take umbrage at the article, “On Irvine lake, bald Eagles soar” [Front Page, June 9]. Pat Brennan cited a very controversial opinion held by environmentalists that DDT usage caused thinning in eagle (and other wild birds’) shells, thus causing their die-offs.

Needless to say, the early research cited by Rachel Carson in her book “Silent Spring” was less than scientific and has been discounted by some studies. My suggestion is that Brennan should not state an unproven theory as fact (such as happens with global warming?).

In addition, the people who support the DDT ban should realize that this ban not only likely did not help the birds,

but can be directly attributed to allowing millions of people to die due to malaria, of which DDT has been shown to be the most effective way of eliminating the disease-carrying mosquitoes.

Leave the opinions to the Opinion page.

Larry Engwall, S.E.
Tustin

GENDER ROLES CONFINE

In her recently published memoir, “Hard Choices,” former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton demonstrated how she can simultaneously handle both personal and work-related duties. A male presidential candidate would not have to do this. This shows that even though she is an experienced political candidate, she still feels confined by gender roles and expectations.

Kenneth L. Zimmerman
Huntington Beach

MILITARY

Who takes the brunt of the war machine?

If wars were fought by old white men, there wouldn’t be any. If every member of the House of Representatives, every member of the Senate and all of their offspring had to go into battle (not serve behind a desk), we wouldn’t meddle in other countries’ affairs. One could say that our “mission” in Afghanistan was to fight terrorist groups that had struck out at our country, and we had to weed them out from the host country that sponsored those terrorist groups. If that were the case, we should have been aggressive, taken names and gotten out of there; but what the powers that be decided to do was nation-build. We have thrown trillions of dollars at this task, and when we finally leave, whoever comes in with the cash will be calling the shots, whether it is the Taliban, al-Qaida or fill in a name.

Who joins the military and why? It is the 18- to 25-year-old person who has a family tradition of military, young people who can’t find a job, those who don’t know what to do with their lives and believe the military might give them some structure, and patriots who feel a call to defend the homeland. It can be any of those reasons or a dozen others. For the most part, 18- to 25-year-old males are immature, inexperienced, testosterone driven beings. We suit ‘em up, teach them how to use weapons and send them out to do their duty. Some perform admirably, while some should never have been there in the first place.

Enter Sgt. Bowe Bergdahl, the current political football. Obama made a prisoner swap without asking permission. Congress has its feathers ruffled because he again made a unilateral decision. I and the majority of Americans don’t know the entire story of how or why this young man left his post. We, again, crucify someone in the press without all the facts.

If you dislike President Barack Obama or his policies (I haven’t been too thrilled by any of these policies), then Bergdahl is a traitorous deserter. But we must also remember that Sgt. Bergdahl is someone’s son, grandson, brother or friend. His parents have anguished over him for five long years.

All decisions have consequences. If he did leave his post, this is one decision, made by an immature 20-something, that has changed the trajectory of his life. It cannot be undone. But let’s give him the benefit of the doubt until all of the facts are revealed. And let’s stop expending our blood and treasure on questionable causes.

Pamela Gustafson
San Clemente

SO NOW WE ‘CUT DEALS’

The America I grew up in would never have done this deal with Sgt. Bergdahl. We didn’t negotiate with criminals or terrorists. If they captured one of our guys, we went in and got him out – period. We didn’t ask anyone’s permission or cut any deals. They had one of our guys, and we weren’t going to stand for it. This was a daunting position. If you take one of ours first, we’re for sure gonna get him back. Second, you’re gonna take a pretty big hit so you never do it again. You’re going to end up with less than you started with. Guaranteed.

Not so anymore. The message here is, “We’ll cut a deal, and we’re not terribly good at negotiating.” The Taliban got back five of their top guys, in exchange for one of our deserters.

“Any American will do, we’ll give you whatever you want, and they’ll be no retaliation.” Doesn’t sound very much like my America.

M. J. Knudsen
Trabuco Canyon

SPEAKING FROM EXPERIENCE

I wish everyone like myself, who never served in the U.S. military, would stop telling us what to do and think about the trade for Sgt. Bowe Bergdahl. We have not earned the right to speak on this issue. We do not have the experience to understand all the issues. This includes White House spokespeople, state department personnel, politicians and journalists.

If you have not “been there, done that,” nobody cares what your imagination may create as being right.

So, “stand down.”
Richard Nolan
Laguna Hills

HOW TO SEND US A LETTER

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Commentary staff

BRIAN CALLE, Opinion editor, 714-796-7823, bcalle@ocregister.com
MICHAEL C. TIPPING, deputy editor, 714-796-7784, mtipping@ocregister.com
JOSEPH PERKINS, assistant editor, 714-796-7786, jperkins@ocregister.com
BETTY TALBERT, senior editor, letters, 714-796-3631, letters@ocregister.com

RORY COHEN, assistant deputy editor, 714-796-5049, rcohen@ocregister.com
SUSAN GILL VARDON, senior editor, 714-796-6838, swardon@ocregister.com
SCOTT KAUFMAN, editorial writer, 714-796-5025, skaufman@ocregister.com
ADAM SUMMERS, editorial writer, 714-796-2230, asummers@ocregister.com
TREVOR SMITH, editorial coordinator, 714-796-7989, trsmith@ocregister.com