

Analysis

Divided Politics Dictated Keystone Call

BY ERICA WERNER

AP Congressional Correspondent

WASHINGTON — President Barack Obama's decision to block the Keystone XL oil pipeline has exposed an endlessly polarized Washington, and likely hardened its divides.

Obama is now being praised to the skies by environmentalists and most Democrats, and denounced in apocalyptic terms by Republicans and the business community. And although environmental issues once produced bipartisan agreement in Congress, consensus on action to increase energy production or deal with climate change looks farther away than ever.

"This became a tribal issue of bizarre proportion," said Jason Grumet, president of the Bipartisan Policy Center.

Grumet said voters support Keystone and infrastructure projects, as well as action on climate change. "And unfortunately rather than recognizing the opportunity to do both, we now have a country that's essentially doing neither," he said.

Seven years in the making, Obama's decision to reject the Keystone pipeline to carry crude oil from Canada to the Texas Gulf Coast was not a foregone conclusion, at least not initially. From one perspective the pipeline is merely an infrastructure project, unlikely to cause major lasting impacts on jobs



ANTONIO PEREZ/CHICAGO TRIBUNE/TNS

President Barack Obama decided last week to reject the proposed Keystone XL pipeline project across the center of the country. Foes of the pipeline had rejoiced in the decision, while proponents have roundly condemned the decision.

or the environment, according to government analyses. In 2010, then-Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton said her department was inclined to sign off on it.

But that same year Democrats lost control of the House after infuriating Republicans by forcing through a bill cutting greenhouse gas emissions. Legislative efforts on climate change were declared dead, and environmentalists began shifting their focus onto the executive branch, seizing on Keystone as a

place to make their stand.

As environmentalists staged protests, Keystone transformed into a litmus test for both sides. In the Republican view, opponents of the project were backing environmental extremism over jobs. Ask Democrats, and the project meant environmental destruction and a giveaway to the fossil fuels industry in place of sensible action to curb climate change.

Clinton announced her opposition to the project in September as

she campaigned for president, and in the wake of that announcement Obama may have had little choice but to follow suit, given the intense pressures he faced. Those pressures would only have intensified heading into international climate talks this month.

To some, the debate became unchained from reality, an election-season wedge issue that forced Republicans and Democrats into their corners, each denouncing the other as extreme. Not so long ago legislation like the Endangered Species Act and the Clean Air Act won bipartisan support on Capitol Hill, but in today's atmosphere such cooperation looks almost unimaginable.

"The polarization is extreme," said Democratic Sen. Brian Schatz of Hawaii. "Our voters want us to work together on these issues, but the political ecosystem surrounding the Congress benefits from these issues as litmus tests rather than as urgent problems that require our leadership."

Despite the corrosive politics, Keystone commanded the support of nine Senate Democrats when it came up for a vote at the beginning of this year. That includes some lawmakers in states on or close to the pipeline route and standing to benefit from construction jobs. Several of them, including Democratic Sen. Heidi Heitkamp of North Dakota, will face voters in 2018, when she will have to explain away her support

for a president who rejected the project — or use the issue to show her independence from national Democrats.

"I don't think this is a decision based on facts. I think it's a decision based on politics," Heitkamp said.

On the other side, Republicans who might be inclined to cross the aisle and support Democrats on environmental issues risk accusations they are throwing their lot in with extremists. GOP Sen. Kelly Ayotte of New Hampshire, up for re-election in a swing state next year, has drawn criticism and talk of a primary challenge since breaking ranks last month to back the Obama administration's plans to reduce emissions from power plants, although her positioning could help her in the general election.

Other vulnerable GOP senators from states including Illinois and Wisconsin will face similar considerations when Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell brings up legislation aimed at blocking the power plant plan, as he's promised to do. Democrats insist most such votes will only help them, given polling data showing the majority of voters wants to see action to reduce greenhouse gases.

Said McConnell: "Republicans have no intention of giving up on common-sense jobs ideas like Keystone."

Forecasters See Storms For Central States

BY KELLY P. KISSEL

Associated Press

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. — Forecasters are warning 63 million people in the central U.S. to have an eye out for bad weather this week as colliding air masses threaten to generate high winds and possibly tornadoes.

The threat Wednesday stretches from San Antonio to Chicago to Cincinnati. It appeared Monday that Missouri, southern Illinois and northern Arkansas would face the greatest severe weather threat, but the Storm Prediction Center cautioned that people throughout the Midwest should be prepared to take action should

the forecast change.

"It's going to be a large area, depending on how much unstable air develops," said Bill Bunting, the operations chief at the Norman, Oklahoma-based forecasting center. He said that while the jet stream and upper-level disturbances were aligning in the atmosphere to aid storm development, another key ingredient — moist Gulf air flooding into the Midwest — was the great unknown.

"It's not a given. We have concerns about the amount of low-level moisture that will be in place. That's a common challenge in November forecasting," Bunting said.

A series of cold fronts have pushed humid air well south,

but should it return Tuesday and Wednesday the result could be very bad weather.

While seeking out forecasts was advisable, there's another way for non-scientists to know if something is up: "Wednesday morning, if there are low clouds streaming northward rapidly, Wednesday will be a day you can expect severe thunderstorm and tornado watches," Bunting said. "If less moisture is in place, you may have showers and a narrow squall line. Nothing is off the table."

Temperatures Monday across the Midwest were a few degrees above normal but could reach unseasonable temperatures by Wednesday —

10 to 15 degrees above normal, and approaching or exceeding 70 as far north as central Missouri.

November storms aren't unusual; Illinois had eight deaths in tornadoes in November 2013. So far this year, there have been 10 deaths from tornadoes, but none since May. Seven occurred in mobile homes.

Since the May 2013 tornado at Moore, Oklahoma, killed 24 people, including seven school children, the nation's has had 77 deaths from tornadoes. The worst was a storm that killed 16 west and north of Little Rock in April 2014.

Military Identifies The Remains Of 7 Pearl Harbor 'Unknowns'

HONOLULU (AP) — The remains of seven crew members missing since the USS Oklahoma capsized in the 1941 bombing of Pearl Harbor have been identified, the military said Monday.

The names of the servicemen identified using dental records will be released after their families have been notified.

In June, the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency began digging up the remains of nearly 400 USS Oklahoma sailors and Marines from a veterans cemetery in Honolulu where they were buried as "unknowns."

Within five years, officials expect to identify about 80 percent of the Oklahoma crew members still considered missing.

The military says it started the project because advances in forensic science and technology are improving the ability to identify remains.

On Monday, officials exhumed the last four of 61 caskets containing unknown people from the Oklahoma. Many of the caskets include the remains of multiple individuals.

Families will have the option of receiving remains as they are identified, or waiting until the agency has more pieces of a body or even a complete skeleton. Navy casualty officers will let families know their options.

Altogether, 429 men on board the World War II battleship were killed. Only 35 were identified in the years immediately after.

Identification work will be conducted at agency laboratories in Hawaii and Nebraska. DNA analysis will be conducted at the Armed Forces DNA Identification Laboratory at Dover Air Force Base in Delaware.

More than 2,400 sailors, Marines and soldiers were killed in the attack on Pearl Harbor. The Oklahoma's casualties were second only to the USS Arizona, which lost 1,177 men.

Lawyer: Turncoats Framed Gangster In 'Goodfellas' Heist

NEW YORK (AP) — The government used opportunistic Mafia turncoats to make its case against aging mobster Vincent Asaro in a decades-old airport heist immortalized in the hit gangster movie "Goodfellas," a defense attorney said in closing arguments on Monday at Asaro's racketeering trial.

Lawyer Elizabeth Macedonio called the cooperating witnesses "despicable people" and "accomplished liars" who would say anything to save themselves. She singled out Asaro's mob associate cousin, who came forward in the late 2000s and agreed to wear a wire to record their conversations and try to implicate her client.

The cousin, Gaspare Valenti, "is a person who is able to lie to everyone around him — even his own family," she told jurors in federal court in Brooklyn.

The jury was expected to begin deliberating on Tuesday.

The government alleges that the 80-year-old Asaro, in his heyday, helped plan the \$6 million armed holdup at a Lufthansa cargo terminal at John F. Kennedy International Airport. It also has accused the Bonanno organized crime family

member of continuing his life of crime into his later year before his arrest last year.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Alicyn Cooley, in her closing argument on Friday, told the jury that Asaro, whose grandfather and father were members of the secretive Bonanno family, "was born into that life and he fully embraced it."

She said Asaro rose through the ranks and developed an "unbreakable bond" with the more notorious James "Jimmy the Gent" Burke, the late Lucchese crime family associate who orchestrated the Lufthansa heist and inspired the mobster character played by Robert De Niro in the film. She cited testimony by Valenti about how Asaro teamed with Burke to assemble the holdup crew and, in a separate scheme, kill a suspected informant with a dog chain.

Jurors have heard recordings made by Valenti on which Asaro complained in a profanity-laced rant, "We never got our right money, what we were supposed to get. ... Jimmy kept everything."

Asaro's attorney argued that the recordings only exposed the

bluster of a broken-down old man with a gambling problem.

"Hardly the powerful organized crime figure the government alleges him to be," Macedonio said. "Rather, Mr. Asaro rode around all day with Gaspare Valenti fantasizing. Fantasizing about a way to make money."

Valenti, 68, testified he signed up to become a paid government informant because

a gambling problem had left him destitute and he was fed up with the Mafia.

Asaro, if convicted of racketeering conspiracy and other charges, would face life in prison.

"Goodfellas," released in 1990, also featured Ray Liotta, Lorraine Bracco and Joe Pesci, who won an Academy Award for best supporting actor. It was directed by Martin Scorsese.

Yankton Public Schools

Experience Preschool at Webster School

Thursday, November 19 • 4:00-6:00PM



Join Us For

EXPERIENCE PRESCHOOL

The Yankton School District will offer Experience Preschool on Thursday, November 19 from 4:00-6:00 PM. This will allow



you and your child an opportunity to get a glimpse of the fabulous program we have in

the public school system for toddlers aged 3 and 4. You and your child can visit the preschool classroom, interact with the teachers and receive a complimentary board book. Please call 665-2484 to make a reservation for your family. Registration will open for the 2016-17 school year on Tuesday, December 1 at 8:00 AM in the lobby at Webster School.

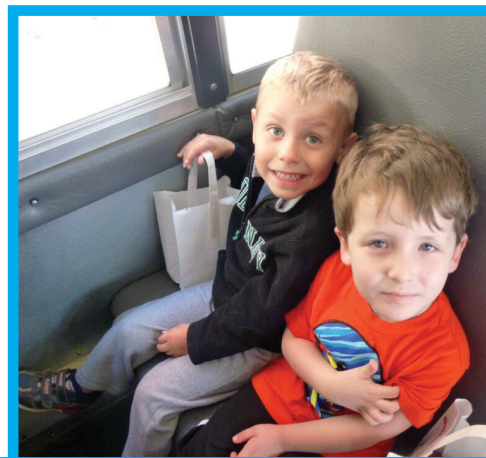
IMPORTANT DATES

Experience Preschool

Thursday, November 19 • 4-6:00PM
Webster Preschool Rooms

2016-2017 Preschool Registration

Tuesday, December 1 • 8:00AM
Webster School Lobby



Make reservation by calling
Webster Elementary School 665-2484

Nominate The 2015 Yankton Citizen Of The Year

Nomination Deadline: Monday, November 30

Please Mail Your Nominations To:
Citizen Of The Year
Yankton Press & Dakotan
319 Walnut, Yankton, SD 57078
or visit www.yankton.net/coy

My nomination for the 2015 Citizen of the Year is:

This person should be the Citizen of the Year because:

My Name: _____

My Address: _____

My Phone Number: _____

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