

Los Angeles Times

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

## When Lobbying Joins the Family Circle

June 29, 2003

Your articles on the congressional family members who lobby (June 22, 23) call up that phrase from my high school history text about the evils of the medieval church: simony and nepotism. Let's add Secretary of State Colin Powell's scion at the Federal Communications Commission and Justice Antonin Scalia's sons, who were members of law firms that defended the Bush campaign in 2000. As with Teddy Roosevelt's trust-busting and the injustice of monopolies, I seem to remember a time when we were taught that these things were undesirable, if not outright morally wrong.

We also read George Orwell: Payoffs are not payoffs; Enron is not Teapot Dome; media money equals free speech. So little investigative reporting goes on these days.

Kate Naples

*Los Angeles*

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Re "In Nevada, Reid Is the Name to Know," June 23: Sen. Harry Reid (D-Nev.) has a long track record of protecting the special places in Nevada for the people of Nevada and for all Americans. In the case of the Red Rock land exchange, Reid acted in the best interests of the public and the environment.

In Nevada, the Sierra Club considers land exchanges only when there is a net gain in public land; when the level of protection is increased; when the newly acquired lands have great conservation and recreation value; and when abutting development is low-density development with parks and open space. When we evaluated the Red Rock land exchange, we found that the project met our concerns.

Marcia Forkos

*Chair, Southern Nevada*

*Group, Sierra Club*

*Las Vegas*

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What shaming reading your excellent two-parter makes. Shaming for the principals involved (although they are probably all too brazen to care) but shaming, too, for all of us who vote such characters into office and allow them to continue to make a mockery of ethics.

The article in which you spell out the spider's web of interests of Reid and his lobbyist sons makes especially grim reading. It should be pinned up in every schoolroom in the land — and the reason spelled out loud and clear.

Roland Starke

*Santa Monica*

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After reading about the lobbying connections of the family of Nevada's Sen. Reid, I think I finally understand the theory of trickle-down economics.

John Sherwood

*Topanga*