

Monday, August 21, 2006

Some of my time in Congress is spent giving speeches; plenty of time is spent listening to constituents and policy experts. And then there is the time I spend reading.

Recently my wife and I stopped into a bookstore. Near the entrance was a table with a sign "Summer Reading" planted into an overflow pile of paperbacks. As I began digging through, I thought about my own pile of summer reading at home. For some reason, the later we get into summer, and the more I read, the higher the pile seems to grow.

Here is the Summer Reading List that currently sits on my table:

A four-page policy proposal from a friend that begins: "Dear Steve, Here's the newest of my ranting," an outline from Keyspan on a new Advanced Energy Technology Center on Long Island and a briefing entitled "Navy Ship Propulsion Technologies: Options for Reducing Oil Use".

There is an Air War College paper on "War Without Oil: A Catalyst For True Transformation," a Congressional Research Service Issues Brief entitled, "Alternative Fuels and Advanced Technology Vehicles: Issues in Congress," and a National Journal article on Global Warming.

Also, an analysis by General (Ret.) Bob Scales about the strategic dynamics of the recent hostilities in Lebanon, a Miami Herald article headlined, "More Iraqis Stand Up But The Us Can't Stand Down," a Washington Times article noting, "Battling Terror Calls for Modern-Day Alternatives" and an Armed Forces Journal cover story: "Clausewitz: Right Or Wrong."

There are constituent letters and emails...articles on local issues clipped from weekly newspapers...and letters from elected officials

Also in the pile: a briefing about preventive health and wellness programs; an essay on "The Persian Gulf and the Geopolitics of Oil," an Armed Services Subcommittee on Terrorism memo, and "Seven Questions: America's Energy Predicament" from Foreign Policy Journal.

Not to mention a briefing about counterfeit drugs, another briefing about shoulder-fired missiles, and a memo about Iran from the Marine Corps Fellow assigned to my office.

The corner of my table has room for two books I'm currently reading: Kevin Bakers' Paradise Alley (about the New York City draft riots) and Erik Larson's "The Devil in the White City" (about the 1893 Chicago Worlds Fair).

SUMMER READING

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Finally, there's a recent newspaper feature on the 1986 Mets.

I'll start with the Mets. After all, it's summer.