LETTER TO THE EDITOR:

LOST not liberal folly

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In fact, LOST, which was first proposed by President Nixon, is supported primarily by the U.S. Navy and the U.S. business community, including the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the American Petroleum Institute, the National Association of Manufacturers and U.S. oil, gas, mining, shipping, and undersea cable companies. American companies will reap enormous commercial benefits, generate substantial tax revenues and potentially create thousands of American jobs if given clear legal rights codified in the convention to develop the enormous oil, gas and mineral resources on the ocean floor. These companies have made it clear that unless the Senate approves the treaty, they will not invest the billions of dollars necessary to exploit these resources.

The George W. Bush administration, which is rarely characterized as liberal, carefully reviewed the convention and urged the Senate to approve it after concluding that it strongly supported U.S. national security and economic interests. Americans benefit every day from a broad array of treaties that the United States has joined, on subjects including international postal delivery, telecommunication transmissions and the extradition of criminal suspects from other countries.

During the Bush administration, the Senate approved 162 treaties, including many multilateral treaties negotiated under the auspices of the United Nations. During the 110th Congress, the Senate approved 90 treaties -- more than during any other single Congress in American history. The Bush administration supported these treaties and LOST, not to be part of a liberal international club, but because the treaties codify important legal rights for Americans that cannot be secured in other ways.

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