

Now, two years after the federal court did the Legislature's job of congressional redistricting in Texas in 2001, Congressman TOM DELAY is trying to ramrod State Rep. Joe Crabb's bill to redraw congressional district boundaries to favor Republicans.

Originally baiting the move with a ploy to create a new congressional district that ostensibly favors Hispanics in South Texas is something more than crass. The Legislature had its chance to participate two years ago but opted out—and mid-decade is no time to throw Texas' Congressional delegation into chaos.

The leadership in Austin is to blame for the discord last week that sent the 50 or so Texas House members into Oklahoma exile. Their defection is not just arbitrary quorum-busting but in courageous protest of DELAY'S attempt to hijack the Legislature for his own political ego's sake.

Further, as a former federal law enforcement officer, I am very concerned that federal law enforcement entities were dragged into the State's efforts to retrieve Texas House members from across state lines.

Crabb's bill, which has set off a storm of national coverage, asks for full-blown redistricting that will require new rounds of public hearings across the state. Also, new redistricting would no doubt end up back in court and cost taxpayers millions of dollars.

The guarantee is slim that any new redistricting in the Rio Grande Valley will benefit minorities Statewide since redrawing district boundaries appears to further disenfranchise minorities—even in the huge proposed border district numbered 23, adjacent to my own. Under the plan, five current Democratic districts are also in jeopardy.

The Legislature ducked redistricting in 2001 and now Republicans are poised for an outright power-grab after the court-drawn plan minimally changed the State's 32-district map, returning 17 Democrats to Congress. And, the court's plan received Justice Department approval.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I wish to commend the Texas state legislators who stood up to this attempted power-grab and hope that the attention of lawmakers at the State and Federal levels returns to the real issues facing our communities—creating jobs, educating our children and ensuring all have access to health care.

SEPTEMBER 11TH
COMMEMORATIVE COIN

HON. STEVEN R. ROTHMAN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 15, 2003

Mr. ROTHMAN. Mr. Speaker, today, I would like to enter into the RECORD an article that appears in the April 29th issue of the Numismatic News entitled "September 11 deserves commemoration on coin." This article was written by my friend, mayor of my hometown of Fair Lawn, and a Bergen County Freeholder in the State of New Jersey, David Ganz. I commend it to the attention of every Member of Congress.

[From the Numismatic News, Apr. 29, 2003]
SEPT. 11 DESERVES COMMEMORATION ON COIN
(By David L. Ganz)

Liberty, Freedom, Justice, Intellect, Ingenuity, Challenge, Capitalism, Success, Glory, Might, Power, America.

The twin towers of the World Trade Center in New York City connoted all of these things—the very reason that the building was a primary target for the extremists and terrorists who murdered thousands of innocents Sept. 11, 2001.

America has avenged the events of that day, when the towers came under attack along with at least two other locations. Without taking anything away from the victims on Flight 93, or those who were at the Pentagon, the aim of Osama Bin Laden and his terrorist crew was the rich symbolism of the World Trade Center—what it stood for.

In any generation, there may be one or two events that are seminal, that define the generation. The bombing of the World Trade Center, the Pentagon and the Flight 93 attack are defining for the United States, for it marks the end of an age of innocence and, perhaps, of a new era of American military might.

The war that we fought in Iraq, now moving toward a complete cessation of hostilities, is a direct outgrowth of the World Trade Center attack and the subsequent nearly futile search for its progenitor, Osama Bin Laden.

H.R. 298 was introduced by Rep. Peter King, R-N.Y., Chair of the House coinage subcommittee, on Jan. 8, "To posthumously award congressional gold medals to government workers and others who responded to the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon and perished and to people aboard United Airlines Flight 93 who helped resist the hijackers and caused the plane to crash, to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in commemoration of the Spirit of America, recognizing the tragic events of September 11, 2001, and for other purposes." Co-sponsor: Rep. Eliot Engel, D-N.Y.

On Feb. 27 it was referred to King's Unit, the Subcommittee on Domestic and International Monetary Policy, Trade, and Technology. Nothing further has been heard from it.

A little more than a year earlier, Rep. Steve Rothman, D-N.J., introduced H.R. 3980 to authorize commemoration of "Events of cataclysmic proportion, as well as epic struggles, [which] have long been commemorated on the coinage of various countries."

Congress has yet to take action on any measure, but it should. It should be more than a national medal that honors those who perished. It should celebrate the majesty of the buildings where they once stood and of what they stood for: above all, Liberty and Freedom, that which its enemies could never destroy.

There are those who believe—some congressional staff members among them—that the events of Sept. 11 should not be commemorated at all, and that we should forget America's darkest hour. Commemoration, their view is, should be reserved for triumphs, not tragedies.

World history and the practices of other nations offers a different perspective. Canada's tombac nickel, for example, issued in 1943, featured a new reverse from the famous Churchill "V" for victory over the Nazi Axis war machine. It came at a dark moment of the war after battles had been lost and when D-Day was more than a year away.

It's more than me, alone, being a cheerleader. Coinstar, who changed the way people dealt with cashing in coins, did a survey last summer which concluded that "more than half (52 percent) of Americans revealed they would prefer to see scenes of the flag raising by firemen at the World Trade Center/Ground Zero over the U.S. Military at Iwo Jima (37 percent)."

More surprising: with younger Americans (18-34) popularity is even stronger, at 63 per-

cent. However, for Americans age 65 and over prefer the U.S. Military at Iwo Jima (50 percent) over World Trade Center (32 percent). The poll, compiled from telephone research among more than 1,000 randomly selected American adults, was conducted by an independent market research firm. It has a margin of error of plus or minus 3.1 percent.

Private enterprise has stepped in where the Congress and the Executive Branch fear to tread. Already, there are colorized versions of the World Trade Center being placed on silver Eagles as well as other coins. The U.S. Mint official position: "The United States Mint does not comment on coin-grading issues or on a colorized coin's current or future value as a collectible item. If you like a colorized coin because of the way it looks, then you may want to add it to your collection. However, if you are primarily concerned about the long-term investment value of a colorized coin, you should contact a reputable coin dealer or coin grading service before you purchase the coin."

What is it that is magical about the twin towers World Trade Center, which at 110 stories tall each were an arresting scene of American power and might in the skyscraper silhouette of New York City's downtown?

The World Trade Center had consisted of seven buildings, one of which was briefly the tallest building on the planet (the towers were not exactly the same height). The twin towers were endless subject of New York skyline scenes that appeared in newspapers, on medals and almost on the New York state quarter.

Designed by Minoru Yamasakui and Emery Roth, the twin towers were part of a complex built in lower Manhattan island that actually constituted the world's largest building complex. Two rectangular twin towers were the most prominent part.

Each 110 stories tall (one also contained a television antennae used by major networks, the building known as 1 WTC was home to the elegant "Windows on the World" restaurant and the antennae, while 2 WTC contained an observation deck that offered an unparalleled view from more than a quarter of a mile up in the air.

One tower was 1,362 feet, the other 1,368 feet in height. Both was completed in 1973 at a cost of more than \$750 million and were owned by the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey.

Wrapped in stainless steel bodies lined with tall, narrow windows, the skyscrapers were state-of-the-art buildings. The Vista hotel complex, part of the center, was the host of numerous New York International coin shows.

Built on a 16-acre site, and going seven stories into the ground (or more than 70 feet into Manhattan bedrock), the twin towers dominated the New York skyline for more than 30 years. That 70-foot drilling was surrounded by a giant bathrhub-like structure that kept out the nearby Hudson River.

In June 2002, just about nine months after the horrific events of Sept. 11, I traveled into Manhattan to go to Ground Zero. As mayor of my municipality (Fair Lawn, N.J.), I was able to travel with the head of our Emergency Management Office, Tom Metzler, and the other members of our Borough Council.

The ostensive reason was to see what terrorist damage could occur, how it could be prevented and to help plan the future. The other reason, more personal, was to stand in the pit of Ground Zero, seven or eight stories beneath sea level, and pay tribute to those who died that freedom might live.

The nearest-height building was the Empire State Building with 102 stories, located several times uptown to the north, and then the Chrysler Building, at 67 stories.

One view of the twin towers is depicted on a drawing presented to the Fine Arts Commission as a possible final design choice for

the New York quarter. Instead, a view featuring the Statue of Liberty superimposed on a New York state map was selected.

Relegated to a third place finish, the towers design shows the Statue of Liberty in New York harbor, the twin towers (including the aerial), misplaced bridges and a too-close proximity of what appears to be a taller Empire state building. The real twin towers always seemed larger than life.

My own memories of the twin towers are long, and varied. By day, Windows on the World was a private restaurant known as the Club at the World Trade Center. I was a member there for about 25 years, joining right after law school. (In fact, right after I was admitted to the bar across the river in Brooklyn, I took my parents, wife and in-laws to a celebratory luncheon at Windows).

At Windows, Kevin Zraleay was first the sommelier, and later the Inhilco director of beverages corporate-wide. He taught a fabulous wine course over a period of a dozen weeks, and I took it. It gave me an appreciation of wine that has lasted a lifetime.

On becoming a club member, I had the privilege of buying wine from them at Cellar cost, and storing it there. I went mostly for older Bordeaux, and had some 1950 Haut Brion as well as 1966 Chateau Gruaud Arose,

and some Louis Jadot burgundies—which were carefully stored in the basement of the center.

That came to a crashing end 10 years ago in 1993 when a car bomb that tried to topple the edifice blew up, destroying portions of the underground parking garage and causing \$300 million in damages, not counting my wine.

When I became president of the American Numismatic Association, I sponsored a board dinner at Windows on the World that allowed me to show off the restored cellar following the explosion. The wine served that night came exclusively from my private reserve, and as best I recall, nine members of the board, their spouses or guests and the professional staff went through three cases of wine, retail value \$2,500. (OK, they did buy the meals from their per diem, but all of the wine was on me.)

Through the years, Windows remained my favorite place to take an overseas client; the food was excellent so long as you stuck to simple dishes like a grilled prime steak or veal chop, less successful with, say, a sauced dish like lobster thermidor. Though never on the menu, except when I first started going there around 1976, their fried zucchini sticks were always available, served in a white

cloth napkin designed to gently blot the oil, but not the flavor.

Just a year before Sept. 11, my wife, Kathy, and I took our first cruise, going from Manhattan to Nova Scotia and back again. We left on the Carnival Line (the Victory) and went down the Hudson River towards the Verrazano Narrows bridge, the Ocean, and the voyage. As we were piloted down, we passed the magnificent structures and Kathy took postcard-like photos showing not only the height of the buildings, but the indelible place that they held in the New York skyline.

It forms the basis for the proposed coin design photograph that accompanies this article—which is done with the assistance of a computerized program that gives the appearance of a raised surface similar to that of a coin.

The Sept. 11 destruction was incredible to watch—and millions saw it happen on television. The rich numismatic connection makes it a story likely to be remembered for years to come. It should be a story that ends with a commemorative coin being struck to honor the American dream that continues to tower, even without those twin buildings.