

Opinion



Letter Drop

- Our Readers Sound Off

Questions to ponder

To the Free Press and its Readers:

How long are you prepared to wage war and occupy conquered countries to establish governments acceptable to the U.S.? Do you know your history well enough to remember that it took many years for our U.S.A. to become a republic with a very intricate and complicated constitution designed to protect the rights of the poor and destitute as well as the rich and powerful, a government of the people and for the people? Our ancestors/predecessors would have lived for years under suppression while they developed the will of self determination and finally in the mid 1770's began serious rebellion. It would be many years later on this day, Sept. 17, 1887 before the ratification of our constitution. And then, history records many long and bitter battles in the halls of government and even a great civil war to get where we are today.

Would we have succeeded in developing the expertise and will power to embark on such an unheard of experiment combining democracy and the republican form of government we now have, if a foreign nation had come in and fought our battles and demanded we constitute a form of government that suited them?

Does our constitution give our leaders the authority to invade other nations without justification? Does just the 'possibility' of danger really justify invasion? Can we legitimately compare Iraq with Hitler and his allies? How many dictators must we conquer to feel safe? We pursued the terrorist organizations with a vengeance, with justification, and have been able to attain at least a reprieve from their physical assault on our nation. However, have we really won the war? I'm afraid there are really no true winners in war! We have broken their backs and appear to have broken their connections with one another. But, they have enslaved us in fear and taken many of our daily freedoms away.

Should we invade Iraq with the intention of overthrowing their government and establishing one that suits us? Are we prepared to spend 5, 10, or even 20 years occupying the territory until they have learned how to govern themselves? Are you willing to sacrifice your sons and daughters to such a long and difficult endeavor? Can we afford such a commitment? If we aren't careful the terrorists and Saddam Hussein will accomplish what Joe Stalin and his successors were unable to do, "Destroy us from within".

**Ken Poland
Gem
(Letter #130)**

Comments to any opinions expressed on this page are encouraged. Mail them to the Colby Free Press, 155 W. 5th St., Colby, Kan., 67701. Or e-mail td@nwkansas.com or pdecker@nwkansas.com.

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COLBY FREE PRESS

155 W. Fifth (USPS 120-920) (785) 462-3963
Colby, Kan. 67701

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State award-winning newspaper, General Excellence, Design & Layout Excellence, Column Writing, Editorial Writing, Sports Columns, News, Photography.
Official newspaper of Thomas County, Colby, Brewster and Rexford.

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THE COLBY FREE PRESS (USPS 120-920) is published daily, every Monday through Friday, except the day observed for Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day and New Year's Day, by Haynes Publishing Co., 155 W. Fifth, Colby, Kan., 67701.

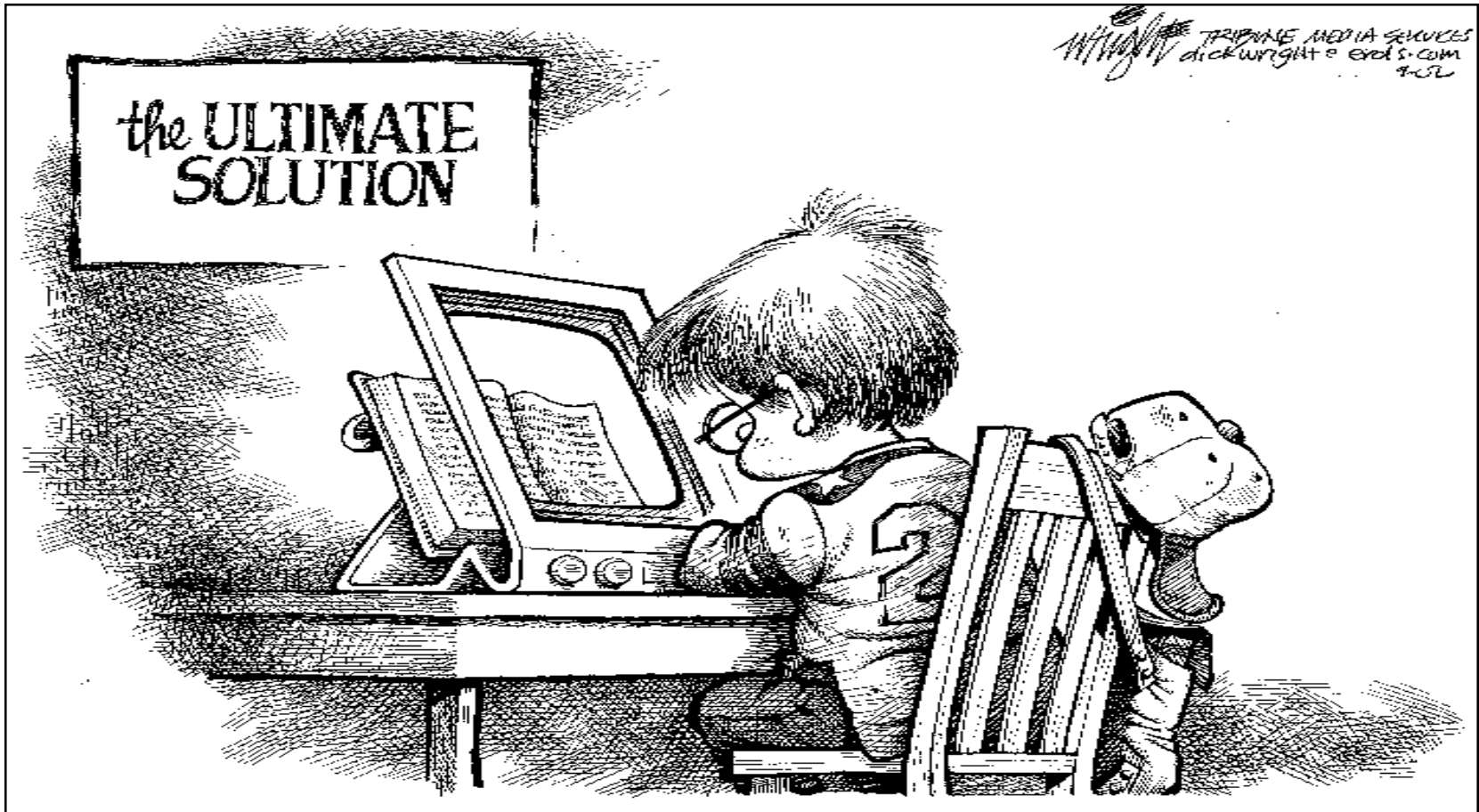
PERIODICALS POSTAGE is paid at Colby, Kan. 67701, and at additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Colby Free Press, 155 W. Fifth, Colby, Kan., 67701.

THE BUSINESS OFFICE at 155 W. Fifth is open from 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Monday to Friday, closed Saturday and Sunday.

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SUBSCRIPTION RATES: In Colby by carrier: 4 months \$32, 8 months \$47, 12 months \$64. By mail with in Colby and the nine-county region of Thomas, Sheridan, Decatur, Rawlins, Cheyenne, Sherman, Wallace, Logan and Gove counties: 4 months \$44, 8 months \$56, 12 months \$72. Other Kansas counties and surrounding states: 4 months \$51, 8 months \$61, 12 months \$75. All other states, \$75, 12 months.

Nor'West Newspapers
Haynes Publishing Company



Invade Iraq? 38 say no, 26 yes



Tom Dreiling

- My Turn

SIXTY-FOUR people took part in the survey I started earlier this month in this column to get a reading on the question, "Should we invade Iraq?" The question generated far more responses than I had figured. I thought if I interested two dozen people I would be satisfied. Nationally, Americans in general aren't yet ready to commit our uniformed men and women to fight Saddam Hussein. Free Press readers echo that sentiment. Of the 64, 38 said NO to invading Iraq and 26 said YES. From the outset, the NO voices stepped out in front and managed to maintain the lead. We've heard from readers in the following areas: St. Francis, McDonald, Atwood, Kanorado, Goodland, Brewster, Colby, Gem, Rexford, Hoxie, Oakley, Winona, Monument, Sharon Springs, Wallace, Burlington, Colo., Victoria, WaKeeney, Quinter. What was striking about the result was the fact that this is all pretty much "Bush Country" but the President's support for an invasion isn't what would have been expected.

Some of the comments, since the last column, included:

√"No, no, no — a thousand times no. Wars do nothing but cause moral and financial bankruptcy." (anonymous)

√"Yes, (anonymous)

√"My vote about an Iraq invasion is NO. I think our country should continue to be a peace seeking country." (The writer gave his name but didn't indicate if it could be used)

√"No." (anonymous, but did give her name)

√"No." (Ken Poland of Gem, by telephone, and who also emailed a letter to the Free Press which appears in the Letter Drop column on this page today)

√"I agree with Henry Siebert. Saddam has side stepped the UN Security Council's conditions since the end of the Gulf War in 1991. If it takes war to make him comply, then God help him. So put me down for a 'YES' vote." (Terry Hoft)

√A Colby husband and wife write: "Please put down two 'no' votes. We wonder why all this energy to convince everyone to go to war with Iraq, isn't being used to find bin Laden once and for all? We aren't finished in Afghanistan... why are we starting in Iraq? And if nuclear weapons are the fear, what's the next target? North Korea? India? Pakistan? And who gave us the right? God? The November election? Lots of scary questions and too few answers. Let's not go to real WAR so uninformed. Thank you for doing this!" (anonymous)

√A NO response from Steve Sheridan of Oakley included a note, in part that reads: "One of my closest friends has visited the Iraqiian people for the last 10 years, bringing to the poor children of Iraq who are suffering the most because of the lack of necessary medicine and because of the ungodly sanctions against the poor children of Iraq. The important answer to your question is what action would Jesus do and because I am claiming to be a Christian than my actions must reflect the love of Jesus 'to pray for and love my enemies,' to practice the spiritual and corporal works of mercy. A war against Iraq will not hurt Saddam, only the poor people of Iraq who are not Saddam's friends. I pray and work and hope and dream of Christ's peace, mercy and justice everyday of my life here on the Lord's Earth."

Thanks to all of you who responded by telephone, by email, by regular mail, by stopping me in stores, on the street, even after Sunday mass or coming by the office. It was good of each of you to take time to become involved. Now, stay tuned to the national debate and see what direction Mr. Bush takes — to wage war or not.

ON THE lighter side...

Jacob is 85 and Rebecca is 79 and all excited about their decision to get married. They go for a stroll to discuss the wedding and on the way go past a drug-store. Jacob suggests that they go in. He addresses the man behind the counter:

"Are you the owner?"

The pharmacist answers, "Yes."

Jacob: "Do you sell heart medication?"

Pharmacist: "Of course we do."

Jacob: "How about medicine for circulation?"

Pharmacist: "All kinds."

Jacob: "Medicine for rheumatism?"

Pharmacist: "Definitely."

Jacob: "How about Viagra?"

Pharmacist: "Of course."

Jacob: "Medicine for memory?"

Pharmacist: "Yes, a large variety."

Jacob: "What about vitamins and sleeping pills?"

Pharmacist: "Absolutely."

Jacob: "Perfect! We'd like to register here for our wedding gifts."

I WATCHED with interest the debate between Scott Ritter, former U.S. weapons inspector, and the host of Talk Back Live, Arthel Neville (spelling is suspect) on Tuesday afternoon's show and it wasn't very pretty. Ritter chewed her up and spit her out and I think it got the best of her. In my opinion, she is not much of a host and much less a debater. She absolutely came into that debate without any preparation. Lightweight, at best. Audience reaction seemed to side with Ritter.

But that's pretty much what cable talk shows are all about — firing from the hip, instead of he lip. But what else is new.

HAVE you been watching that goofy television commercial showing the guys with burning faces after shaving? One puts the garden hose to his face, another drowns his face in a bowl of milk, and another uses a fire extinguisher! What in the world are they shaving with? A pocket knife? A pitch fork? A floor sander?

I've been shaving for more years than a lot of people have even been around and I've never come away with my face feeling like I needed the local fire department to give me relief.

HAPPY Birthday to...

Sept. 18 — Jennifer Selby

Sept. 19 — Joel Ohlrogge, Lacey Cooper, Kelly Sloan, Samantha Shannon

HAPPY Anniversary to...

Sept. 18 — Curtis & Loraine Berry

Sept. 19 — Bernard & Treasa Baker, Willard & Maxine Moore

Congratulations!

Call us a 462-3963 or email td@nwkansas.com to have your special day mentioned. Also, please keep us advised of any changes (deaths, name changes, etc.) so we can maintain accuracy with this calendar. Thanks, for your cooperation!

HAVE a good evening!

Dreiling is publisher of the Free Press. His column appears Wednesdays and Fridays.

No need to overreact

Tommie Berger

- Of Interest to Hunters

I recently returned from a two-day Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) Symposium held in Denver. It was a very informative workshop and it provided the most up to date information on this wildlife disease. I would like to devote a column to some of the information provided at this symposium.

First off, Chronic Wasting Disease is not a new disease. It has been around since the 1960s when it was first identified and it may have been around long before that, nobody really knows. It is one form of a series of diseases called Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies. Probably the most widely publicized and known is Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy or mad cow disease. Scrapie in sheep is another TSE form, as is Cruetzfeldt-Jakob disease in humans. These TSE diseases are a group of fatal transmissible neurodegenerative disorders that affect the brain and central nervous system.

Chronic Wasting Disease began as an obscure disease in Colorado and has expanded to affect free-ranging and farmed big game animals in a number of locations throughout the central U.S. and Canada. The endemic area (the area where the disease really started) is northeastern Colorado and southeastern Wyoming. In the endemic area of Colorado, the infection rate averages about 5 percent in the mule deer population and less than 1 percent in the elk population. Observed trends suggest both prevalence and distribution of CWD in mule deer has slowly increased over the last decade in northeastern Colorado. In Wyoming, the prevalence of the disease in the endemic area was 12 percent in mule deer, 16 percent in white-tailed deer, and less than 3 percent in elk. While the disease appears to be expanding its range within Wyoming, annual prevalence rates have not increased.

Chronic Wasting Disease has been identified in free-ranging cervids (elk and deer) in only four other states and one Canadian province, which include Nebraska, South Dakota, Wisconsin, New Mexico, and Saskatchewan. This disease has also been detected in farmed animals (game farms) but only in

elk. To date, no positive deer have been tested on any game farms except for deer trapped in fenced enclosures built for elk farming. The first detection in the U.S. of Chronic Wasting Disease in farmed animals was in 1997 in an elk herd in South Dakota. Since then the disease has been identified in 22 additional farmed elk herds in 6 states to include Colorado, Kansas, Montana, Nebraska, Oklahoma, and South Dakota.

Some of the situations of the CWD contamination in free-ranging deer and elk can be directly linked to adjacent game farm contamination while several in Wisconsin and New Mexico cannot yet be linked to any direct source of contamination.

Because this disease has spread to the western slope of the Rockies and east of the Mississippi River, it has garnered a lot of attention and many state and Federal agencies are involved in surveillance and testing programs to monitor the continued spread of CWD. Currently, the only reliable test for the disease requires brain or brain stem tissue which in turn requires the animal to be dead.

There are only a few labs in the country set up for CWD testing and therefore, testing of large numbers of animals is limited and turn around times are lengthy. The cost of the tests are reasonable in price and more testing facilities are being put on line as quickly as they can. It appears that in 2002, reasonable testing availability may be a problem but by hunting seasons 2003 they expect the situation to be much better. Research on better testing methods, live animal testing, field testing kits, and the like are ongoing at a rapid pace.

ing at a rapid pace.

Research has been conducted and continues in regards to transmissibility of CWD to humans. Sheep scrapie has been around for centuries and there has never been a case documented of it being passed on to a human.

However, the transmission of BSE to humans in Europe (causing a variant form of CJD) has created a concern about possible transmission of CWD to humans. Laboratory tests show that CWD acts similar to BSE in cultures but investigation found no strong evidence for a casual link between CWD and any of the CJD illness in patients to date, even those who regularly consumed venison. One interesting note, in Britain, 60 million people were exposed to BSE and at this point in time only 120 people have died from the disease. That is a very low infection rate!

The one primary point that I got out of this symposium was to keep this disease in prospective. Although not new, there is a lot still unknown about CWD. But, there are a lot of other wildlife diseases out there that we have learned to live with that can affect us: brucellosis, bovine tuberculosis, roundworm, sylvatic plague, rabies, hanta-virus, etc.

We manage risk every day. Just think about what risks we take every time we go hunting: we might get killed in an auto accident, we might get shot, we might cut ourselves with our hunting knife or broadhead, we might fall and break our neck, or we might drown. All of these risks might be a higher probability than contracting CWD from an elk or deer we eat.

So, you might ask, should we be concerned? Sure, we need to be vigilant and cautious but lets not over-react.

Leonard Hopper, with the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks, based in Colby, submitted this column written by Tommie Berger, fisheries biologist also with Wildlife and Parks at Wilson Reservoir. Hopper said he believed the information would be of interest to area deer hunters.