

Opinion



Letters

Taxes...and more

To the Colby Free Press:

In the Wednesday, April 14 edition of the *Colby Free Press* in the middle of the editorial page standing out in large letters it read, **I need to hear from you.** Then I saw it was from our Representative, Jim Morrison in his column *Capitol Review*.

I am for spending money on education — even if it's my own. I can see from what Jim says that it would cost less if the state income tax were raised instead of property taxes. The sales taxes are getting so high I get squeamish if raising them is even mentioned. It makes me think of what a radio announcer, Jim Martin from Kansas said one day on KGIL Radio — 1260 in the San Fernando Valley, "Some day the government will take all of your paycheck and give you back what it doesn't want!"

The super-rich — the top 1 percent — who get well over half the tax cuts, should be allowed to participate in our democracy. They get the use of appliances, cars and services of all kinds, yet proportionately, they pay less than the poorest of taxpayers. They would feel better if we didn't scrape and bow to them by allowing them so many tax exemptions. By super-rich, I mean comparatively that even \$200,000 is a poor income.

Some people can't afford a new appliance or appointments with a dentist, yet the wealthy don't want to give up one of their ten cars or one of their eight world-scattered houses for anything.

Education should be their concern because they benefit from it most and can even open the door to others the know-how into luxurious living and help instead of inhibiting the improvement of society.

But can that be done before the next election?

Can the present president turn the management of Iraq over to the United Nations soon enough?

Soon enough, so that "No Child Left Behind." money can be released from the federal government for the education needed in Kansas and the rest of this country?

Soon enough, instead of setting us back on the road to the dark ages?

Let Iraq, with the help of the United Nations, have its own pattern of democracy "with no child left behind." Let them manage their own oil and let's spend our own money on education and something to eat.

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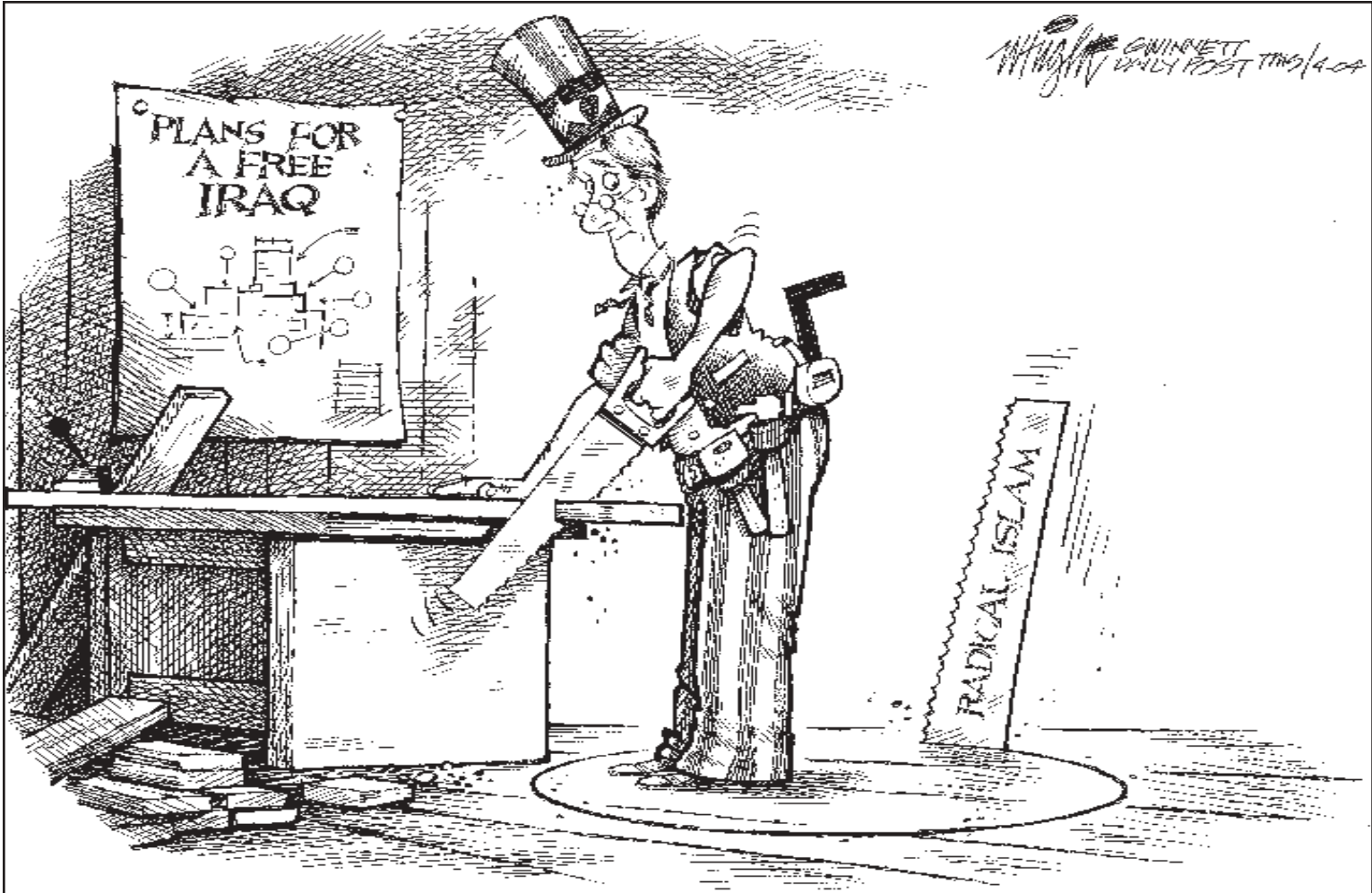
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Old story changes with the times

Remember "The Ant and the Grasshopper?"

I know there have been many versions circulating about the story of the ant and the grasshopper, but when I received this one — well — it was too good to pass up.

Hopefully, not everyone has seen these two versions. Sadly, though, there is a lot of truth to the modern version.

Here it is:

OLD VERSION

The ant works hard in the withering heat all summer long, building his house and laying up supplies for the winter. The grasshopper thinks he's a fool and laughs and dances and plays the summer away. Come winter, the ant is warm and well fed. The grasshopper has no food or shelter, so he dies out in the cold.

MORAL OF THE STORY: Be responsible for yourself!

MODERN VERSION

The ant works hard in the withering heat all summer long, building his house and laying up supplies for the winter.

The grasshopper thinks he's a fool and laughs and dances and plays the summer away.

Come winter, the shivering grasshopper calls a press conference and demands to know why the ant should be allowed to be warm and well fed



Patty Decker

● Deep Thoughts

while others are cold and starving.

CBS, NBC, and ABC show up to provide pictures of the shivering grasshopper next to a video of the ant in his comfortable home with a table filled with food.

America is stunned by the sharp contrast. How can this be, that in a country of such wealth, this poor grasshopper is allowed to suffer so?

Kermit the Frog appears on Oprah with the grasshopper, and everybody cries when they sing, "It's Not Easy Being Green."

Jesse Jackson stages a demonstration in front of the ant's house where the news stations film the group singing, "We shall overcome."

Jesse then has the group kneel down to pray to God for the grasshopper's sake.

Tom Daschle and John Kerry exclaim in an interview with Peter Jennings that the ant has gotten rich off the back of the grasshopper, and

both call for an immediate tax hike on the ant to make him pay his "fair share."

Finally, the EEOC drafts the "Economic Equity and Anti-Grasshopper Act," retroactive to the beginning of the summer. The ant is fined for failing to hire a proportionate number of green bugs and, having nothing left to pay his retroactive taxes, his home is confiscated by the government.

Hillary gets her old law firm to represent the grasshopper in a defamation suit against the ant, and the case is tried before a panel of federal judges that Bill appointed from a list of single-parent welfare recipients.

The ant loses the case.

The story ends as we see the grasshopper finishing up the last bits of the ant's food while the government house he is in, which just happens to be the ant's old house, crumbles around him because he doesn't maintain it.

The ant has disappeared in the snow.

The grasshopper is found dead in a drug-related incident and the house, now abandoned, is taken over by a gang of spiders who terrorize the once peaceful neighborhood.

MORAL OF THE STORY: Vote Republican *****

Patty Decker is editor of the Free Press. Her column appears on Thursdays.

Some politicians are out of step

Judie Brown

● Religion and Politics

was the real deal, and they stayed.

Okay. So much for the detour into basic theology. Today, far too many Catholics seem to have lost touch with that basic teaching. And the lost sheep include far too many Catholics in public office who think they can vote pro-abortion during the week and sashay shamelessly up to the altar on Sunday. Sen. John Kerry of Massachusetts is the current poster boy of this pro-abortion Catholic flock. One week, he rolls into Mass 10 minutes late with a noisy entourage, then makes a quick trip to the altar for Holy Communion, then bounces out to hit the ski slopes. The next week, he's photographed receiving communion at a non-Catholic church. That's also a no-no. But Sen. Kerry is not alone.

Sen. Dick Durbin of Illinois is getting a fair amount of attention in his home state. Catholics in Springfield picketed his church there. So he sought out a friendlier church in Chicago (read: one where the tenets of the faith are subject to negotiation) where his die-hard pro-abortion stance seems irrelevant. A new group is now organizing to picket that church. Maybe he's not getting the truth inside the building, but he's sure going to get an earful on the way in and out.

Gov. Kathleen Sebelius of Kansas vetoed a bill that would have imposed minimal health and medical standards on abortion clinics in her state. She is Catholic, and pro-abortion. The legislature is again contemplating a bill that would enact such requirements. The governor is promising a repeat veto performance if the representatives of the people of Kansas dare approve what is considered a pro-life measure.

Gov. Jennifer Granholm of Michigan is also a pro-abortion Catholic who has made questionable use of the veto pen. A local group has a web site that follows the ongoing inconsistencies that unavoidably dog someone who proclaims both the Catholic faith and the so-called right to choose abortion. Granholm's case is particularly troublesome, since she has served as a Eucharistic minister. That's right. This woman, who is pro-abortion, has stood before her fellow parishioners, presented the Holy Eucharist to them and announced, "The Body of Christ."

Hello? Does she really believe it? Does Durban? Sebelius? Kerry? Does every Catholic priest and bishop really believe it? Aha! That's the real question. In the pro-life movement, it is often said, "If you really believe abortion is murder, then act like it." A similar sentiment should be expressed to Catholic priests and

bishops who are lukewarm about defending the Church's teaching about Holy Communion: "If you really believe the Holy Eucharist is the actual Body and Blood of Jesus Christ, then act like it!"

We are told, for instance, that Archbishop Sean O'Malley of Boston has said pro-abortion Catholics should not receive Communion. Yet Sen. Kerry, a pro-abortion Catholic continues to do so. Granted, Archbishop O'Malley is still the new guy in town, but with high-profile pro-abortion Catholics such as John Kerry and Ted Kennedy in his flock, he surely knows that their behavior merits his extremely vigilant scrutiny.

We are told that Cardinal Francis George of Chicago has met privately with Dick Durbin, hopefully for some remedial catechism instruction on the Church's teachings on the sanctity of human life. That's well and good, but how long will it take before something is said publicly to this man, and the countless others, who very publicly promote legal abortion and very publicly receive Holy Communion?

That priests and bishops are within bounds in withholding Communion from such persons is beyond question. It's in the rules: Canon Law, in this case. Canon 915 says those, "who obstinately persist in manifest grave sin are not to be admitted to communion." Abortion, the Church says, is gravely evil, adding that "formal cooperation in an abortion constitutes a grave offense."

Pro-abortion Catholic politicians are fond of saying they "personally oppose" abortion, but are unwilling to stand in the way of others who seek them. Is that formal cooperation? Well, voting to expend tax dollars on abortion and abortion-related matters certainly seems to qualify. Abortion is, after all, a matter of life and death. Yet the Gallup organization tells us it "consistently ranks among the least important issues to the electorate in choosing a president." Americans have become indifferent. American Catholics, too, have become indifferent. Is it because too many priests and bishops, through their silence, have allowed this indifference to fester?

"I am the bread of life," said Christ. The apostles knew it was the real deal, and they stayed. Do the apostles' modern day successors share that conviction? Or have they, as did many of Jesus' fair-weather followers, simply drifted away? It's certainly a question to ponder at this time of year, when Christians commemorate the Lord's Passion and Resurrection.

Judie Brown is the president of American Life League. http://www.catholic.org/cathcom/national_story.php?id=7267. This opinion was forwarded to the Free Press by Colby resident Joan Albers at geojo@st-tel.net.