

Opinion



Free Press Viewpoint

Many Americans ready to walk out of Iraq now

Even as the Bush administration pushes through the transfer of power to a new Iraqi government, it looks like much of America is ready to give up on Iraq.

Apparently, we see Iraq as just another foreign adventure unworthy of our attention — or our sons.

Americans, in increasing numbers, see this war as difficult and deadly, but not worth fighting.

The administration has committed itself, and an early withdrawal is unlikely, leaving our troops in a hostile land with increasingly less support.

The winner here is likely to be the terrorist mob, who will see many of their objectives won if Iraq falls into anarchy and confusion as Americans withdraw.

At this point, it matters little if we got into the war because of faulty intelligence or the president's supposed desire to finish what his father started. It matters not whether Iraq was the right battleground.

Nearly a thousand American soldiers have given their lives in this effort. Can we afford to walk away?

War is a terrible thing, and the Iraq war has been harder by far on Iraq than it has been on us. But now the terrorists seem to be winning. They have honed their tactics and driven for the jugular of the western coalition.

By randomly and viciously killing most any hostage they can capture from a foreign land, the terrorists are betting that the West has no stomach for prolonged fighting.

This is not the kind of war our armies are designed to fight. We believe in large-unit war, where divisions sweep in and conquer objectives. We won that war in the first few weeks in Iraq. President Bush declared it over, but he warned then that we faced years of tough fighting ahead.

Now we see that he was right. The terrorists toppled a government in Spain, and they would like nothing better than to see "regime change" in America and England.

The people running this war are not Iraqi, but Arab terrorists aligned with Osama bin Laden. His chief henchman was the one who bent before the camera and sawed the head off a living American hostage.

These tactics will continue until we — the coalition and the Iraqi government — find and kill or capture the terrorists. They have the upper hand, because they are perfectly willing to use any disgusting tactic against us. The more cruel and bloody, in fact, the better.

We, on the other hand, raise a ruckus — and rightly so — if our troops embarrass or harass enemy captives.

That is the difference between our cultures — the Arab terrorists we face are barbaric and uncivilized. They believe in their cause and they believe they will win.

We may be too civilized to fight them, but we must. Great civilizations can and do crumble when they lose the will to fight for their freedom.

It's an ugly thing, and hard to know when it is necessary. History teaches that it sometimes is.

We need to ask ourselves if this is the time, because if we fail in Iraq, it's quite likely that the terrorists will regroup and return to our shores, and soon.

Steve Haynes
Nor'West Newspapers

Comments to any opinions expressed on this page are encouraged. Mail them to the Colby Free Press, 155 W. 5th St., Colby, Kan., 67701. Ore-mail td@nwkansas.com. You can also fax 785-462-7749, or call 462-3963. All submissions must carry a signature of the writer, an address and a daytime telephone number. Unsigned letters or other unsigned material cannot be published.

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.

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THE COLBY FREE PRESS (USPS 120-920) is published every Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and 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.

MEMBER OF THE ASSOCIATED PRESS, which is exclusively entitled to the use for publication of all news credited to it or not otherwise herein. Member Kansas Press Association, Inland Press Association and National Newspaper Association.

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.

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Talk about an opportunity...

Tom Dreiling

• My Turn



David sings tenor in the Gaither Vocal Band, which, if you follow gospel music, is one of the foremost quartets in the country.

The Texas native lives near Nashville with wife Lori and their three young children. He is a graduate of Baylor University and directed the Baylor Religious Hour Choir while pursuing a concert ministry.

Here in Colby, tickets can be purchased at The His Shop. In advance they are \$18 for the Artists Circle and \$12 general admission. At the door the price is \$25 and \$20. Group tickets can be had at a discount rate for 15 or more.

Any money left over after all expenses are satisfied, will be used to help Colby resident Kristi Pollonais with her medical expenses. Kristi is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Rich Epp of our community.

Do yourself a favor. Don't, repeat — **don't** — miss this concert. It's a once in a lifetime opportunity.

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HEY, why not bring the family to Colby for the big Fourth of July fireworks display at the Thomas County Fairgrounds. The Sunday night "light the sky" show is expected to commence around 10 p.m. If it's anything like past shows, it'll be a goodie once again.

-td-

SADDAM Huessin is now in the hands of the Iraqis. He insists he is still president of Iraq. He says the real culprit is Bush (as in George W.). I would much rather be in George W.'s shoes, facing criticism from Saddam, then in Saddam

shoes facing the noose from fellow Iraqis.

-td-

ISEE where at least one medical expert thinks Americans are not exposing themselves to enough sun. That's a twist! Of course his comments and reasoning were cast aside as folly by others who study the effects of the sun on the skin of humans. So, like eggs that were condemned to "egg hell" some time back and then returned to favor, now they are beginning to wonder if we aren't shielding ourselves too much from the sun. I'll be interesting to see how long it takes some skin care manufacturer to come up with something called 'sun unblocker.'

-td-

I THINK Saddam Hussein would be a good candidate for one of those television survivor shows.

-td-

BACK to the basics, maybe?

Rick, fresh out of accounting school, went to an interview for a good paying job. The company boss asked various questions about him and his education, but then asked him, "What is three times seven?"

"22," Rick replied. After he left, he double-checked it on his calculator (he knew he should have taken it to the interview!) and realized he wouldn't get the job.

About two weeks later, he got a letter that said he was hired for the job! He was not one to look a gift horse in the mouth, but was still very curious. The next day, he went in and asked why he got the job, even though he got such a simple question wrong. The boss shrugged and said, "Well, you were the closest."

Sad, huh?!

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HAVE a good evening and a good weekend, and don't forget to spend a little time in the church of your choice.

Tom Dreiling is publisher of the Free Press. His columns appear Wednesdays and Fridays.

Ah, those good old days

T D

• At Week's End

Today we will deal with memories, thanks to Joan for sharing. I think you'll particularly like this submission, especially those of us with a few years under our belts. - td

My Mom used to cut chicken, chop eggs and spread mayo on the same cutting board with the same knife and no bleach, but we didn't seem to get food poisoning.

My Mom used to defrost hamburger on the counter and I used to eat it raw sometimes too, but I can't remember getting E-coli.

Almost all of us would have rather gone swimming in the lake instead of a pristine pool (talk about boring).

The term cell phone would have conjured up a phone in a jail cell, and a pager was the school PA system.

We all took gym, not PE. and risked permanent injury with a pair of high top Ked's (only worn in gym) instead of having cross-training athletic shoes with air cushion soles and built in light reflectors. I can't recall any injuries but they must have happened because they tell us how much safer we are now.

Flunking gym was not an option... even for stupid kids! I guess PE must be much harder than gym.

Every year, someone taught the whole school a lesson by running in the halls with leather soles on linoleum tile and hitting the wet spot. How much better off would we be today if we only knew we could have sued the school system.

Speaking of school, we all said prayers and the pledge, and staying in detention after school caught all sorts of negative attention. We must have had horribly damaged psyches.

I can't understand it. Schools didn't offer 14 year olds an abortion or condoms (we wouldn't have known what either was anyway), but they did give us a couple of baby aspirin and cough syrup if we started getting the sniffles. What an

archaic health system we had then.

Remember school nurses? Ours wore a hat and everything.

I thought that I was supposed to accomplish something before I was allowed to be proud of myself.

I just can't recall how bored we were without computers, PlayStation, Nintendo, X-box or 270 digital cable stations.

I must be repressing that memory as I try to rationalize through the denial of the dangers could have befallen us as we trekked off each day about a mile down the road to some guy's vacant 20, built forts out of branches and pieces of plywood, made trails, and fought over who got to be the Lone Ranger. What was that property owner thinking, letting us play on that lot? He should have been locked up for not putting up a fence around the property, complete with a self-closing gate and an infrared intruder alarm.

Oh yeah... and where was the Benadryl and sterilization kit when I got that bee sting? I could have been killed!

We played king of the hill on piles of gravel left on vacant construction sites and when we got hurt, Mom pulled out the 48-cent bottle of mercurochrome and then we got our butt spanked. Now it's a trip to the emergency room, followed by a 10-day dose of a \$49 bottle of antibiotics and then Mom calls the attorney to sue the contractor for leaving a horribly vicious pile of gravel where it was such a threat.

We didn't act up at the neighbor's house either because if we did, we got our butt spanked (physical abuse) here too, and then we got our butt spanked again when we got home.

Dad drove a car with leaded gas.

Our music had to be left inside when we went out to play and I am sure that I nearly exhausted my imagination a couple of times when we went on two-week vacations. I should probably sue the folks now for the danger they put us in when we all slept in campgrounds in the family tent. (Or took naps in the car with one child up in the back window, another in the back seat, and the youngest in the floorboard.)

Summers were spent behind the push lawnmower and I didn't even know that mowers came with motors until I was 13 and we got one without an automatic blade-stop or an auto-drive.

How sick were my parents? Of course my parents weren't the only psychos. I recall Bob from next door coming over and doing his tricks on the front stoop just before he fell off. Little did his Mom know that she could have owned our house. Instead she picked him up and swatted him for being such a goof. It was a neighborhood run amuck.

To top it off, not a single person I knew had ever been told that they were from a dysfunctional family. How could we possibly have known that? We needed to get into group therapy and anger management classes?

We were obviously so duped by so many societal ills, that we didn't even notice that the entire country wasn't taking Prozac! How did we survive?

Yep, times has changed — and did someone say "for the better?" Hah!

Got something for "At Week's End?" Please send it to td@nwkansas.com, mail to 155 W. Fifth, Colby 67701, call 462-3963 or fax 462-7749.