# Opinion

## Your turn

### **History lesson**

Carol Rahn

Colby

Matt Dickson, in his Nov. 15 article about CCC's strong start in basketball writes, "On Friday in a match-up of Roman warrior mascots Colby (Trojans) defeated the Northwestern Lady Spartans 109-43."

Now I may be picking a nit or two, but neither the Spartans nor the Trojans were Roman warriors. Admittedly Troy, Sparta, and Rome were all known for their military prowess, but they were military mights at different times in history. They were located in different areas of the Mediterranean basin, spoke different languages, and probably employed different military tactics and used different weaponry.

Troy, which was located on the western coast of Asia Minor (now Turkey) was a military power in the 13th and 12th centuries BC. Sparta was a city state in what is now Greece and was a formidable foe to its neighbors in the fourth century B.C. The Roman Empire was at its strongest during the latter half of the last century B.C until about the fourth century A.D. Just because all three cities were in the Mediterranean area, were strong militarily, and existed before the year 1000 does not mean they are the same.

I think it is wonderful for schools and colleges to have team mascots. They offer a great way to boost school spirit. But I also think it's important that the school be correctly informed about said mascot. After all, isn't education the primary purpose of our schools and colleges? The least a student can learn is what their school mascot correctly represents.

And congratulations to the Colby Trojans basketball teams for their great playing.

#### About those letters . . .

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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 jvannostrand@nwkansas.com or pdecker@nw kansas.com.

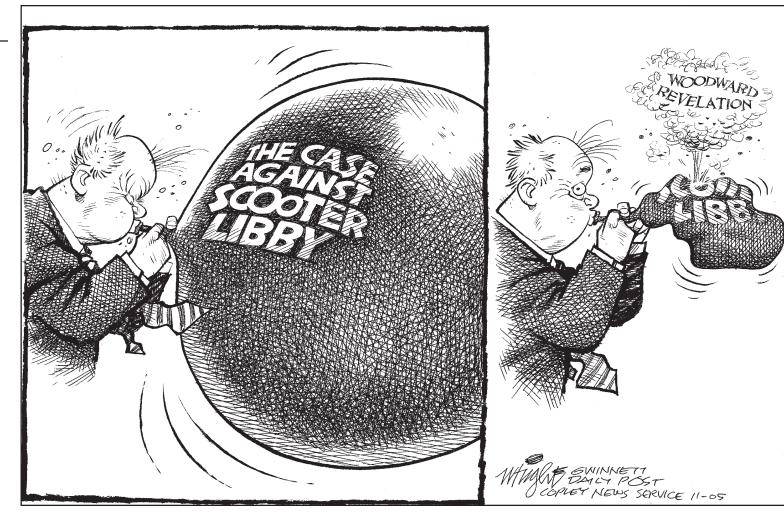
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State Rep. Jim Morrison, State Capitol Building, 303 SW 10th St. Rm. 171-W, Topeka 66612. 785/296-7676 e mail: jmorriso@ink.org web: www.ink.org/



### A luxury to say "One nation under God"

As 27-year-old Ret. Army Captain David Holden held his prosthetic leg and boot in his hand he reminded me how often Americans take freedom for granted. He also reminded me why Americans celebrate Thanksgiving.

Holden spoke to a standing room only crowd during a revival service at Hoxie's Living Word Fellowship Sunday evening. He shared how he'd witnessed the bombing deaths of two fellow soldiers in Iraq, as well as the loss of his right foot and part of his leg.

Holden's injury took place while serving in the United States Infantry and commanding a platoon of 200 men. He said as he lay face down in a pool of blood, God spoke to him saying he would not die because his life had a definite purpose.

A student at Brownsville Revival School of Ministry in Pensacola, Fla., Holden and 14 fellow students spent time with area residents this past weekend. During his testimony, Holden said it's the shed blood of American soldiers which allow us to worship freely in our nation. He also said it's the shed blood of Jesus Christ that offers us forgiveness and salvation. For these two sacrifices I will be eternally thankful.

While each and every American has the right to support the war in Iraq or not, each and every American needs to support the soldiers fighting it. Just because at this moment in time America has an all volunteer military does not give us the right not to support our soldiers.

Having spent two Thanksgivings on foreign soil as a military dependent, I have a thorough understanding about our luxury of being able to say "One nation under God."



God's presence in our nation.

The history I know tells me about 102 Pilgrims who left Plymouth, England, Sept. 6, 1620, to search civil and religious liberty. My version of history tells me about the United States' first civil government document, the Mayflower Compact, signed just before the Pilgrims' landing Dec. 11, 1620. That compact shows the Pilgrims' faith rested in God's hands as they founded colonies for the "advancement of the Christian faith." Proof of the Pilgrims' intent is the compact's opening - "In the name of God. Amen."

Are our children learning about the Pilgrims' gratefulness to the Indians for teaching them how to live through their first harsh New England winter? Are they learning the reason the Pilgrims hosted a three-day feast with their Indian friends was to thank God for their bounty? Sure, half of the Pilgrims died that first year, but those who survived remembered to thank God.

only after President Abraham Lincoln walked

Presidency) I asked the people to pray for me. I was not a Christian. When I buried my son, the severest trial of my life, I was not a Christian. But when I went to Gettysburg and saw the graves of thousands of soldiers, I then and there consecrated myself to Christ."

It was Lincoln who proclaimed our nation's need to reflect on our reasons to thank God for everything we have, particularly the luxury of worshipping our Lord in a free nation.

"It has seemed to me fit and proper that they should be solemnly, reverently, and gratefully acknowledged, as with one heart and one voice, by the whole American people. I do therefore invite my fellow-citizens in every part of the United States, and also those who are at sea and those who are sojourning in foreign lands, to set apart and observe the last Thursday of November next as a day of thanks giving and praise to our beneficent Father who dwelleth in the heavens. And I recommend to them that while offering up the ascriptions justly due to Him for such singular deliverances and blessings they do also, with humble penitence for our national perverseness and disobedience, commend to His tender care all those who have become widows, orphans, mourners, or sufferers in the lamentable civil strife in which we are unavoidably engaged, and fervently implore the interposition of the Almighty Hand to heal the wounds of the nation and to restore it, as soon Are our nation's children being taught it was as may be consistent with the Divine purposes, to the full enjoyment of peace, harmony, tran-

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Holden's comments raised the question about whether our nation's children are getting a complete or watered down version of history about among the graves of 60,000 Americans who sacrificed their lives the first week of July 1863 at Gettysburg did our president convert to Christianity?

History documents Lincoln's comments to a friend as "When I left Springfield (to assume the

quillity, and union," Lincoln said in his 1863 Proclamation of Thanksgiving. (Source: Internet)

So as you celebrate Thanksgiving this week, please pray Americans wake up and put God back in our government and schools.

### The search for Utopia

There are a lot of idealists in the world. In fact, most columnists are idealists, or at least former idealists. I think children are born idealists, but taught out of it.

Have you ever heard a group of 8-year-olds argue about what is exactly "fair?" They are absolutely concerned that the principles of egalitarianism are not compromised, even though they probably can't say egalitarianism.

Something happens along the way, however, and many lose their idealism. It is often and unfortunately replaced by cynicism, which is one of the belief systems I want to talk about in this column.

You see, there are three basic ends for an idealist and finding the actual ideal, or utopia, is not one of them, at least on this earth. I happen to believe that it will be found through faith in Jesus Christ, but that will be upon his return.

I suspect it will also be quite different than many are expecting. For one thing, there is no indication that it will be earthly; but while we're here, we're pretty much stuck with a fallen world.

For one thing, the desires of egalitarianism and individualism "if carried to a utopian extreme" are diametrically opposed. Everything can't be fair and equal while at the same time allowing those who are bigger, smarter or faster to excel.

So, what do we idealists do in an imperfect world? There are actually three possible responses. I thought of a few others, but they seemed to fit within the parameters of these



three.

First, we can simply retreat into our shell. We can live a practically hermetic lifestyle; only coming out for the necessities of life and having as little interaction with the outside world as possible. We can become cynical in our thinking, refusing to think good of anyone who is succeeds or even takes chances.

It is possible to retreat and still lead a relatively normal life. There are many who do it. Work, school and other functions are possible, so long as one limits interaction with anyone who might have a radically different viewpoint.

If we are going to be hermits, we must limit any input which challenges our thinking. By the way, listening does not constitute acceptance, nor should those with whom we disagree cry foul because we listened, but did not accept their viewpoint.

The second response goes in exactly the opposite direction. When confronted with an imperfect world, we can just give up and join the party. Instead of trying to convince others of the

rightness of our course, we can simply say, "To each his own" and adopt a sort of moral cowardice as our guide.

Understand, we don't have to join others in pursuits or beliefs we find objectionable, although some have done that as well, we just have to quit standing up for that which we believe.

There is a third response to our imperfect world and it is the one I have chosen. We can be idealistic in our expectations yet content with realism.

Part and parcel to the attitude I call "realistic idealism" is not only understanding the underlying principles upon which we stand, but also the forgiveness we would expect in falling short of our goals.

It does not mean that we do not confront that which is evil and wrong, nor does it require that we be in lockstep agreement on everything. That is one of the problems with realistic idealism: it requires common sense.

It also requires us to have more than just knowledge of current events. It requires us to educate ourselves. That means turning off television and actually reading books as well as newspapers.

Maybe it really is too hard, but I don't think SO.

After all, I'm an idealist.

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