

# Opinion



## Free Press Viewpoint

### More casinos don't make cents

By John Van Nostrand

So much for a sound economic development project approved by Gov. Sebelius.

Earlier this month she approved a bill created by legislature to increase gambling in Kansas. The casinos, yet to be built or even approved by voters where they will be allowed, are a twisted form of economic development.

If they are approved and built, consider what will probably happen.

Only the economics of people who own the buildings and slot machines will develop. The only guaranteed winner at a casino is the person who put it there.

For casino owners to profit, they must have casino participants lose, and the more the players lose, the more the owners make. Las Vegas, Nev., the mother of all gambling, proves that tenfold.

Gamblers who lose don't develop their economics. If everyone won gambling, casinos would be on the shelf next to 8-track tapes.

Oh sure, the new Kansas casinos will employ a variety of people from serving cheap drinks and buffet food, but those jobs won't be any different than the employees at other places who also serve food and drink.

It's just more of the same service-oriented jobs.

Putting a casino in Wichita, one of the places targeted, won't make Wichita any better.

The casino will just be another thing for Wichita people to do among the arts, sports and occasional festivals.

Those who go to a game can buy a T-shirt. Those who go to the festival can take pictures and buy souvenirs.

Gambling stories are like fishing stories. Gamblers can lose a big one. Not everyone takes something home after gambling.

At a casino, many people will only have to figure out how they will make up what they lost at the casino with their bills still yet to be paid. That's the issue with Kansas economy.

Residents have bills to be paid and some desire to upgrade the car, improve the house and keep the taxes paid. Kansas casinos don't meet those needs. Good jobs with lower taxes do.

— John Van Nostrand is publisher of the Colby Free Press

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@nwkansan.com](mailto:jvannostrand@nwkansan.com) or [pdecker@nwkansan.com](mailto:pdecker@nwkansan.com). Opinions do not necessarily reflect the *Free Press*.

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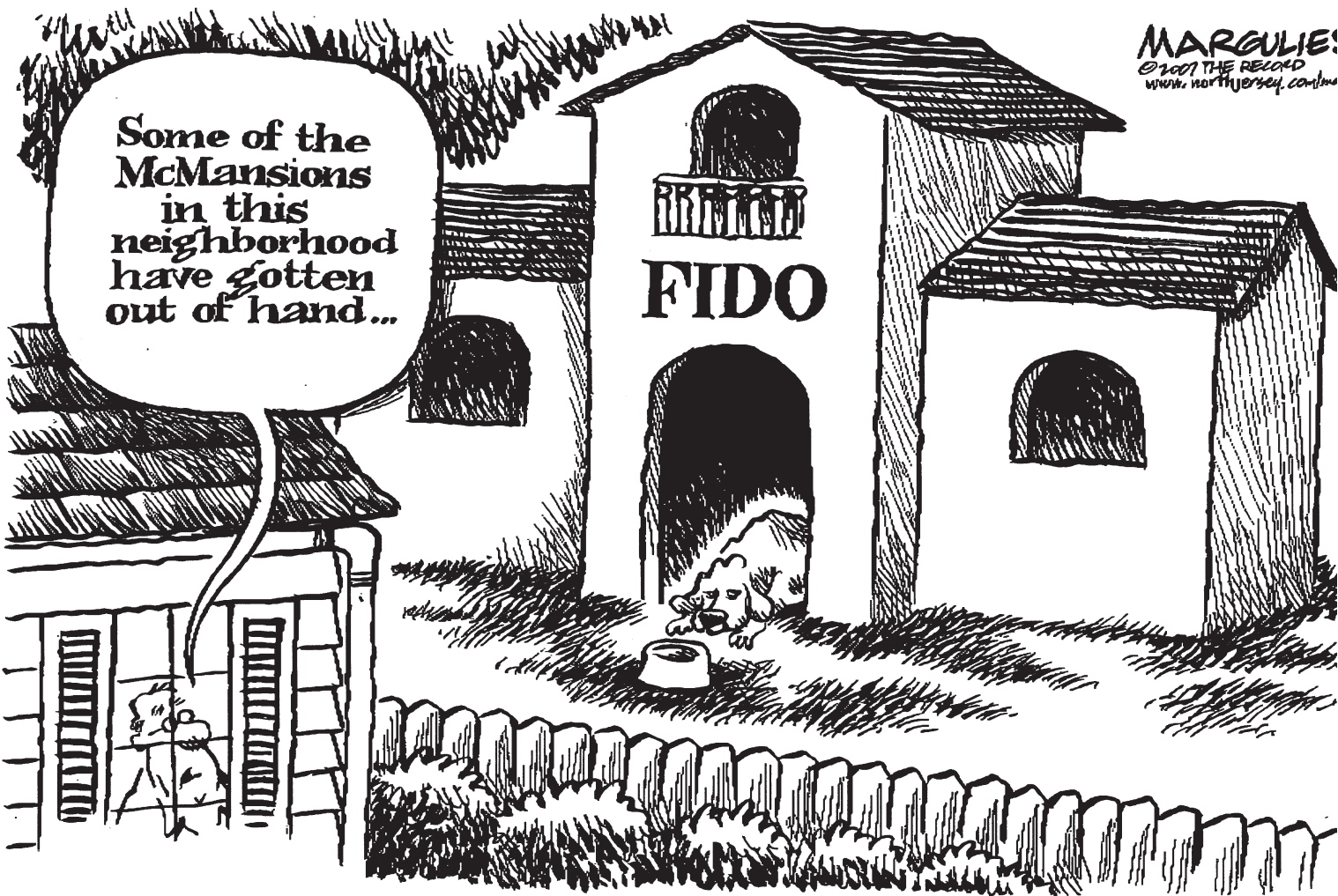
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### Nader warms up the issues



**Tisha Cox**

#### • Off The Beaten Path

phenomena of global warming, but any intelligent, reasonable person with even a high school science education can understand how the environment works. And something funny is going on.

Maybe it is just a cyclical thing, but who knows. Weather records have only been kept going back a little over a century now.

And with Earth Day celebrated Sunday, now is as good a time as any to think about what can be done to help conserve energy in general or cut back on dependence on foreign oil.

Current estimates are there is a supply of coal that will last about 500 years. The problem is what it takes to get to that coal. I don't like the idea of strip mining, but then again, no one has bothered to tell me if there is a better way to get it.

According to the Sierra Club, half the power generated in the U.S. comes from coal, but it has its drawbacks. Pollution is the biggest, along

with the methods to extract it.

But who am I to detract from the fact that if those two coal-fired plants are built, it will give southwest Kansas an economic boost, creating jobs? However, how long will that last?

Here in northwest Kansas, we still have the chance to go the other way — alternative energy sources.

Heaven knows we have wind, and plenty of it. Maybe it's time to take advantage of that.

Imagine a time in the future when communities here could be self-sufficient when it comes to meeting their energy needs.

Parts of Europe have already succeeded.

What is keeping us from it here?

Stubbornness? A desire to keep the status-quo? Lack of tax breaks?

It all comes down to a willingness to want to change, to make a difference. I know our dependency on fossil fuels isn't going to end tomorrow, next week or next year.

But maybe here at home, in our backyard, we can change how and where we get our electricity.

A small step, but one worthy of consideration.

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### The liberal lion



**Jay Kelley**

#### • The Prodigal View

I was somewhat skeptical about Ralph Nader coming to talk about global warming in Colby on Tuesday. Oh, I know he has been an activist on the environmental front as well as public safety for many years, but there was still the lingering question — has he still got it?

How refreshing to find out that, while he is an old lion of the left, Nader is far from toothless. Not many politicians would dare come to our neck of the woods and question the validity of ethanol, but he did.

However, before my conservative friends think I've gone off the reservation and the liberals start crying happy tears for my repentance, I have to say that his conclusions are consistently wrong.

Oh, he's almost right about the problem. Big money and big business are a big problem, but the solution is not found in big government, which has been the result of most of his work.

He's also done his homework.

He had the facts and figures at his fingertips and even when he left some pertinent facts out like the facts about Ronald Reagan tripling revenues and the overwhelming failure of his budget cuts in Congress — the facts he did quote were mostly accurate.

Of course, we don't have 28 Trident nuclear submarines (we have 14 left), the Russians didn't get rid of their missiles (although they lost some — does that worry anyone?) and the Chinese are doing an awful lot of saber-rattling for

a country with purely economic designs for us.

Nader could have been having a bad day, though, and you could say the thing with China is all in perception. After all, Hitler fooled Chamberlain. Come to think of it, Chamberlain was a liberal, too.

Surprisingly, he was right on target when he talked about global warming. Not about the science, he didn't really deal with that. Nor was he very clear about those who disagreed with the conclusions.

At first, he said anyone who disagreed was a relative of the Dodo bird, but he was later pretty conciliatory toward those scientists who are questioning some of the conclusions.

What he was on target about was how we can deal with the production of the so-called greenhouse gasses which, if not the cause of global warming, are at least the cause of a great deal of pollution and are definitely not a good thing.

We do it by demanding more efficient cars and appliances and exploring alternate forms of en-

ergy which are cleaner and renewable.

His solution, however, is to use the ground swell to demand more legislation, which only puts big government in control of a larger piece of the pie. One great line he had about big business went like this, "No one made them care, so they didn't."

The further government gets from home, the bigger it gets and the fewer people there are to make it care as well.

I wanted to ask him what made him so sure that big government would listen to left-leaning activists when it has mostly ignored the right. Unfortunately, I couldn't get to the guy with the microphone.

The answer isn't in more legislation or more subsidies — at least not on the federal level. Yes, there are certain interstate commerce and safety issues which need to be under Federal control (not to mention a little protectionism for American business), but for the most part, the states should be handling it.

The least intrusive government is always best. Nader is right in that it is up to us "the people" to reassert control through civic activism.

He is wrong in that it cannot be done by giving the Federal government more power. We must take back the power that originally belonged to the states.

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#### About those letters . . .

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#### Mallard Fillmore

• Bruce Tinsley

