Opinion



Other **Viewpoints**

Free speech allows billboards for sex

A state law regulating billboards advertising sex that was scheduled to go into effect this month has been put on hold by a federal judge.

The law would limit the size of billboards advertising "adult" stores and strip clubs and stipulate what they may say.

Federal Judge Julie A. Robinson said a lawsuit filed by the owners of the Lion's Den Adult Superstore near Abilene must be adjudicated before the law can be enforced - if then.

Attorney General Stephen Six intended to enforce the law. But his spokeswoman, Ashley Anstaett, pointed out that similar laws in Georgia, South Carolina and Missouri have been struck down by court decisions, so the attorney general is taking another look at the Kansas law....

The best solution to the fix that Six is in would be to close down the sex shops and the strip clubs. Making them illegal would probably win the approval of an overwhelming majority of Kansans. And also would be challenged in court with great likelihood of success....

On the one hand, all legal businesses should be allowed to advertise their wares without government telling them how, when and where to do it. Just as obviously, society should be allowed to shape itself; to foster what it deems good and useful and ban what it judges to be base and destructive.

These principles are mutually exclusive, producing a problem without a solution. In the past, panderers catered to man's animal nature by relegating pornography to under-the-counter shops, locked back rooms and street peddlers with big overcoats. Naked dancers could be found in speakeasies in sleazy sections of inner cities or in the boondocks.

Today our free enterprise philosophy allows the pandering to be done in the open. We have the First Amendment to blame.

— The Iola Register, via The Associated Press

Where to write, call

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U.S. Sen. Sam Brownback, 303 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510. (202) 224-6521

U.S. Rep. Jerry Moran, 2202 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20515. (202) 225-2715 or Fax (202) 225-5124

State Rep. Jim Morrison, State Capitol Building, 300 SW 10th St. Room 143-N, Topeka, Kan. 66612. (785) 296-7676 e-mail: jmorriso@ink.org web: www.morrisonfamily.com

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Fillmore Bruce Tinsley

Mallard



Do we answer to big business bucks?

Who are we?

This is a question Americans should be asking themselves as we deal with a world growing smaller as technology leads to an era of globalization.

Coming up with the answer is difficult in an era filled with sound bites, political doublespeak, corporate whitewashing and five-minute attention spans.

It's hard to find time to contemplate things when you are constantly being bombarded with news of corrupt banks, foreign wars, famous dead musicians and unfaithful politicians.

But if you ignore all the static and focus on issues, it has become quite clear that the banks and multinationals that wield so much power over the United States and the global economy at large have been incredibly irresponsible.

This generation's children and their children will be left with a world that is not much better than the one we have today if the multinational corporations, oil giants and other big firms do not change the way they do business.

While pundits hysterically scream socialism to protest the idea that a public option will be injected into our health care system, it would be wiser to look at some large companies in America with an unlimited amount of wealth that can be used to influence Washington. While politicians have been fairly criticized

for supporting deregulatory policies that allowed investment banks to make risky loans thought to the catastrophic effects their actions irresponsibility of these banks pales in comparison to the action of other large companies.

One of the most egregious examples of corporatism between our government and big business in the not so distant past was the Bush

Andy Heintz

 Wildcat Ramblings

Administration's decision to give a contract to Betchtel to help rebuild Iraq. According to the Center for Responsive Politics in May 2003, the company made \$1.3 million in political donations over the four years before receiving the contract. Even worse than the potential conflicts of interest, Betchtel already had an infamous legacy in Iraq.

The National Security Archives, a nonpartisan group that writes articles and reports based on documents released under the Freedom of Information Act, revealed that when the U.S. Senate passed economic sanctions on Iraq in 1988 for using poison gas on the Kurds, U.S. Ambassador April Glaspie reported in a "confidential" State Department cable that Betchtel planned to employ "non-U.S. suppliers of technology and continue to do business in Iraq."

While Presidents Ronald Reagan and George H.W. Bush kept any serious sanctions from being levied on Iraq, Betchtel's willingness to do business with its genocidal dictator is still lamentable. It is shocking that Betchtel landed so they could make a quick buck without any a large Agency for International Development interest in what these corporations are doing as contract to do infrastructure repair work in could have on the whole financial system, the Iraq in 2003 with an initial payment of \$34.6 million and a long-term value of up to \$680 million. This is just one of many examples of corporate welfarism that subsidizes large, amoral private enterprises with tax money.

Another example of nefarious behavior by is sports reporter for the Colby Free Press.

big business relates to a legal battle featuring indigenous Indian peasants from Ecuador and Chevron Corp.

A group of U.S. lawyers brought a lawsuit on behalf of the peasants against Chevron, accusing Texaco, which Chevron bought in 2001, of dumping of billions of gallons of toxic oil wastes into the region's rivers and streams.

Newsweek reporter Michael Isikoff wrote that a lobbyist for the oil giant said, "the ultimate issue here is Ecuador has mistreated a United States company. We can't let little countries screw around with big companies like this - companies that have made big investments around the world."

These comments exemplify the views of a small but influential group people who think it is their god-given right to run the world in a way that puts their own short-term gains in front of the needs of people and the future of

'It's not that they couldn't have done otherwise," said President Rafael Correa of Ecuador. "The technology existed, the measures were available, to prevent environmental harm and so forth. But they didn't want to do so, probably because we're poor countries, so they consider that we're inferior."

These are just a couple of the companies that have many allies in Washington. The question for us is, will we continue to passively accept our role as mindless consumers who have no long as it doesn't interfere with our lifestyle?

Or will we demand that today's "kill-orbe-killed" capitalism be replaced with more enlightened capitalism that refuses to put the wealth of a few over the will of the many?

Andy Heintz, a K-State journalism graduate,

Agriculture can do the job

Agriculture continues to lose farmers. No one will argue that point, but larger, more efficient producers are replacing those lost in this highly competitive industry.

While this is not necessarily a desirable trend, it is one that has continued for decades maybe since the beginning of this profession. That said, it is also a trend that is not confined to agriculture but has affected nearly every sector of the U.S. and world economies.

Regardless of this ongoing change, care for the land and this critical resource continues to improve. Today's farmers are increasing the amount of organic matter in their soil. With no-till and reduced tillage farming, farmers continue to build organic matter and improve the soil tilth. There is no reason to believe this practice will be discontinued.

Today's modern farmer is not exhausting the land. Just the opposite is true.

Without question scarce water is always a concern, especially in Midwestern states where rainfall is limited and people use plenty of it. Farmers constantly chart rainfall amounts and monitor weather conditions. In Kansas, producers are aware of changes in the Ogallala Aquifer.

Farmers are very much tuned into water and the conservation of this vital resource. Some are concerned about the potential of a longterm climate change.

If such a phenomenon does occur, there is the possibility that Kansas could become more arid - more like New Mexico, for example. We have better yield potential and better food



John Schlageck

• Insights Kansas Farm Bureau

But if this is a concern, no one has been predicting such an event to date.

Barring a major shift in our climate, crops will continue to be planted in western Kansas. Production could be less than now, but this land will be farmed and farmed wisely.

At the same time, the world's population is exploding. Some say the greatest growth in the history of our world is underway.

It's estimated 3 billion people will be born during the next 40 years. This would increase the world's population to 9 billion. Most of these people will be born in the hungry parts of the world.

As a result, pressure on the world's economic and natural resources for food will become intense. This demand will mean opportunity for farmers and ranchers. It will also become critical for public/private enterprise to ramp up food production.

There is nothing to suggest yields will not keep up with population growth. Even countries with marginal soil and more severe climates than our own are growing crops today.

value today and with new genetics and technologies coming on line, there is no reason to believe the world won't be able to feed itself in the future.

country has the ability to continue producing for the world. The U.S. farmer and rancher can compete

with other nations, if they aren't shackled by

American agriculture is up to the task. This

government regulations that cause production Even the most efficient farmers in America can't make it with too many regulatory restrictions. Any regulations must be science based

and uniform across the board for producers around the world. An example that could really hurt agriculture is the current debate over climate change. If there is a level playing field, where all producers have the same health and safety re-

strictions, U.S. agriculture will compete. Give farmers and ranchers the same opportunity, as others around the world and bountiful, wholesome food will continue. Winston Churchill said many years ago,

'Give us the tools and we will get the job done." The same can be said for agriculture in this country.

John Schlageck of the Kansas Farm Bureau is a leading commentator on agriculture and rural Kansas. He grew up on a diversified farm near Seguin, and his writing reflects a lifetime of experience, knowledge and passion.

I'M SORRY, KEVIN.... I KNOW YOU 1H15 15 AMERICA"..

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