



Other Viewpoints

Ike’s warning pertinent today

Fifty years ago, President Dwight D. Eisenhower expressed his fears that the U.S. would be overrun by a huge and growing military enterprise at the expense of schools and hospitals. Kansans take pride in their native son, affectionately known as “Ike.” The president served two terms, from 1953 to 1961. He became a five-star general during his command in World War II and then was at the helm of NATO. Fifteen years after the war, Eisenhower no longer saw the need for the United States to retain its overwhelming capacity to dominate the world in terms of war machinery, and said so in his farewell speech. “Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired, signifies in the final sense, a theft. The cost of one modern, heavy bomber is this: a modern, brick school in more than 30 cities.” Eisenhower said he feared that an untethered “military-industrial complex” could result in wanton behavior.... Fast forward 50 years and to another Kansan, Secretary of Defense Robert Gates, who happens to keep a picture of Eisenhower on his desk in the Pentagon. What good is it, Gates has asked, to be able to annihilate an adversary 20 times over? Or to have a battle fleet that is larger than the next 13 navies combined – 11 of which are our partners? Today, the United States has more than \$660 billion a year in military expenditures, the most of any country. Far behind in second place is China, allocating \$100 billion. Picture a pie of world expenditures on armaments. The U.S. slice would consume 43 percent of that pie compared to the rest of the world.... To date, we’ve spent \$1.1 trillion on military operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. The cost for keeping a single soldier on the ground exceeds \$500,000 a year. At the same time, the United States is in dire financial straits. At least 39 states, including Kansas, are facing a budget shortfall this year. Their schools, retirement programs and social services all face cuts that will mean wider gaps in services for the poor and disabled, and fewer resources in the classroom. Two Kansans, 50 years apart, both military leaders, have spoken for the need of reduced military might. This overkill is killing us.

– The Iola Register, via the Associated Press

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- U.S. Sen. Jerry Moran, Russell Senate Office Building Room C-4, Washington, D.C. 20002 (202) 224-6521 moran.senate.gov/public/
- U.S. Rep. Tim Huelskamp, 126 Cannon House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20515. (202) 225-2715 or Fax (202) 225-5124. Web site: huelskamp.house.gov
- State Sen. Ralph Ostmeyer, State Capitol Building, 300 SW10th St., Room 225-E., Topeka, Kan. 66612, (785) 296-7399 ralph.ostmeyer@senate.state.ks.us

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Garden thoughts warm January days

The garden is starting to appear out in the back yard, though some winters the snow doesn’t really melt – or the ground thaw in the shadow of the neighbor’s fence – until almost time to plow it up in March. Snow cover is good, both because it delivers moisture to everything during the dry months, and because it holds down the mulch of chopped grass and leaves we cover the whole patch with in the fall. As the mix becomes more dry leaves and less green grass, it doesn’t adhere as well to the garden soil. The leaves tend to blow away or clump up. Snow holds them down and they get good and wet. That binds them together, and to the garden. In the spring, they get plowed under and join the rest of the compost from 17 seasons. Many garden experts advise plowing the mulch under in the fall, but the spring schedule has worked for us. Our garden started out as hard, lifeless yard soil, but today it’s full of organic matter – and worms and grubs. I’m not sure how the garden will get plowed up this spring. The friend who always did it died suddenly last year. He owed us a tilling, too, since last spring he talked both of us into paying him on separate days. I may have to rent a tiller this year, but I hope not. When we were kids, my brothers and I had the duty of tilling Dad’s garden. He believed us doing it in the old-fashioned way, by hand with a potato fork. He always grew marvelous vegetables, mostly tomatoes and cucumbers. He ate the tomatoes about any way you could think of – sliced, in salads, you name it. The cucumbers he sliced up with fresh onions, then slathered with homemade oil and vinegar dressing. I couldn’t abide the cucumbers, but I still make the dressing. After Cynthia and I got married, I bought a potato fork. Still have it. But later, we learned you could rent a rototiller. Just getting it in and



Steve Haynes
• Along the Sappa

out of the car was a chore, but it made quick work of any garden. Then someone offered to bring his tiller and do the garden for about the same price. We gave up tilling and started specializing in growing. Sort of like farmers hire out chores today, we hired out tillage. I guess I could start digging up the garden when it thaws, but that does sound like work. Maybe there’s somebody out there who wants to make a buck. Or we’ll rent a tiller. Anyway, the tilling will be followed quickly by seeds for lettuce and spinach, which need to grow and be harvested before it gets hot. Then we’ll follow with corn, unless Cynthia has her way and we give up on it as a crop. Then, in May, the bedding plants. By then we’ll have plenty of mulch to retard the weeds and the summer will be in full swing. But first the ground has to thaw. Can’t wait for spring.

Steve Haynes is editor and publisher of The Colby Free Press and president of Nor’West Newspapers. In his spare time, whenever that is, he like to ride and watch trains.

An old, old chat comes to mind

How far back can you remember? That question often arises when friends get together. I would say most people can go back to about age 3 or 4. They are in awe when I tell them I can go back to about a week or two after my birth. You read that right! When I was born, mothers and babies stayed in the hospital for two weeks. Today, Mom goes in, baby comes out, bags are packed and they are back home before anyone knew Mom was gone. I tell friends the sounds newborns make, such as ‘gaa gaa, goo goo,’ etc., ‘ are sounds of baby talk. That’s right, baby talk. And what babies hear are actually words and phrases. The “Institute of Baby Banter at Birth and Other Things Newbies Fool Us With” recently published the results of their study, and the conclusions are something I’ve known since birth. When friends press me to give examples of my claim, I have no hesitation to relate to them a conversation I had with a baby in the crib next to me in the hospital nursery, a conversation that sticks with me yet today. One day that baby wanted to know how much I weighed. I told her 6 pounds and 5 ounces. She said she weighed 9 pounds and 4 ounces. I told her she was a fatty. I noticed her fists curl up, so I quickly changed the subject. Our conversation continued for probably 10 minutes until some ladies in white came in to check the inventory in our diapers. Apparently what we were supposed to do we did very well, because they left the room with their noses pinched shut. We thought that was funny. But back to our conversation. My nursery friend wanted to know where I was from. I told her I didn’t know because it was so dark I couldn’t see anything. She sort of smiled at that answer. She then wanted to know if I was a bottle baby or a breast baby. Not knowing what she was even talking about and yet not wanting to sound stupid (after all she was three days older than me), I told her that I was a nipple baby. She almost fell through the guard rail around her crib in laughter. Then she asked if I was a boy or a girl. I told her I didn’t know. She said, “Well, dummy, there’s only one way to find out.” I asked her how. “Pull down your blanket, remove those safety pins on your diaper, and take a look,” she instructed. So I did. She said, “Well, what are you?” I didn’t answer right away because I was busy looking around. Exploring reveals all kinds of interesting things. She kept pestering and pestering, so I finally yelled out with excitement, “I’m a boy!” “A boy,” she repeated, kind of disappointedly. “Yes,” I assured her. She was quiet for a few moments, then asked in a teasing kind of voice, “Well ... just how did you find out that you were a boy?” “That was easy,” I told her, “BLUE BOO-TIES!!” (gotcha!) As I write this, the snow removal machinery here at the Sonoma Resort at Saddle Rock in Aurora (Colorado, for my Kansas readers) is busy clearing streets and sidewalks. The piles of snow they are creating are as high as they’ve been all season long. Of course this is good news for all the kids, as well as for all of us, and especially the farmers. After school, the kids will make good use of the snow piles. Ahh, to be young again! I think the snow-fall here was in the neighborhood of 5, maybe 6 inches. I’ve never been good at estimating snow depth. I will not comment on the shootings in Tuc-



Tom Dreiling
• A View From the West

son, Ariz. In lieu of commenting, I will do as I always do when such situations occur – pray. Those directly affected need our prayers more than another word or two from those who at this time know little as to why what happened happened. Prayer is powerful; it can’t be matched. If you haven’t done it in a while, now would be a good time to acquaint yourself with it. I took special note of the problems New York faced in its recent snowstorm and how they were really coming down on their mayor. I got to thinking that New York City has a population of somewhere around 10 million. Now, if each one of those 10 million had a snow shovel.... Two guys who should be setting an example ... aren’t. What do President Obama and Speaker of the House Boehner have in common? They both smoke! When I saw the new activity bus my alma mater is wheeling around the territory, thanks to a front page photo in the Hays Daily News, I thought how lucky those students at Thomas More Prep-Marian High School are. I say that because I can remember as a child when athletes at that school were transported to games by their parents. There were no buses. It was a military academy at the time, and parents would team up to fill their cars with athletes and head out in whatever direction the opponent lived. I hope the students of today truly understand how privileged they are to travel in such style. Comments to milehitom@hotmail.com. Until next time, peace ... and love. Tom Dreiling of Aurora, Colo., is a former publisher of the Colby Free Press and The Norton Telegram, and a former long-time editor of the old Goodland Daily News. He is a life-long Democrat, a curmudgeon come lately and a newly minted Coloradan.

Mallard Fillmore

• Bruce Tinsley

