

Less squabbling, more unity is the only path

Pass the blame. The country is fractured and squabbling over our response to the Muslim terrorist threat. Rather than seeking common ground for the unified effort, our leaders in Washington spend their time vilifying and undermining each other. The bitter, divisive attitude runs all the way down to the local coffee shop. Democrats and liberals characterize President Bush and Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld in terms that would make Venezuelan President Hugh Chavez Frias, that old buddy of Fidel, proud. Republicans respond by blaming everything on Bill Clinton for not finding Osama bin Laden, and boy is he touchy on that subject. He'd probably rather talk about Monica. Mr. Bush had eight months to get Osama, President Clinton replied, and all his people did was make fun of the Clinton crew for being "obsessed" with chasing him. Truth is, while Mr. Bush has pretty well eliminated bin Laden as an operational force, neither president caught him. It's a draw. There is enough blame to go around, and if we don't start working together, there'll be even more. We are facing a global movement by radical Islamists. These people are clear about their goal — nothing short of world denomination conversion to Islam at the point of a sword and elimination, not just of Christianity, but other world religions in turn. The West can no more afford to ignore this threat than it could the Red menace of the last century. The fact that it is led by a few nut jobs who hide in caves does not make the movement a joke. Far from it.

These people are serious, and they have friends. We are ill suited as a nation for this kind of fight.

We are ever prepared to go invade some country and set matters right, but we want our troops home the next day. As victims of imperial power, we have no taste for empire. We lack the ruthless nature needed to enforce our rule on others, and it goes against our tradition.

We argue endlessly about the occupation of Iraq, though in absolute terms you'd have to say it's been a success: no major terrorist attacks in the five years since 9/11, and a cost that's bearable.

It's fascinating that American liberals point constantly to the deaths of 2,600 U.S. troops, but never mention the thousands of Iraqis killed, so many that no one in this country bothers to count them.

Perhaps the next president will give us the leadership we need to deal with this devil. Perhaps by the time he or she takes office, it'll be too late.

Like all evil in this world, this trouble will pass. The question we must answer is the price we will pay to fend it off, or the price we will pay if the radicals, as they sometimes do, succeed.

It's not too much of a stretch to compare this time to the days before World War II, when many in this country, liberal and conservative, strove to avoid the inevitable conflict. Even 9/11 has not given us the resolve to deal with this one. And until we unite in our efforts, nothing will.

— Steve Haynes

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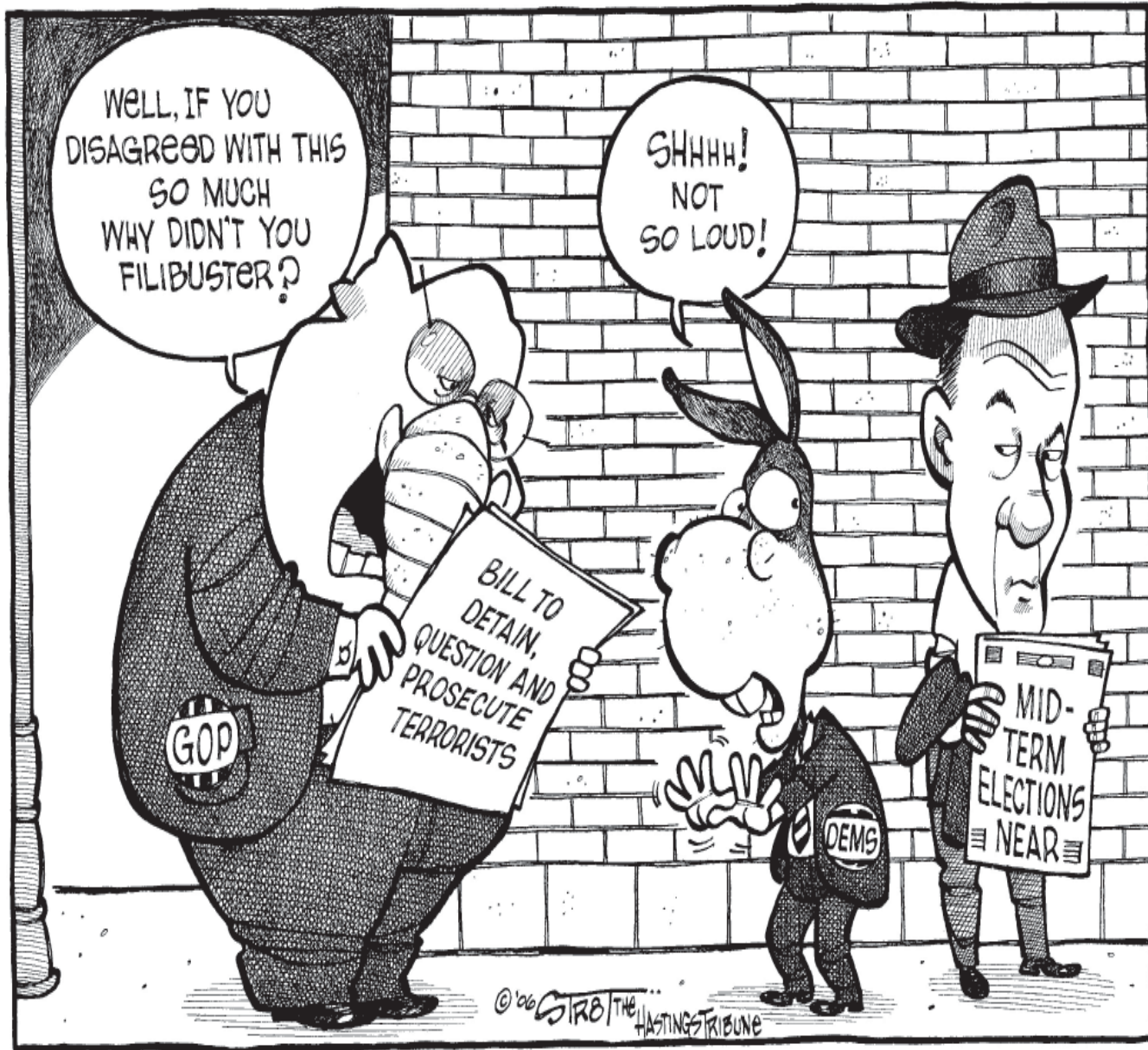
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Come on, V, it's time to end vacation

Some weeks are full of fun, excitement and new people. And, then, some weeks are nose-to-the-grindstone, don't-look-up, get-the-job-done kind of weeks. That's what last week was.

In a small office, everyone wears a lot of different hats. In a newspaper office, there are lots of hats. One moment you might be writing a feature story, the phone rings and you have to dash out for a picture.

Or you are on the phone confirming facts when a customer walks in to place a classified ad. There's always something happening. But, you take one employee out of the picture and, all of a sudden, the pieces of the work-pie get a whole lot bigger.

Veronica is the kid of our work team. I know she's a young adult, but she's still a kid to me. Like everyone else in this country 30 and younger, being computer savvy is second nature to her. When I ask her

Out Back

Carolyn Plotts



how she knew to do whatever function, she says, "Oh, I just figured it out."

I don't care how much time I had, I could never "just figure it out."

This is all leading up to the fact that Veronica is gone on vacation, forcing me to absorb some of her workload. She left written instructions for everyone of her job duties. In minute detail. Right down to "click," "arrow down," "double click" and "enter."

It hasn't been easy, but we did survive last week. At the beginning of the week I wouldn't have given you odds on our

chances of actually getting a paper out. But, we did, and in the process I learned some new skills. Not perfected, yet, but new skills nonetheless. This "old dog" learned a new trick.

-ob-

Progress on the house is moving right along. We finished painting the closet and utility room this weekend, moved the woodworking equipment into the old living room and got the new living room ready to finish.

Just a few more pieces of sheetrock to hang and Jim can top, tape and texture and then we'll paint that room. He's building our entertainment center in a rustic style. The front will be out of weathered cedar to resemble old barn doors.

We're neither one the "foo-foo" type and we want our home to be comfortable — livable. It will, definitely, be a place where you can put your feet on the furniture.

Oh 'deer' is it that time once again?

One of the frightening realities of driving on Kansas roads and highways this time of year is the possibility of an unexpected encounter with a deer. The incidence of deer-vehicle accidents typically rises in the fall and spring and they occur mainly around sunset and sunrise.

Statistically, one in every 100 drivers nationally is likely to have a collision with a deer at some time during their driving years. The Insurance Institute for Highway Safety estimates that deer-vehicle crashes cost up to \$1.1 billion in property damage and cause tens of thousands of injuries, and more than 200 deaths every year. Approximately 87 percent of all animal-vehicle related accidents involve deer.

While car-deer crashes are unfortunately inevitable, there are some things motorists should be aware of regarding deer-related collisions:

- Deer aren't just found on rural roads and near wooded areas; many deer crashes occur on busy highways near cities.
- Deer are unpredictable. When faced with glaring headlights, blowing horns and fast-moving vehicles, they often startle and dart into traffic.
- Deer often move in groups. If you see

Realities

Sandy Praeger

one, there are likely more to follow.

Drivers should consider the following driving tips and precautionary measures to help avoid a collision:

- √ Stay alert, always wear your seatbelt and drive at a safe, sensible speed for conditions.
- √ Deliberately watch for deer, particularly from sunset to midnight and the hours shortly before and after sunrise.
- √ Highest risk periods are from sunset to midnight and the hours shortly before and after sunrise.
- √ When driving at night, use high-beam headlights when there is no opposing traffic. The high beams will illuminate the eyes of deer on or near a roadway.
- √ Watch for the reflection of deer eyes and for deer silhouettes on the shoulder of the road.
- √ Do not rely exclusively on devices such as deer whistles, deer fences and reflectors to deter deer.

√ Sometimes deer will move toward an approaching vehicle. Assume nothing, slow down and blow your horn. If the deer stays on the road, stop and put on your hazard lights and wait for the deer to leave the roadway. Do not try to go around the deer while it is on the road.

√ Deer frequently travel in groups and in single file. If you see one deer on or near the road, expect that others may follow.

√ Brake firmly when you notice a deer in or near your path, **but stay in your lane**. Many serious accidents occur when drivers swerve to avoid a deer and hit another vehicle or lose control of their cars. The fact is you will risk less injury by hitting the deer.

√ If you hit a deer, and are uncertain whether or not the deer is dead, keep your distance. You are dealing with an injured, wild animal with sharp hooves that can inflict serious bodily injuries.

√ If the deer is blocking the roadway and poses a danger to other motorists, you should stop and report the incident to the local law enforcement agency immediately.

These tips may not always prevent an accident, but they could save you and your family from a more serious accident.

Sandy Praeger is Kansas Commissioner of Insurance.

FROM THE MAILBOX:

'What would Jesus do' with Attorney General Kline?

To the Editor,
Asking the question "What would Jesus do?" is an excellent method to reflect on the ethics of one's actions. That question came to mind when I read about how Attorney General Phill Kline was going to various churches to further his re-election campaign.

His own campaign memo states that

one objective for attending these worship services would be to meet "money" people for the purpose of getting large campaign contributions.

Every Gospel in the New Testament tells of the wrath of Jesus against those who were misusing His temple to gain wealth and power. The Gospel according to St. John states: "Making a whip of

cords, he drove all of them out of the temple..." (chapter 2 verse 15).

The answer is obvious what Jesus would have done to Phill Kline because of his repugnant abuse of God's house. It is equally obvious what voters must do. They must vote him out of office.

Tim Peterson
Monument