



It's far from clear on who's winning the war

It's far from clear who's winning the War on Terrorism, though the U.S. has not suffered greatly in the last few years, and the terrorists have taken a beating.

Around the world, leaders of al Qaida and its related groups have been killed by bombs and missiles, hunted down and arrested and run into hiding. While the Taliban has become aggressive in Afghanistan, it's nowhere near a victory.

Americans, however, and our news media in particular, tend to blow out of proportion every little skirmish in this war. Overall, we are not only winning the general fight, but our losses have been negligible.

Take the incident where a terrorist double agent who gained the trust of Jordanian and American intelligence officers detonated a bomb in a briefing room, killing eight CIA officers. The loss of eight officers is tragic, but in war, there are casualties.

While not insignificant to the individuals involved or their families, this incident, in the history of our battle, will be little remarked. It represents a series of mistakes in an individual operation, but not a failure of our intelligence system or a major defeat in the war.

Yet, news reports trumpet the bombing as if it was a major issue for the United States. You almost get the idea that some people want us to lose, or at least to play up our every setback.

In the same vein, the "underwear bomber" does not represent a massive failure of our air transport security system, though it does point out some weaknesses. If security had not been so good, one expert noted, the bomber might have carried a real bomb — one that worked. Instead, he was captured, alive but horribly wounded.

It's easy to say that the security apparatus should have spotted the bomber, who had been turned into our embassy in Nigeria as a possible

terrorist by his father, but in truth, the system is not that good. It may not even be possible or desirable for the system to be that good.

The fact is, it works. Millions of people fly every day, and not one of them has been killed by a terrorist act in years. It could happen again, to be sure, but it seems less likely as time goes by. The terrorists are not winning and have mustered only feeble efforts against the U.S. since 2001.

In the meantime, they've been run out of their sanctuaries around the world and forced to exist in caves and inhospitable mountains. They are no longer the threat they once were.

That is not to say that we've won this struggle, but it may never be won. Terrorists can claim victory from a single act, but the civilized world needs to be safe all the time. Eternal vigilance may be the price of 21st century civilization.

Yes, we might as well be prepared for further indignities at the airport checking line, though gate screening isn't terribly effective. Lots of contraband gets through, many fly who perhaps shouldn't.

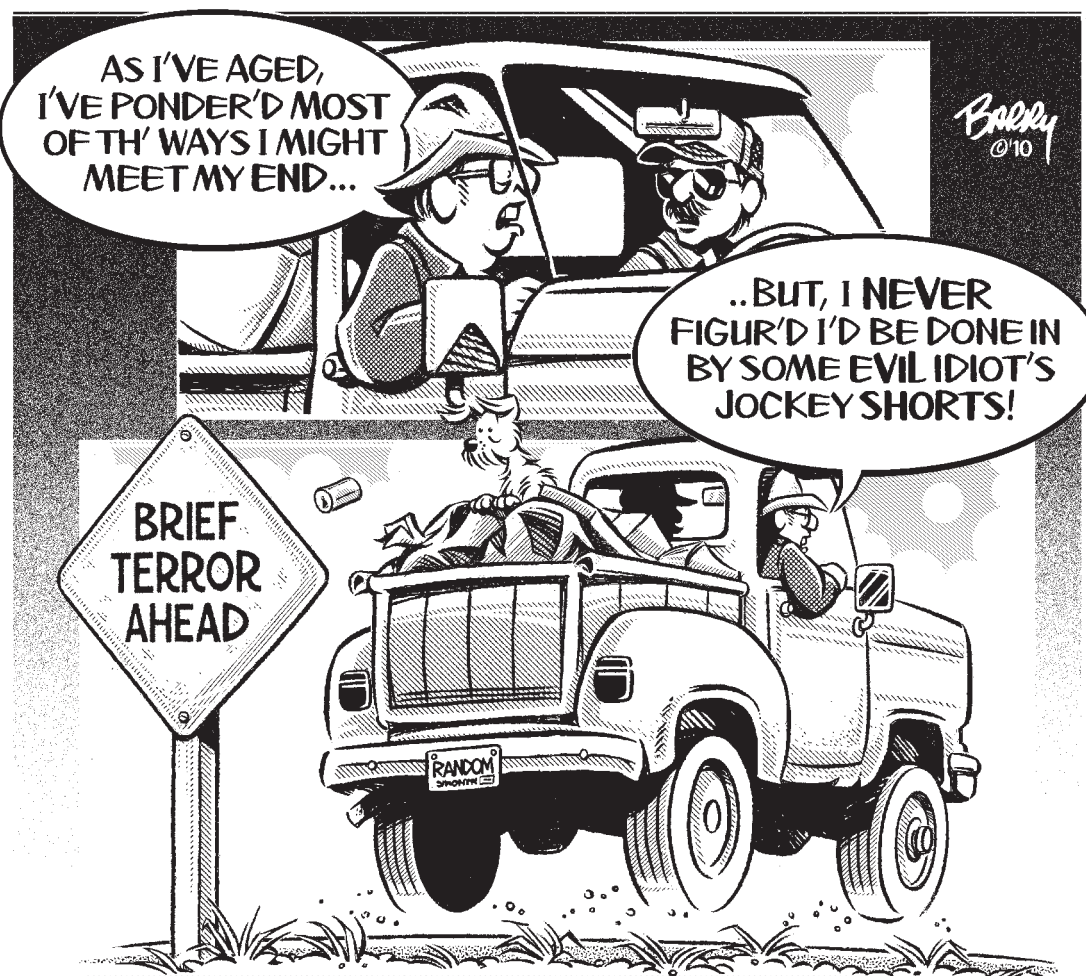
The greatest obstacle to a victory by the forces of reason may be our will to continue. The more we hear about bombings and death, the less we want to face the threat. Americans, in particular, do not relish long-term conflict, but this one will not go away soon.

Go away it will. All threats fade, all movements run their course. Even the dreaded communist monolith went away, leaving only a hollow shell to scare us in the end.

For now, though, we need to gain some perspective on what's happening, step back and realize that our side has not fared badly, though the battle is far from over.

And think about the consequences of ignoring this problem and letting the terrorist movement grow and fester.

— Steve Haynes



News From the Past

5 years ago - 2004

The St. Francis Music Club will present their annual Yuletide Festival on Dec. 5. The Candy Store will also be open.

The CAT scanner has been installed at the Cheyenne County Hospital. Also now in use are the computerized radiology equipment and the X-ray equipment.

The alumni volleyball and basketball competition held at the high school on the Saturday following Thanksgiving was a

great success.

Students in the high school psychology class are donating clothing to the Denver Urban Peak Shelter for underprivileged teens.

Derek Ross was named to the first team of the Topeka Capital-Journal football team as a line-backer while Tanner Kinen received honorable mention as an end and Gabe Walz was named honorable mention as a lineman.

Trevor Richard, Dylan Loyd,

Jordan Gienger and Derek Ross placed first at the St Francis Invitational Wrestling Tournament. The team placed second.

The St. Francis Junior High girls will present a tribute to the 1970s at their annual musical on Dec. 18. "Disco Knights" is this year's production.

The St. Francis and Cheylin schools have received automated external defibrillators to be used by school employees in emergency situations.

Hangin' With Marge

Mailing

By Margaret Bucholtz



I do not like to send thank-you notes out because my spelling and handwriting are horrible. Yet I think sending out computer-made ones are kind of cold, so when I received food, flowers and help with my knee, I decided to bite the bullet and handwrite the notes.

When I got the job done I was proud of myself as I even hand wrote the addresses. As I was putting on the stamps I had all these stamps that were of different prices so I thought I would just use them up. Thinking because it was a small envelope it won't cost as much as a normal size card.

I had all my old ones used up so the last four got the normal stamp. However I didn't pay attention to who got what stamps.

The next day Lezlie called me and asked me how many people

I sent thank you notes to? I told her I wasn't sure but wasn't that nice of me to do and I even hand wrote them.

She agreed but added that it would have been nicer if I would have put the right stamps on. I felt bad then, not so much for family, but for the friends I had sent to. No one else called me, but I knew they were out there.

When I got ready to mail out my Christmas letters I knew I would check before I sent them to make sure they had enough stamps.

The day I was addressing my Christmas letters, I got some of those free return addresses in the mail. They had a winter scene on them so I decided to use them.

I slapped one on each letter and the next day I took them all to the post office, checked to see they had enough postage and mailed them.

Doug called me the next day and said, "Mom, when you sent me the thank you that I had to pay for I didn't do anything about it, but the address labels on your Christmas card was just a little over the top."

I immediately told him I didn't make those and what was wrong with them?

He said, "Look at the spelling of your last name."

I told him I couldn't because I had used them all, but what was wrong with it? He told me that it was spelled "Rucholtz."

Then it dawned on me that I had wondered why they had several stamps with a big "R" on them, but I had just thrown them away.

The nice thing is that anyone I have told didn't notice it until I told them. Maybe next year I will pay more attention.

Casey's Comments

By Casey McCormick



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It's 9:00 on a Thursday morning as I sit at my computer in the newspaper office. The temperature outside is listed at -2 on the Weather Channel website. Factor in the wind-chill and nobody in their right mind should be outside. And what am I thinking about? A beautiful, plump, sitting high on its shell, Blue Point oyster!

I know, I know, not everyone loves raw oysters. But for me they are truly one of life's great pleasures.

When I was a kid my folks liked to bombard my siblings and me with a variety of different types of food. Maybe it was because my Dad was in the Navy in WWII. Perhaps it came from Mom's side. Her father, Howard McIntyre, was also in the newspaper business, working for the Canton Repository in Ohio. Mother says he was always bringing home new items that the local markets brought in

to advertise. Where ever it came from, there were no picky eaters at our house.

I remember a trip to Florida to visit the McIntyre grandparents. They had relocated to Bradenton Beach, on the Gulf side, and we stayed at a hotel not far away. Each evening we would gorge ourselves on oysters on the half shell for a nickel each.

Later, when I was living in Lafayette, Louisiana, I found a restaurant that served an oyster platter with a dozen prepared in a variety of ways. Every kind from Oysters Rockefeller, to fried, to a bisque. Yum!

Another great place was a little joint in Baton Rouge, not far from the LSU campus, that offered a mean oyster Po-Boy sandwich.

Nowadays, whenever Lezlie and I get a chance to travel, we both enjoy hunting down a seafood restaurant. But today I will stay close to the warmth of the Herald office

and do my work with the phone and dream of a bivalve waiting for me in a more moderate climate.

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The pagan Obama agenda

The pagan Obama agenda

Letter to the Editor:

Contrary to Biblical scripture, Mr. Obama has:

- 1) Endorsed homosexuality as a normal lifestyle.
- 2) Questioned God's control of His creation by endorsing global warming nonsense.

Letter to the Editor

- 3) Turned his back on Israel.
- 4) Supports abortion which denies the sanctity of life.
- 5) Supports same-sex unions contrary to Biblical scripture.
- 6) Violates basic Bible economic advice relative to deficits.

Mr. Obama needs to realize that God is not mocked! Those who do so will reap what they sow. (Gal. 6:7)

Terry Rueb
St. Francis

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