

Opinion



Guest Viewpoint

It's patriotic to stand up and be counted

George W and his fellow warmongers in Washington have a message for all of us who dissent from — or even have doubts about — his Iraq Attack:

“Shhhhhhh,” they tell us. Swallow your doubts. Don’t rock the patriotic boat. Lay low. Be quiet.

BE QUIET? Holy Thomas Paine! Since when do freedom-loving Americans cower in quietude? If you don’t speak out when it matters, when would it ever matter for you to speak out? If you and I stay quiet now, while the Washington elites blindly rush us into a bloody war that they can’t even explain to us, our proud American ideals of democracy and justice will be trampled — and thousands will die for nothing more noble than oil, presidential arrogance, and corporate empire.

The opposite of courage is not cowardice ... it’s conformity. After all, even a dead fish can go with the flow.

Unfortunately, we seem to have too many dead fish in the Congress, especially among the Democratic leadership. Senate Majority Leader Tom Daschel and House of Representatives Minority Leader Dick Gephardt ought to be rallying the majority of us Americans who do disagree with Bush’s pell-mell rush to war. But they’re not.

We can wring our hands about their failure of leadership ... or we can become the leaders. This is what it means to have a democracy. As has happened throughout our great nation’s history, regular folks like us have had to go out front.

That’s what the abolitionists did, as did the suffragists, the populists, the labor movement, the civil rights movement - and now us.

As Patti Smith sings, “People have the power. The power to dream, to rule, to wrestle the world from fools.” First, start talking — to your family, friends, neighbors, co-workers, church members, coffee klatches, campus colleagues, happy hour bunch, and everyone else you can find. Second, reach out through e-mails, letters to the editor, radio call-in shows, Internet chats, and so forth. Third, take to the streets in protest — in your own town, state capitol, or nationally.

For links to action, connect to my Web site, www.jimhightower.com, and click on “Chat & Do”. — *by Jim Hightower, radio talk-show host and author. He also served as agriculture commissioner for the state of Texas.*

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 td@nwkansans.com.

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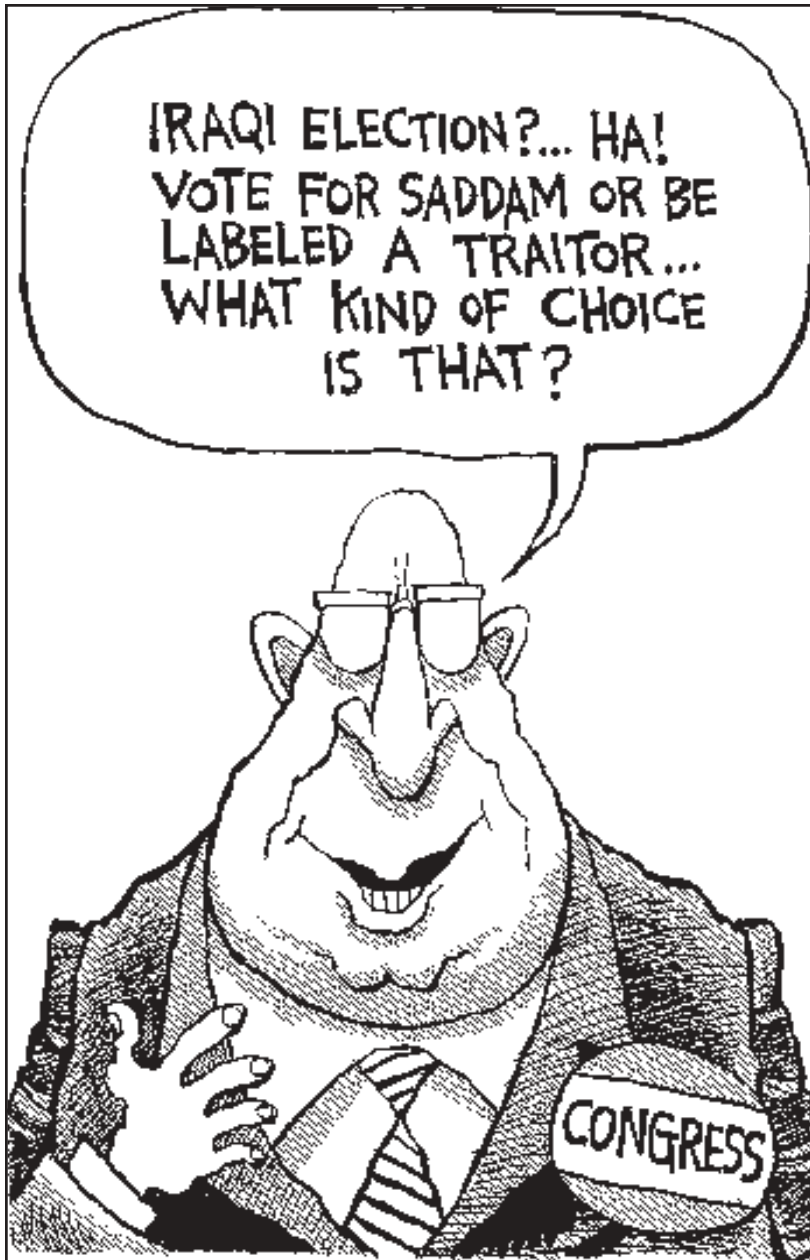
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What would be the proper sentence?

LOOKS fairly certain that the snipers are now behind bars. Authorities have enough evidence to pin those two against the wall to serve out an intensely painful sentence — that of a human dart board. It'll be interesting to see what kind of defense the attorneys assigned to the case will come up with. This should be a trial that shouldn't take very long. I know I'm making it sound like they are guilty before a trial is even held. But I think I've heard enough to convince me beyond a reasonable doubt that these two are the killers. And of course under our judicial system they are entitled to their day in court. I think if I was prosecuting this case, I would call only 10 witnesses — the 10 people shot dead. I would call them to the stand, one by one by name, with an appropriate pause between each name. Nothing else need be said. That would in itself be a deafening message. Reports are the two snipers aren't saying much to investigators. Guess they are finding it hard to talk without bullets. Cowards are like that. Let's see how this all unfolds.

A FRIEND called me from his car east of town yesterday and of course I asked him how the highways were. "Fine, really fine," he said, then added, "I'm following some kind of bus carrying a load of politicians and with all the hot air coming out of that thing the roadways are as dry as can be."

I DON'T really know what impact the race for governor will have on the turnout at the polls here and all across the state on Nov. 5. That is always hard to figure. The closer we get to election day the less certain I am that there will be a crush of voters at every polling place. Why? Well, for starters, the Democrat, Kathleen Sebelius, didn't have any primary opposition — no wounds inflicted that needed healing — thus she headed into the general election the day after the August primary with a healthy lead in early poll results over Republican Tim Shallenburger. Tim beat out two challengers in the primary — State Senate President David Kerr and Wichita Mayor Bob



Tom Dreiling

● My Turn

Knight — thus there were wounds needing healing. And the fact Republican Governor Bill Graves took his good old time endorsing Shallenburger — and a luke warm endorsement it was — that didn't help his cause either. Many Republican moderates are still hedging and conservative Shallenburger needs them to bring home the bacon. Sebelius has been courting those same Republican moderates so long and so energetically that there are times I think she's changed her party affiliation and forgot to tell anyone. We are at a crossroads in this election and it is a sure bet that most minds of those who will vote are made up. The undecideds are probably not as great in number as pollsters would want us to believe. While I am a registered Democrat, I am not of the liberal batch that Mr. Reavis painted me to be in his letter in Thursday's paper. But it was his canvas, his paint, and his paint brush so I stepped aside and let him do his work. We all see things differently. I do not and will not ever vote a straight ticket. And I will not hinge my vote on a single issue. I think both Tim and Kathleen have positives that would make them good, perhaps even great governors. Going into the primary election, I knew that if either Kerr or Knight won my decision who to vote for in November would be easy. But with Shallenburger surprising more than just a few people in the primary, the decision for Nov. 5 was a lot more difficult.

But I did come to a conclusion — measured, not registered — and I'll see how it all plays out when the last vote is counted election night. Be sure you vote too.

Agriculture and 'Changing Seasons'

John Schlageck

● Weekly Insight

For most college seniors, selecting a career and planning the future can be a daunting task. Many find little time to think about, let alone prepare for one of life's most important decisions as they speed toward graduation while immersed in classes, clubs, textbooks and a whirlwind of other college activities.

Even the best and brightest students have concerns about whether they have the skills and qualities necessary to take that next step into a place often referred to as "the real world."

With that uppermost in mind, a new leadership program, "Changing Seasons" was held Oct. 17-18 at the Living Water Ranch north of Manhattan. Fifty-five students who plan to pursue careers in agriculture attended. Kansas Farm Bureau sponsors the agricultural student development program under the direction and guidance of Jackie McClaskey, assistant dean of academic programs for agriculture at Kansas State University, and Sarah Grace Geiger, a senior in agricultural economics.

Changing Seasons is a 24-hour workshop crammed full of fun, fellowship, goal setting, mentor insight and a dose of reality designed to ensure that Kansas agriculture and rural Kansas has a bright future.

In winter, a time of preparation, the students focused on self-awareness and understanding upcoming life changes that result in hope and excitement about the future. During the spring segment of the seminar, a time of emergence, they discussed their roles in life, the challenges they will encounter and the choices they will make in living out these roles.

Summer, a time of growth, challenged the students to evaluate past experiences and give meaning to future decisions through a renewed commitment to personal core values.

Fall, a time of harvest, featured a time to reflect on

the balance necessary to serve the needs of others, while experiencing personal success and making a difference in family, community and the agricultural industry.

Changing Seasons brings everything together, says Kim Stump, Blue Rapids, who will soon graduate with an agricultural economics degree from Kansas State University. Before this seminar, Stump had never really thought about or prioritized her goals and values.

"It's helped me re-examine my heritage, my farming tradition and all of the people who have helped me along the way," Stump says. "I understand that I have the tools to draw on. They're part of who and what I am."

Like the others in this workshop, Stump came to realize and appreciate the strong family tradition she's part of. She has a better understanding of the integrity and beliefs that will help chart her future course. Like the others, she will draw on her faith and her convictions.

This leadership opportunity also provides the students with the opportunity to spend time thinking about what they want to do with their life and where they want to live.

It provides them with a learning environment where they can sit down, discuss and reflect on decisions that will impact them and the agricultural industry for

YOU know when people see a cat's litter box, they always say, "Oh, have you got a cat?" I'm always tempted to say, "No, it's for company!"

Remember to turn you clocks BACK one hour before going to bed Saturday night. At 2 a.m., Sunday, the time officially changes to Standard Time. I've got 9 clocks to change. Why that many? Beats me. I better get started.

AND next Thursday is Halloween. Got candy?

WHILE noticing the Welcome flags waving from the utility poles, I've concluded they are probably up there to denote the arrival of winter.

HAPPY Birthday to...

Oct. 25 — Shana Chandler, Brandon Ferguson, Kent Nelson, Diane Williams, Fawna Haremza-McFee

Oct. 26 — Annette Moorhous, Michael Pickett,

Brady Colson, Jody Reed, Joseph Hutfles

Oct. 27 — Judith Sears, Audrey Hines, Jeannie

Solko, Esther Bedore, Boyd Touslee, Tate Siruta,

Tyler Landenburger, Kyle Nordhues

Oct. 28 — Robert L. Allen, Courtney Brungardt

Oct. 29 — Chuck Colson, Phil Buford, Janifer Bell

HAPPY Anniversary to...

Oct. 27 — Mr. & Mrs. Leo Berens

Oct. 29 — Wes & Jeannette Bencken

Congratulations!

Call us at 462-3963 or email td@nwkansans.com to have your special day mentioned. And please keep us advised of any changes. Thanks for your help!

OLD AGE is when you still have something on the ball but you are just too tired to bounce it.

HAVE a good evening and a good weekend!

Dreiling is publisher of the Free Press. His column appears Wednesdays and Fridays.

years to come.

Kim Harms served as one of the group leaders/mentors at the workshop. Harms and her husband, Mark, raise registered seed stock near Lincolnville.

Having graduated from Kansas State University in 1989, Harms understands how valuable a program like Changing Seasons can be to graduating seniors. She believes in giving back to the agricultural community and young people.

This is a unique period of time for them, Harms says. They are making huge changes. This is a period when other people's expectations are a heavy load.

"They are trying to please their parents, please other family members and friends and do what other people expect of them based on their past performances," Harms says. "It's a lot of pressure."

The mentors emphasize flexibility and help the students understand that they will experience many changes throughout life and their career.

"We encourage them to let their own principles and values guide them and not so much other peoples' expectations," Harms says. "We tell them to follow what's in their hearts."

After attending the Changing Seasons conference, students leave with a better understanding about their future in the agricultural industry. They are better prepared to deal with change that will become a constant companion.

They come to realize that change is okay and they must rely on their own strengths and convictions as they walk down the path they choose in life.

John Schlageck has been writing about farming and ranching in Kansas for 25 years. He is the managing editor of "Kansas Living," a quarterly magazine dedicated to agriculture and rural life in Kansas.