



Other Viewpoints

Today's GOP needs cooperation

Bob Dole was a savvy politician. A conservative Republican, he led Senate Republicans for a decade. He could throw and take a partisan punch, but he knew that getting things done on Capitol Hill – governing – required working with rather than against Democrats.

He was an outstanding senator, respected by political adversaries as well as allies both for what he accomplished and what he said. He retired from the Senate in 1996, but the wisdom he acquired in a 35-year career in Congress was evident in remarks he made on Fox News May 26 about a subject dear to his heart – the national Republican Party.

Dole is understandably concerned about it. It's ineffective and its priorities are skewed to the point that Dole said, "I think they ought to put a sign on the National Committee doors that says closed for repairs until New Year's Day next year and spend that time going over ideas and a positive agenda."

The Republican agenda since Barack Obama was elected president has been driven by the desire to force him to fail. That has involved legitimate philosophical differences, but it has also meant abandoning and even opposing positions Republicans once supported because the president also supported them. So much has the party changed that Dole said he isn't sure he would be welcome in it. "I doubt it," he said, when Fox News host Chris Wallace asked. What's more, Dole added, "Reagan wouldn't have made it. Certainly Nixon couldn't have made it because he had ideas and... We might have made it, but I doubt it."

Among other things, Dole indicated that he thinks the party lacks genuine leaders, particularly in the Senate. "Somebody has to stand up and say, 'We're going to do this,'" said Dole, who knew what it took to build a consensus among disparate senators.

Dole isn't alone in his views of the Republican Party. According to an April *Washington Post*-ABC News poll, almost half of the polled individuals who described themselves as Republicans said the party is "out of touch" with issues that most concern Americans.

As troubling as such findings are, dissatisfaction is essential to making the kinds of changes the party needs to make if it is to better represent Americans and generate ideas the public will support. If the party can do that, election success, perhaps including the White House, will likely come.

We're confident that Dole would be delighted to tear down the "Closed for Repairs" sign and replace it with "Open" and "Welcome" signs.

— *The Manhattan Mercury, via the Associated Press*

Write us

The *Colby Free Press* encourages Letters to the Editor on any topic of general interest. Letters should be brief, clear and to the point. They must be signed and carry the address and phone number of the author.

We do not publish anonymous letters. We sign our opinions and expect readers to do likewise. Nor do we run form letters or letters about topics which do not pertain to our area. Thank-yous from this area should be submitted to the Want Ad desk.

Letters will not be censored, but will be read and edited for form and style, clarity, length and legality.

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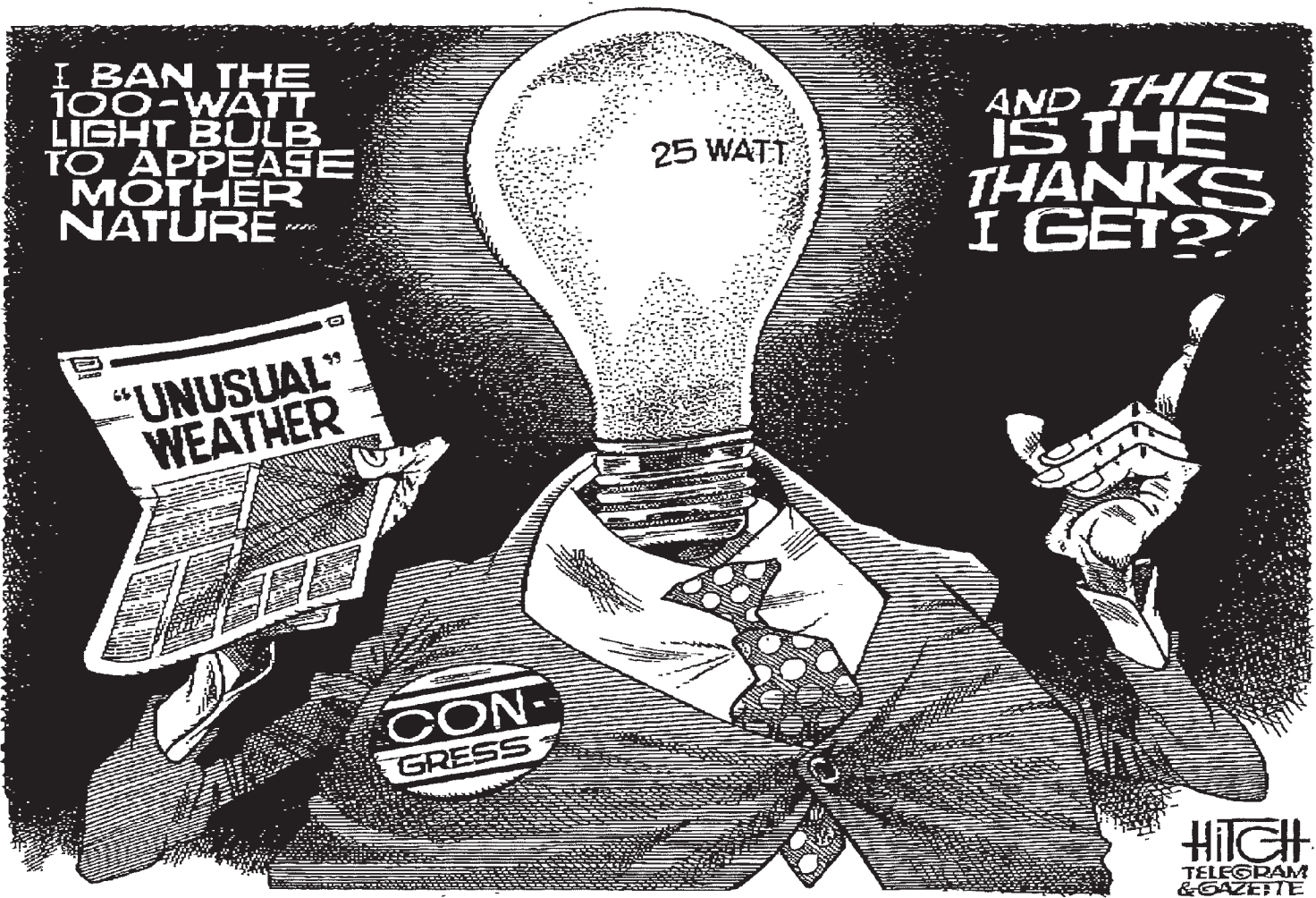
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Fast food? Not so fast

Pre-packaged, vacuum-packed, just add water...

Many of us in Kansas live in a world where food comes fast – so fast we forget how it arrives at our table. We also forget it comes from the hard labor and calloused hands of Kansas farmers. Our food also comes from Kansas ranchers who work miles of rangeland in rain, snow and blazing heat.

Fast food?

Not really.

Our lives wouldn't be the same without the farmers and ranchers who put food on our tables. Just as meat, eggs and milk have always been part of our mealtime routine, caring and providing for the animals that give us these staples are part of a farmer's daily activities.

These activities continue, often for long hours, throughout the day. Farmer-stockmen look after their animals the first thing in the morning and the last thing at night. In that sense, livestock producers often place greater emphasis on their animals than themselves.

There's no doubt agriculture has changed throughout the years. Today's farm animals live in carefully supervised environments. No longer do they need to struggle for survival in a driving snowstorm or search for nourishment on parched rangelands. Instead they have heat in the winter, cool ventilation in the summer



John Schlageck

• Insights

Kansas Farm Bureau

and clean dry living areas with food and water all year long.

All of this is provided with hands-on care, education and a long tradition of animal husbandry. Farmers and ranchers go far beyond their role of humane guardians and demonstrate devoted concern for their animals' health and safety.

They routinely stay up all night to help sows deliver piglets or to tend to newborn calves. When it's 15 degrees below zero on a frigid Kansas winter morning, farmers and ranchers are feeding, watering and caring for their livestock.

They're God's creatures and a farmer and rancher's responsibility. Proper care of animals is a time-honored ethic that also makes economic sense. In order for animals to increase efficiencies in meat, milk, wool and egg production, farmers must take all possible steps to ensure their animals live stress free.

The farmer's creed has always been to nurture the land, improving it while coaxing forth a bountiful harvest. Farmers hold enduring respect for the land that sustains them and consumers in this country and around the world. Their reward is an abundance of the safest, most wholesome food on the planet.

Today's American and world consumers enjoy ample yields from this nation's farms. Success lies with the farmer's ingenuity and stewardship ethic.

Advances in crop production enhance the farmer's natural commitment to providing us all with food. These innovations allow farmers to harvest larger yields with fewer acres, in harmony with the environment.

Yes, it takes plenty of hard work and honest sweat to raise the grain, vegetables, fruits and livestock that provide this country's food. Farm and ranch families take pride from their shared experience living, working and harvesting food from the land.

They believe that through their profession of producing food they are giving more to the world than they are taking from it.

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.

Let us not give up on Benghazi

Other Opinions

• Lt. Gen. Jerry Boykin Family Research Coun.

Congress has shifted much of its focus recently to the Internal Revenue Service's targeting of conservative groups, the Department of Justice's subpoenaing of 20 Associated Press phone lines and the e-mail account of a Fox News reporter.

Because of this, Benghazi has received little attention in recent weeks. This is surprising since the topic was a leading story in April, when 700 retired and former Special Operations Forces professionals signed an open letter to members of the U.S. House of Representatives calling for a bi-partisan commission with subpoena power to investigate the terror attack last September. Considering that H.R. 36, a bill that would create such a commission, now has 154 co-sponsors, it's a wonder how it hasn't yet passed the House. Why haven't we seen an inquiry convened?

The signers of the "SOF 700" letter are tired of delays. The signers of this letter, circulated by the group Special Operations Speaks, will not rest until those responsible for the attack on the U.S. facilities in Benghazi are held accountable.

Our passion about this issue is due to our background. As members of Special Operations units in the Armed Services, the 700 signers dedicated their careers and often risked their lives to respond when fellow Americans were threatened or when their safety was at risk. During their time serving the United States, the signers all knew that there would be many situations during which they would have inadequate intelligence, limited resources and little preparation time.

During the Vietnam conflict, Air Force pilots launched regularly in CH-53 helicopters into enemy-held terrain to recover downed pilots. They were never sure what they would encounter in their efforts. In 1970, courageous members of the military launched a raid into North Vietnam to rescue Americans who were being held as POWs near Hanoi. The first sig-

nature in the SOF 700 letter is that of Air Force Lt. Gen. (Ret.) Leroy Manor, that operation's commander.

Richard Nixon knew that every American expected that the U.S. would make every effort to bring its warriors home. The intelligence Lt. Gen. Manor and his team used was so inadequate that when they arrived at the prison, the POWs were not even there. But that did not discourage them from trying. It was the right thing to do. No one focused on what was lacking, only on the moral imperative to try.

In spite of his discomfort with using the military, Jimmy Carter ordered a rescue effort for 52 Americans being held in the U.S. Embassy in Tehran in April of 1980. The mission was fraught with challenges and was very risky from the start, but the men on that mission never hesitated in their attempt to rescue those American hostages. Again, it was just the right thing to do.

George H.W. Bush directed that the first mission during Operation Just Cause in Panama in 1989 was to rescue an American citizen named Kurt Muse. Although the larger mission was to restore democracy, capture Manuel Noriega and protect Americans living in Panama, President Bush placed the highest value on the rescue of a man whose liberty had been taken from him and whose life was in danger. Like Presidents Nixon and Carter, President Bush protected that long-standing American ethos that – simply stated – the U.S. never leaves anyone behind, and the U.S. always runs to the

guns when one of our own is threatened.

That ethos was disregarded in Benghazi, and there has not yet been a full accounting as to why. The 700 signers will not rest until the details of this event have been determined. Our interest is not to bring down this administration. Nor is it to ruin then-Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's political future.

It is all about providing information to the families of the four Americans who died in Benghazi representing and protecting U.S. interests abroad. It is about sending a strong message to every American that, should they ever face danger abroad in the future, the American military will come to their aid.

It's the right thing to do. Our government must stop making excuses and simply do it.

Retired Lt. Gen. Jerry Boykin served in the U.S. Army for 36 years, as an original Delta Force member, commander of the Army's Green Berets and of the Special Warfare Center and School, and as Deputy Undersecretary of Defense for Intelligence. He is the executive vice president of the Family Research Council. He was a driving force behind the SOF 700 letter.

Where to write, call

U.S. Sen. Pat Roberts, 109 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510. (202) 224-4774
roberts.senate.gov/public/

U.S. Sen. Jerry Moran, 354 Russell Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510 (202) 228-6966.
Fax (202) 225-5124 moran.senate.gov/public/

U.S. Rep. Tim Huelskamp, 126 Cannon House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20515. (202) 225-2715

Mallard Fillmore

- Bruce Tinsley

