

commentary

from other pens...

Presidents exercise the power to pardon

By Lawrence L. Knutson

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON - Consider the presidential pardon and the ways chief executives have used it over the last two centuries.

When Bill Clinton reached for his pen on the last morning of his presidency and granted a full and absolute pardon to Marc Rich, a wealthy fugitive from justice, he whipped up a storm of accusations, censure and blame that shows no sign of quickly blowing over.

But, even as Clinton's critics claimed his judgment was faulty and his motives ripe for investigation, few questioned his right to employ a presidential power given presidents by the Constitution.

The right to pardon or to commute a prison sentence has been exercised by virtually every president since George Washington in 1795 pardoned violent anti-tax protesters in the Whiskey Rebellion.

Over more than two centuries, presidents have issued thousands of pardons, most to people whose names have never caught the attention of the public or historians.

In 1992 President George Bush pardoned a man convicted in 1963 of stealing 12 six-packs of beer on an Indian reservation. He also pardoned a Kentuckian convicted in 1947 of moonshining.

Attention-grabbers involve famous names or celebrated cases.

In 1974, in the most famous pardon of modern times, President Ford assured that former President Nixon would never face criminal charges growing out of the Watergate scandal that had caused his resignation.

Some 20th century examples:

-Ford pardoned Iva Toguri D' Aquino, who made World War II propaganda broadcasts for Japan under the name "Tokyo Rose."

-Nixon commuted the sentence of Teamsters union leader Jimmy Hoffa on condition Hoffa stay out of labor activities for eight years.

Presidential pardons wipe the slate clean. In the case of Ford's pardon of Nixon, it prevented any consideration of guilt or punishment.

That's what Bush did when he issued his famous Christmas Eve pardons in 1992. That act short-circuited the prosecution of several former government officials under investigation in the Iran-Contra affair.

"The Constitution is quite clear on the powers of the president and sometimes the president has to make a difficult decision, and that's what I've done," Bush said later as he responded to of criticism of his action.

Article II, Section 2 states the chief executive "shall have power to grant Reprieves and Pardons for Offenses against the United States, except in Cases of Impeachment."

The presidential power to pardon was introduced at the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia on June 18, 1787 by Alexander Hamilton.

In making the case in the Federalist Papers, Hamilton said the most important reason for the pardon power was not to show mercy to criminals but to allow flexibility "in seasons of insurrection or rebellion."

"There are often critical moments when a well-timed offer of pardon to the insurgents or rebels may restore the tranquility of the commonwealth," Hamilton reasoned.

That's why Washington, in December 1795, pardoned those convicted of crimes stemming from the Whiskey Rebellion of 1792.

Washington had used the army to suppress "disorder and insurrection" in western Pennsylvania, where distillers and their friends had violently resisted efforts to collect the federal tax on whiskey.

But now, Washington reported to Congress, "quiet and order" had been restored and "the misled have abandoned their errors and pay respect to our Constitution and laws."

Other presidents have acted for similar reasons.

Abraham Lincoln and Andrew Johnson issued amnesties for Confederate soldiers and political leaders during and after the Civil War. Jimmy Carter, on his first day in office in 1977, reprieved thousands of Vietnam-era draft evaders.

EDITOR'S NOTE - Lawrence L. Knutson has covered the White House, Congress and Washington's history for more than 30 years.

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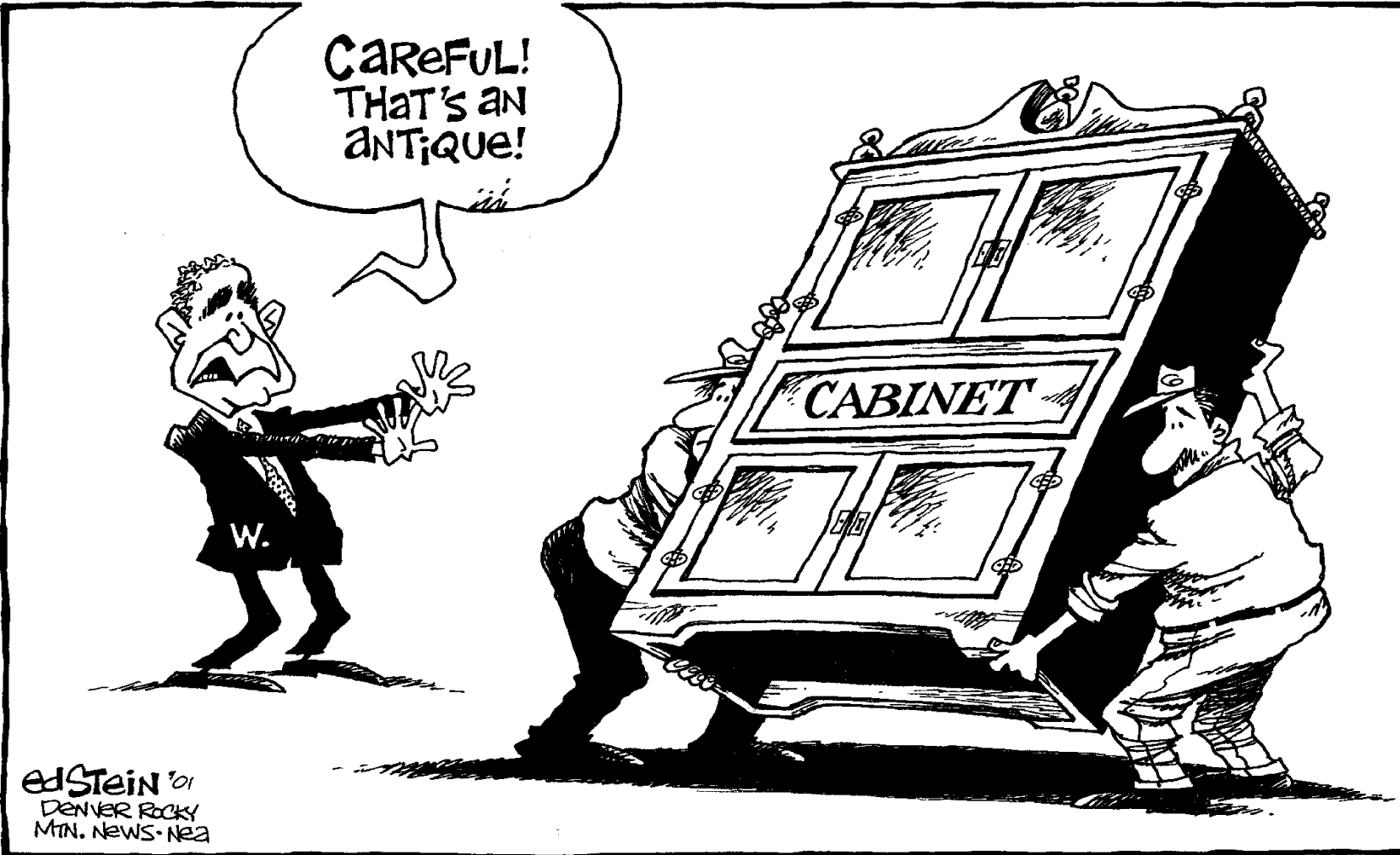
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Personality disorders spawn 'crazy-kid drugs'

An old college friend called me a couple of weeks ago to ask if I would attend her wedding this summer. She was supposed to get married last May, but postponed the wedding because neither she nor her boyfriend felt ready.

I hadn't talked to her for over a year, so we had a lot of catching up to do. A few months after we graduated from college, her father died of leukemia and I asked how her family was doing now.

She said her sisters were getting on with life and her mother had gotten remarried to a man she knew in high school. Megan said she was doing fine, but later said she was taking what she called "crazy-kid drugs."

I don't remember what the name of the drug was, but Megan said it was supposed to fix a chemical imbalance in her body that caused social anxiety disorder.

She said after her father died, she started feeling anxious when she was with a large group of people and was easily upset over minor problems or comments people made.

Soon, Megan said, she couldn't eat, she couldn't sleep and she couldn't leave her house without feeling stressed. She said she started to see a massage therapist, but that didn't help much.

After a few sessions, she said, the therapist told



rachel miscall

- unraveling

her that some of her muscles weren't relaxing and her tension could be cause by something beyond physical problems or everyday stresses.

She said the last straw came one day when she was on the phone with her telephone company. Suddenly, she said, she was standing on the sidewalk in front of her home banging her wireless telephone into the ground and jumping up and down. She said she was angrier than she had ever felt.

Megan said she started to see a psychologist and he prescribed the crazy-kid drugs. She said she only saw the psychologist a few times and wasn't continuing therapy. Basically, she said, the psychologist told her to try out the drug and didn't suggest further therapy.

She said she thought the drug was working OK, but it definitely wasn't the answer to all of her problems.

After talking to Megan, I started thinking about

Uncle Sam a Joseph of Egypt?

Would a parent care if it was genetically altered corn if his children was crying from hunger?

There are some places in this world of seven billion people who fear hunger more than a notice from the Internal Revenue Service.

Before we can export our farm surpluses the Commerce and State Department must issue a export license. This (it takes an export license) is a relic of the cold war. We lived in a far different world when the Soviet Union tried to steal our grain reserves. Bet farmers wish Ivan would come steal our grain again maybe wheat would go to \$5.00 a bushel. If he did steal our grain reserves it would not be bigger again this year. It's all right to do away with guns but you better keep the export licensing of farm exports. Well we really need them, think of the hungry in America.

The free food pentagon (big five food processors) like them too. They say farm surpluses, isn't so bad. Food inflation is up, but it is under three percent.

Wait a minute farm prices are lower than a snake's belly and food costs more, just who gets the money? It sure isn't farmers - all they get is what the little boy shot at (nothing).

Wonder if higher food prices is a tax bracket creep on the people. Couple years go these fancy



wayne gattshall

- wayne's world

guys said low farm prices was like a tax cut for the people. So why isn't the latest jump in the cost of food a tax bracket creep on the people?

Isn't this cyberspace economy great. Another farm bill or a tax bracket creep. Take your choice, but what if the people get both?

It was a former Secretary of Agriculture who said the American people need to know while national defense (military industrial complex) is essential to our security, so is the Department of Agriculture-free-food-complex. Well he didn't quite say that but what he meant was to have more money for the Agricultural Market Transition Act, commonly called (Freedom to Farm) payments. That is a good thing, don't you know!

In 1942 Franklin D. Roosevelt gave a speech on the four freedoms and one of those was the freedom from hunger.

There is not a nation in the world that is not debauching their currency to make their exports com-

the world we live in today. A world where it's no longer acceptable to be shy, hyper or even distraught over the loss of a loved one.

Today, you're not shy, you have "social anxiety disorder;" you're not hyper or unorganized, you have "attention deficit disorder;" and you're not sad, you're "depressed." And there is most likely a drug out there that doctors say will fix your personality disorder.

The upside to these drugs is that they help some people feel happier, which helps everyone around that person.

The downside, I think, is that in some cases the drugs are used alone, without therapy.

In Megan's case, I can't understand why she would be taking a drug to help a medical problem that seems to be caused or at least intensified by the grief and anger she feels about her father's death—and not also be seeing a psychologist regularly.

I also can't understand why a psychologist would prescribe the drug without insisting Megan see him regularly to work through her sadness. Is she supposed to take the drug for the rest of her life? Or hope that someday she'll miraculously be cured?

I'm no psychologist, but it seems to me like Megan has covered a stab wound with a band-aid. I don't think it's going to stop the bleeding.

petitive with U.S. grain prices. Nearly every former Soviet bloc nation needs food imports too. Once upon a time, General Secretary of the Communist Party Leonid Brezhnev bought grain from the U.S. to feed his communists puppet regimes, but now we give them the grain to build up their military. So that's really the cyberspace world of free trade these fancy guys are talking about.

Every time the price of corn is cheap we either drink it or burn it to keep us warm.

In 1786 it was the Whiskey rebellion. In the 1880s it was the Grover Cleveland depression. Then farmers burned corn for coal. We burned corn in the great depression, too.

If we don't learn from past mistakes we are doomed to repeat them again. So maybe it is a good idea to make ethanol out of corn but everywhere you look another less developed nation will need food imports.

It was Joseph of Egypt who gave his long lost brothers both the grain and their money back. But the United States is better than Joseph we are giving them the grain - our money and pay the freight doing it. So now we know what those fancy guy free traders are talking about!

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Sub-state a chance to show off for state officials

Dear Editor:

The Kansas State High School Activities Association has given Goodland High School the opportunity to host a 4A Sub-State Basketball Tournament featuring the best 4A boys and girls basketball teams in western Kansas. First round games were held at the home of the top four seeded teams beginning Monday.

The Goodland Cowgirls will host Thomas More Prep in a first round game Tuesday at 6 p.m. Mountain Time (Editor's note: This has been changed to 6 p.m. Mountain Time, Wednesday because of weather.)

Thursday through Saturday the semi-finals and finals will be played in the Max L. Jones Fieldhouse.

This is a great opportunity for our community to see some great basketball and, at the same time, demonstrate to the state association in Topeka that we can host a successful tournament. Despite the fact we have one of the finest athletic facilities in the state, and outstanding community services, we are not often given the opportunity to host regional and sub-state events because of our geographical location. This is our opportunity to let the state people see that we support these events when we are given the choice to host them, but it takes your participation.

By your presence in the stands, we can show the state athletic association officials that we deserve



from our readers

- to the editor

more consideration when selecting tournament sites. The financial income of the event is one of the measuring sticks used to judge the success of the tournament. By purchasing a ticket and taking in the games, you not only support our home teams, but you can help us make a positive statement about our community and our commitment to hosting successful post-season events.

Thanks for your support in the past, and we look forward to seeing you in the Max at 6 p.m. Mountain Time on Wednesday when the Cowgirls host a first round game.

The Max will be the site of great basketball at 5 p.m. Mountain Time on Thursday when Colby faces Ulysses and at 6:30 p.m. Mountain Time on Thursday when the Cowboys face Scott City in the semi-finals. Friday will be the semi-finals for the girls bracket, and Saturday beginning at 6 p.m. Mountain Time will be the sub-state championships.

This sub-state features the most balanced teams and some of the hottest contested rivalries to be found anywhere. Come enjoy some great basket-

ball at the 4A sub-state basketball tournament in Goodland.

Richard Liess

Goodland Athletic Director

berry's world

