

commentary

from other pens...

Getting all officials in step not so easy

By George Gedda

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — When dealing with high-stakes foreign policy issues, government officials “should be on the same page.” They should “speak with one voice.” They should avoid sending “mixed messages.”

Still feeling its way after seven weeks on the job, the Bush administration fell short of that standard last week when addressing the North Korea issue in a substantive way for the first time.

Secretary of State Colin Powell said he planned to pick up North Korea policy where Clinton had left it and spoke of the “promising elements” of a deal the former president had been negotiating with Pyongyang.

Less than 24 hours later, as President Bush was conferring with South Korean President Kim Dae-jung, Powell made a surprise appearance in the White House press room.

He performed a flip-flop, dropping conciliatory references to North Korea while issuing stern warnings about the threat posed by Pyongyang’s “huge army.” He gave assurances that Bush “won’t be fooled by the nature of the regime.” He said no negotiations with Pyongyang are planned until after a policy review.

Eight years ago, not long after Clinton took office, Undersecretary of State Peter Tarnoff wandered off the reservation by saying the United States had to cut back on commitments because it was too poor to lead.

Two days later, Secretary of State Warren Christopher said in a speech: “America must lead.” It was a message he repeated dozens of times in his remarks to blunt the fallout from Tarnoff’s comments.

When President Reagan took office, officials issued threats about taking out Fidel Castro because of his meddling in Central America.

A U-turn was announced seven weeks after Reagan’s inauguration; reporters overplayed the story, they were told. Reagan, officials said, did not want foreign pursuits to interfere with his quest for a tax cut.

Perhaps the most serious early-term blunder was President John F. Kennedy’s decision in 1961 to give the go-ahead for the Bay of Pigs invasion. The invaders suffered a humiliating defeat, as did Kennedy.

Administrations have hard- and soft-liners, and this one is no exception. Besides North Korea, there apparently are disagreements over Iraq — Powell pursuing a cautious approach, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld favors an activist policy to depose President Saddam Hussein.

As for Powell’s remarks last week, Condoleezza Rice, Bush’s foreign policy adviser, noted he did not say in his conciliatory remarks that the administration was ready to resume missile talks. Alluding to Powell’s reference to the “promising elements” in Clinton era negotiations, she said that was something the administration was exploring in its review of Korea policy.

Another senior administration official said if Powell had it to do over again, he would omit the part about picking up where Clinton left off.

Henry Graff, a Columbia University historian, says early-term mistakes by the Bush team are understandable, especially given the abbreviated transition before Bush took office. He also noted Powell is at a disadvantage because none of his top advisers are in place yet.

On the day Powell did his dove-hawk conversion, Bush appeared to misspeak when he said, with Kim at his side, “We’re not certain whether or not they (the North Koreans) are keeping all terms of all agreements.”

The United States and North Korea have only one agreement, a nuclear accord signed in 1994. Sen. Joseph Biden, D-Del., a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, says Bush’s allegations of violations were mystifying.

“There’s no evidence of that. Zero. Zip. None,” he says.

Biden says that on foreign policy, “there does not seem to be a clear voice” in the context of North Korea and in general. “I’m not sure whose running foreign policy.”

EDITOR’S NOTE — George Gedda has covered foreign affairs for The Associated Press since 1968.



Eating right and exercise aren’t enough

Have you ever heard yourself saying these words? Oh, I know how to lose weight, eat right and exercise. This is a true statement!

Through my years dieting I thought this fact was the Eleventh Commandment. I have embarked on many diet and exercise regimes. And yes, they would work. I would exercise for one hour daily, sweat and moan, speaking these words over and over. To lose weight, I must eat right and exercise.

The pounds would be coming off and I was excited. Then something would happen that I would have to break my exercise routine, and then I would automatically think, Well, if I am unable to exercise, it isn’t going to do any good to eat right.

I would spend a week or two waiting for things to get back to normal so I could start my diet and exercise again. Naturally, it would eventually end up in defeat for me. I would be back to normal. (eating and being sedentary).

Do you see how this attitude is damaging to you? You have joined these two things so tightly together that you have limited your chance for success. What if you broke a leg or were having back problems? There are many things that would prevent you from being able to exercise. So you just accept defeat! I urge people to exercise if they can. However, I lost eighty pounds before I began any type of exercise.

I do extol the benefits of exercise! There are several considerations that need to be addressed concerning the type of exercise you choose. I thoroughly enjoyed the step-up aerobics but I realize



sally mosier

- freedom in eating

that they are not for everybody. I am also hearing of benefits attributed to weight training. My advice to you is to do some checking on your own if you want to do intense exercise.

The type of exercise that I can feel good about recommending is walking. I love walking for two reasons: Number one, it is a good exercise, and number two, I love the peace and quite of a morning walk.

Exercise will build up your muscles. Muscles are the largest fat burners in the body. If there comes a time that your weight loss slows down, that is the time to develop your muscles so as to burn some more fat grams. Remember, any calories not burned are always stored as fat! No matter what! It doesn’t matter whether they are simple sugar calories or not, they are stored as fat if they are not burned.

Now, to take all of that and put it into my words, Walking is a good exercise! It works to help you build muscle and burn fat, and we can make it enjoyable. What more could we ask?

I will not set up any hard and fast rules for you concerning your walks. I want you to do what is comfortable and enjoyable for you. The longer you

walk, the more fat you will burn. But don’t put yourself in bondage over time or distance. Continue to challenge yourself by increasing only as you feel comfortable.

Experience the freedom.

Exercise, coupled with eating in a way that will speed up your metabolism, will cause you to lose weight. Have a big bowl of this warm and yummy soup and then try an evening walk with your own personal Valentine.

Smoked Sausage and Bean Soup

1 medium onion, finely chopped
1 tsp. bottled minced garlic
6 cups water
2 med. potatoes, chopped (2 cups)
16 oz fully cooked Healthy Choice Sausage, sliced
1 15 oz can red kidney beans, rinsed and drained
1 t. instant beef bouillon granules
2 cups chopped cabbage (I use preshredded cabbage, because.... it’s easier)
1/4 cup tomato paste or catsup
3 T vinegar

In a 4-quart Dutch oven cook the onion and garlic with a little water, until tender. Add the rest of water, potatoes, sausage, beans, and bouillon granules. Heat to boiling. Reduce heat; simmer, covered for 15 min. Add the cabbage mix, tomato paste or catsup, and vinegar.

Simmer, covered, 10 minutes more.

I would love to hear from you. E-mail me at gosally@netwest.com or write to me at: 400 10th St., Canyon, Texas, 79015.

Those older employees are recession heroes

They say we’re heading for another recession, and for those of us who didn’t really enjoy the last one, this news is not good. There are going to be layoffs and downsizing, and companies are going to be looking sideways at anybody over the age of 40 as a prime candidate for the golden handshake.

So if any of you CEOs out there are reading this, I have a better idea. Instead of getting rid of the middle-aged guys, keep them on and put them in charge. Anybody who’s been married more than 20 years and has put a couple of kids through college can handle any recession you throw at them. Look at how they dress and what they drive.

These guys are content to be chugging along. They’re not going to kill you with demands or ambition. They’ve given up. And that’s what makes them great corporate middle management. Especially during a recession. See how they’ve managed to cover that large bald spot with only 12 hairs? These are guys who can do more with less.

GOOD NEWS FOR WHOM?

I’ve noticed an odd thing that people do whenever they’re telling me about something good — when they’ve just picked up a new car or moved into a new house or have won the lottery: They always add a couple of disappointments in there.

“I wanted the teal blue but had to settle for the aqua blue.”

“They put in an acrylic laundry tub, even though I told them a hundred times we wanted fiberglass.”

“The bank was so nervous about accepting a deposit check that large.”

They don’t want me to think they’ve got it easy compared to me. They don’t want me to envy them too much. So they throw in a couple of minor



red green

- north of forty

wrinkles in the midst of a boastful story just so they’ll feel they’re doing the right thing.

But if these people really want to do the right thing, they shouldn’t mention their good news unless I bring it up. I know you have a new house, I can see you’re driving a new car, and that 22-year-old model hanging onto your arm convinces me that you won the lottery.

DANGEROUS DECISIONS

The most dangerous decisions in life are the emotional ones. When you fall in love with someone or something, you lose all ability to make rational, logical comparative evaluation. If the resulting decision turns out to be a good one, that’s blind luck. So it’s always wise for you to know when you’re making an emotional decision. Here are a few warning signs to watch for:

— You don’t want to talk to anyone about the decision. Especially your current wife.

— You want to act on the decision as quickly as possible, before doubt creeps in, as you know it should.

— You imagine that after you enact this decision, you will be younger and better-looking.

— You smile whenever you think about the decision, which is all the time. If you’re unaware that you’re smiling all the time, the other morticians

will probably mention it.

IN A HEARTBEAT

I have this theory that your lifespan is not determined by your genes or your diet or your fitness level. I think that each person is assigned a certain number of heartbeats. Like at the carnival, where you get three tosses for a dollar. Once you’ve used the tosses, you’re done.

And at the carnival, you win a kewpie doll. In life, you have to date them first.

So you take a look at your allotment of heartbeats and have to decide how to spend them. Normal life takes about 70 a minute. Obesity and high blood pressure take a few more. So do jogging and talking to the police.

My advice is, before you do something that’s going to increase your pulse, make sure it’s worth it. Make sure that after it’s over, you’ll have a new garage, or a kid. Or a kewpie doll.

Quote of the Day: “If you lend someone \$20 and never see that person again, it was probably worth it.” — Red Green

Red Green is the star of “The Red Green Show,” a television series seen in the U.S. on PBS and in Canada on the CBC Network, and the author of “The Red Green Book” and “Red Green Talks Cars: A Love Story.”

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