

commentary

from other pens...

The aversion to U.S. boots on African soil

By George Gedda

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON—Americans don't have much stomach for involvement in Africa's myriad conflicts so Secretary of State Colin Powell is using his four-country visit to the continent to focus on health issues, especially AIDS.

After a stop in Mali on Wednesday, Powell will fly to South Africa, where an astonishing 4.7 million people — 11 percent of the population — have the virus. In Botswana, the infection rate is estimated at 36 percent.

President Bush has volunteered a "down payment" of \$200 million as part of an effort to fight AIDS and other diseases ravaging Africa.

Powell has a number of AIDS-related events on his calendar, especially on the South Africa, Kenya and Uganda legs of his trip.

Helping African nations fight AIDS benefits countries worldwide, the United States included, because the disease spreads so easily, administration officials say.

Powell will discuss security issues on his trip as well but there is a sense of resignation about the ability of the U.S. to do much in this area.

Africa's difficulty in avoiding both civil and interstate conflicts is a phenomenon almost as discouraging as the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

A U.S. Institute of Peace study says African countries involved in conflicts last year included Algeria, Angola, Burundi, Chad, Comoros, Ivory Coast, Congo, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Liberia, Namibia, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan, Uganda and Zimbabwe.

That adds up to 22 countries, twice the number for 1989. Peace agreements can be signed one day and violated almost immediately. The New York-based International Rescue Committee estimates that the war in Congo has claimed 2.5 million lives in 2 1/2 years.

There are four U.N. peacekeeping missions in Africa — in Sierra Leone, Eritrea-Ethiopia, Western Sahara and the Congo — and no U.S. troops have been committed to any of them.

Because of a congressional freeze, the U.S. is \$350 million in arrears in helping to finance these missions, officials say.

During the early 1990's, the United States showed enthusiasm for rescue operations in Africa but no more. The change of heart is partially the result of the tragedy in Somalia when 18 American soldiers died during a firefight while on a humanitarian mission in 1993.

The U.S. Institute of Peace report says U.S. and other leaders are unwilling "to risk the loss of soldiers in poorly understood lands where there may be no perceived national or strategic interest."

It adds that "the aversion to peacekeeping among American military and policy-makers runs deep."

Nonetheless, the United States has been supportive in some ways. In Nigeria, American soldiers have trained troops from Sierra Leone, preparing them for battle against a rebel movement widely known for its brutality. Additional training of Sierra Leone troops may take place in Ghana and Senegal.

The administration clearly wants to help bring an end to the war there. "This is a regional conflict there and it could spread again," says Timothy W. Docking, an Africa specialist at the peace institute.

A main reason for Powell's decision to open his trip in Mali was that the country's president, Alpha Oumar Konare, is head of a West African regional grouping that is trying to end the conflict in Sierra Leone. In addition, Konare is one of the few elected presidents in the region.

Powell also is showing interest in deeper American involvement in attempting to settle the 18-year old conflict in Sudan. The administration has decided to try to revitalize a moribund peace process. It is not clear whether there is much political will to do more.

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

BUSH'S LATEST FAITH-BASED INITIATIVE...

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Ideas for changing the attitude of your fridge

As we work with people in our clinics through the years we make it a special point to visit with each of them. After we have seen successful weight loss we would ask them to list the pivotal points that helped make this time different.

I want to share some of them with you. Who knows, maybe you will find your nugget booster listed within.

Janis said: "I quit using food as my stress reliever, my comforter and my habit. I set small goals. I took it one step at a time. I would use each new day as a new beginning. (I love this one, it keeps us from feeling beat down if we messed up.)"

Juna said: Find something you can live with and stick with it. Read labels (don't make this harder than it is, it is really quite simple. E-mail me and I will send you my secrets.) Downsize your plate. (this helps with portion sizes.) Drink 6 to 8 glasses of water a day to help curb hunger

Betsy said: Learn to enjoy the right kind of food. Eat only when you are hungry. Increase daily activity. De-fat your kitchen (wonderful idea, see below.)

These are a few of the things that worked for others. I can concur with each of them. In fact, I will concur with anything that works, as long as it is healthy.

I have volumes of this type of data. It is so important that you find what works for you.

Now would be a good opportunity to talk with you about de-fattening your kitchen. Let's start with the fridge.

A well-stocked fridge will mean less fast food and less fatty snacks. A little quote that has been a



sally mosier

- freedom in eating

big help to me in this endeavor has been: "What you put in your refrigerator is what you end up putting into your body."

We can go a little further, what I want you to do is to give your kitchen a complete new attitude. Here are a few great starts for your fridge.

Start with your condiments — you will be surprised at the fat you can put on your food. Begin by purchasing the no fat variety of salad dressings to replace the other. Did you know that normal salad dressing has 60 grams of fat per ladle? (about 4 tablespoons.)

Next add some personality and color — Stock up with fruit and vegetables. You will love it!

Imagine the beauty of apples, plums, grapes and oranges. Then add lettuce, tomatoes, onions, mushrooms, carrots, and corn on the cob. What a riot of color!

You then will add low-fat margarine and cheeses, cartons of yogurt, tofu, skim milk and egg substitutes.

Plan ahead. I have found it to be so helpful to prepare healthful, low-fat meals in advance, place them in the freezer.

If you know you have a quick but healthy meal at home you will be less likely to stop by and pick

up fast food. We just need to determine to make it easier to eat healthy.

Go ahead and pre-wash your fruits and veggies. If you have a member of the family that insists on the high fat snacks, go ahead and provide them.

Be sneaky, make it things that they would have to prepare. Keep the healthy alternatives at their fingertips.

Before you know it you will see that the less desirables are gathering dust at the back of the fridge. By changing the attitude of your fridge, you will find it much easier for you and your entire family to experience the freedom in eating healthy.

Mable sent this great new recipe to us that would be a good beginning on using some of those no-fat condiments found in your fridge with a new attitude.

Sweet Mable's Mustard Pork Roast

Two-thirds cup maple syrup 3 T Dijon-style mustard 2 T apple cider vinegar 2 T soy sauce 2 lbs LEAN pork boneless loin roast.

Preheat oven to 350. In bowl stir together maple syrup, mustard, cider vinegar, soy sauce. (salt and pepper to taste) Spread mixture evenly over pork. Place pork in shallow roasting pan. Roast until meat thermometer reads 150, about 1 hour, 15 minutes. Remove from oven; let stand 10 minutes. Slice, serve and enjoy the freedom!

Summer time can be "slim-down" time. Order our "Freedom Package". You will receive our complete weight loss plan and our popular recipe book for only \$20.00. Just send your check to "Freedom Package" 400 10th. St., Canyon, Texas 79015. Slim down the Freedom way. e-mail me at gosally@netwest.com

Being short with each other

Throughout history, short people have built a reputation for being extremely touchy. There's something about being the shortest person in the room that brings out the Chihuahua in people. Almost every diminutive person, from Napoleon to Toulouse Lautrec to my sixth grade teacher, has had a real problem being the last one to find out it's raining. I'm forced to conclude that being short can make you angry, and that worries me. Because, as we all get older, we will also all get shorter. And I'm talking about baby boomers, which means there are a whole lot of us. Are we looking at a future in which the majority of the population is a bunch of sawed-off crabby old guys running around biting people on the knee? Not me. I'm going to be ready for it. That's why I sit when everyone else is standing. I'm practicing being short so I'm ready when the day comes. If that sounds sensible to you, would you please explain it to my wife?

MEN'S WEAR?

I think I've spotted a flaw in the design of men's clothing. Men's clothes are tight in all the wrong places — around the waist, across the chest, in the seat. When I try on a pair of pants that are generous and roomy in the calf and knee area, and then can't do up the waistband, that sends a message that there's something unusual about my body shape. Well from what I've seen in the golf club locker room, my body shape is pretty darn normal. The designers are the oddballs here. They're making clothes for men my age who have narrow waists



red green

- north of forty

and small seats. These men are rare to the point of being freakish. I say it's time to design clothes that are tailored to the marketplace. Maybe a one-piece suit that hangs from the shoulders and is belted loosely just above each knee. Some easy flowing material that's not too revealing, with vertical stripes and a stretchy panel for buffet night.

DEJA VOX

One of the best ways to avoid aging is to stop yourself from doing things that old people do. Like repeating yourself. It is very annoying to others when you repeat something you've already told them. It is very annoying to others when you repeat something you've already told them. The trouble is you're not always aware that you're doing it. So here are a few signs to watch for that indicate these people have heard all of this before:

- They scan the room for an exit.
- They down their drink and go for another.
- They're mouthing the words along with you.
- They have a fake heart attack.
- They have a real heart attack.

BIG BOX STORES

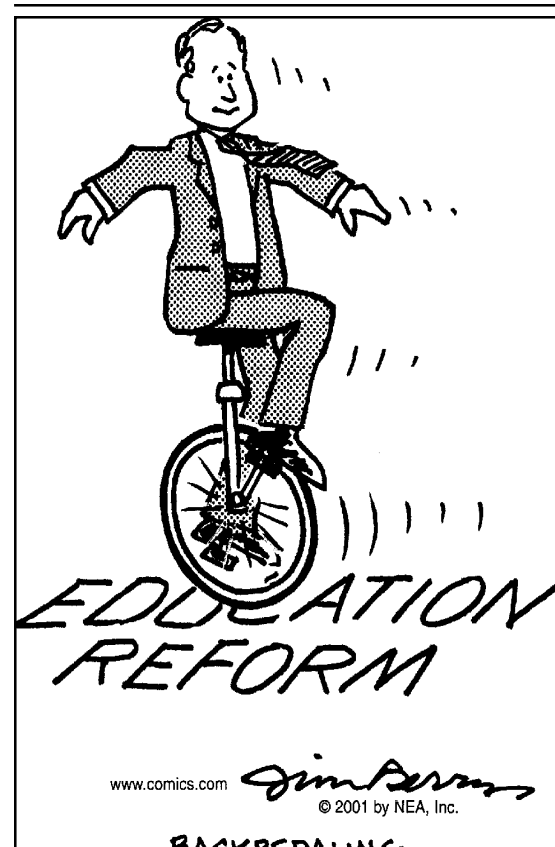
We've seen a lot of these big box stores spring

up over the last few years. Everybody has their theories as to why this happened, but I think it's all based on credit cards. When we were a cash society, you'd come into the corner store with twenty bucks, spend it, leave, then come back later in the week when you had another twenty bucks. These days you come in with no cash at all. Instead, you have a credit card with a \$5,000 limit. This makes you a much better prospect for the retailer. He's going to fill his big box with everything you ever wanted and then some, and by the time you're outta there, your credit card is going to have to lie down for a while. Which means you won't be able to shop anywhere else. And they call it competition.

Quote of the Day: "At my age I can still enjoy myself, but I find the fun doesn't take as long as the recovery." — 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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