

# commentary

from other pens...

## 'That damn cowboy' took charge this week

By Lawrence L. Knutson

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — A century ago this week a force of unbridled energy leaped into the saddle of the American presidency.

Theodore Roosevelt quickly filled the gap left by the assassination of William McKinley. He reshaped the office and the attitudes of the country and stamped each with the vigor and spirit of his personality.

In a capital accustomed to gradual change and predictable patterns, "Roosevelt blew in like a tornado off the Great Plains," historian H. W. Brands wrote in his 1997 biography, "T.R.: The Last Romantic."

Roosevelt, McKinley's vice president, was in the Adirondack Mountains of New York on a family vacation when telegrams advised that McKinley, first thought to be recovering, was in fact dying.

McKinley had been shot twice by an anarchist Sept. 6 while shaking hands at a reception at the Pan American Exposition in Buffalo, N.Y. Roosevelt began his vacation after being assured the president would live.

Black-bordered newspapers were thudding onto doorsteps and stoops of a stunned nation when Roosevelt swung aboard the waiting train.

It was Sept. 14, 1901. McKinley had become the third American president to die at the hand of an assassin.

Seeking to foster a sense of continuity, Roosevelt took the oath after vowing to continue McKinley's policies "absolutely unbroken."

Some of new president's friends fretted Roosevelt's promise might cause him to be seen as only "a pale copy" of the fallen leader.

Mark Hanna, McKinley's closest political adviser who had opposed TR's selection as vice president, had no such fear.

"I told William McKinley it was a mistake to nominate that wild man at Philadelphia," Hanna said aboard McKinley's funeral train. "Now look, that damn cowboy is president of the United States."

Roosevelt had been a hard-riding Dakota ranch owner, crime-busting New York City police commissioner, assistant secretary of the Navy, leader of the Rough Riders in Cuba and governor of New York.

Soon, the Roosevelts and their six lively children tumbled into the Executive Mansion with parrots and ponies and pet snakes.

In one of his first acts, the president ordered new stationary and officially gave the place the name people had always called it: the White House.

The house itself was soon transformed. Its interiors shed their overstuffed Victorian gloom and gained the elegant, understated classical style that still surrounds the American presidency.

Roosevelt moved to rein in corporate monopolies, conserve the nation's natural heritage, protect the safety of the food supply, assert American power in the world and build the Panama Canal, all while wringing from the office every drop of authority it possessed.

"I did greatly broaden the use of executive power," he was to say.

One historian said it was also clear Roosevelt could with equal ease lasso a steer, write a historical essay, hunt lions, converse with cowboys, run a political convention, play tennis, read voraciously, command a regiment, entertain royalty and hypnotize an audience.

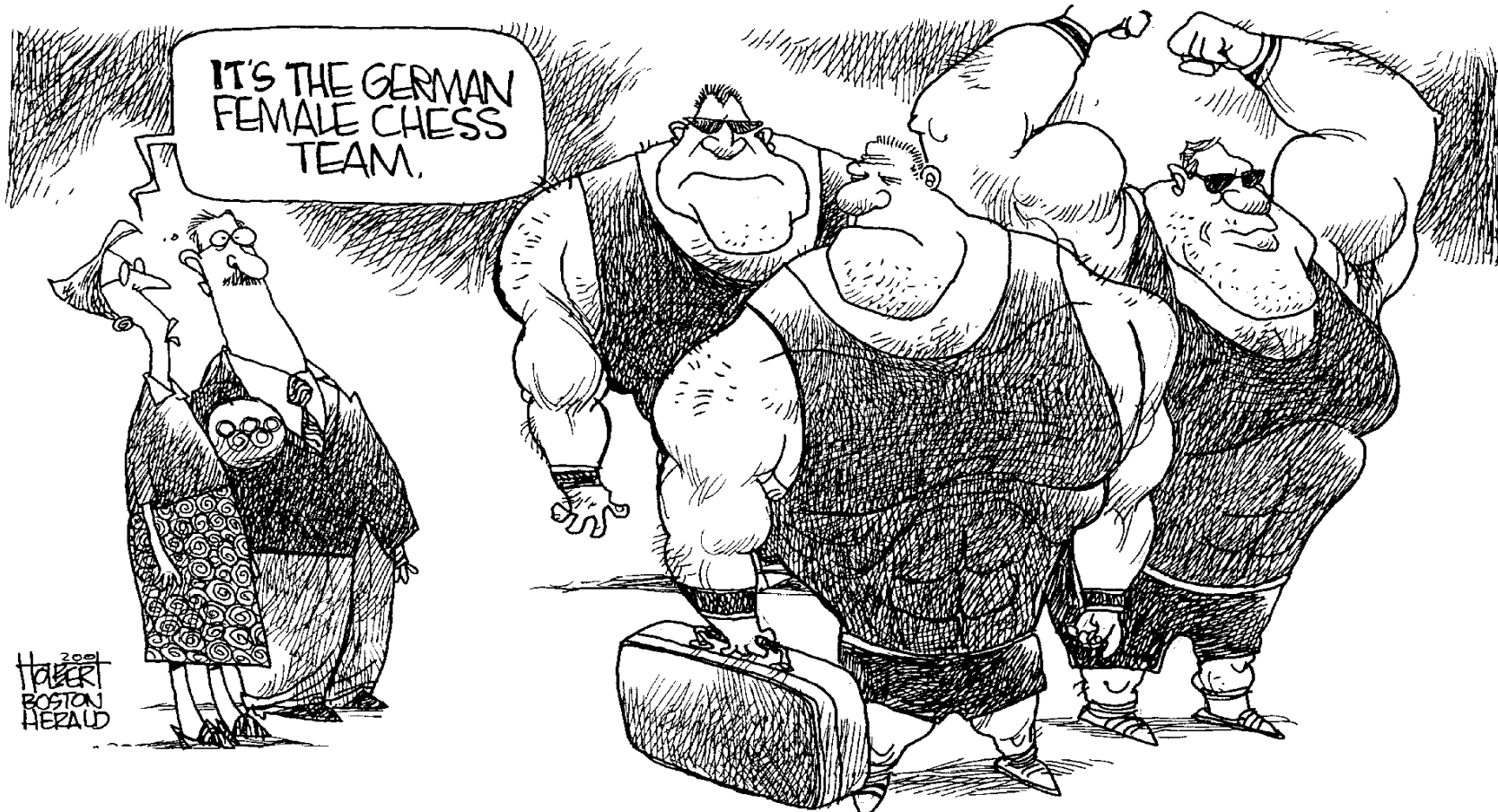
"Theodore Roosevelt made ... the president a domestic steward of the people, who regulated big business, protected the consumer, and preserved 230 million acres of parks, forests and wildlife preserves and national monuments" for the future, historian John Allen Gable said at a conference last year on White House history.

"TR saw the White House as a 'bully pulpit' for preaching the doctrines of the strenuous life, the big stick and the square deal," said Gable, executive director of the Theodore Roosevelt Association.

"In short, TR established what has been called the modern presidency."

He had also inspired a new generation of idealists. Speaking many years later, one of TR's daughters summed up. "It was a brave, bright morning," Ethel Roosevelt said.

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



CHESS FEDERATION TO BEGIN DRUG TESTING, TRYING TO MAKE CHESS AN OLYMPIC SPORT

## The Charlie Brown and Lucy show again

Those up north Indians (northeast gypsy moth Senators) would rather be seen in Figgie's porno bar than be caught with an oil well.

The big Chief in the White Teepee has said there would be no more money to farmers. That was the good news. The bad news is he doesn't mean it.

You can always tell when the Potomac swamp (Congress) doesn't have the votes to pass another processor subsidy farm bill. He wants subsidies to beef and specialty crops.

When the Department of Agriculture Free-Food-complex, (food processors) doesn't want to pay the price they use fan subsidies. It's like Charley Brown and Lucy with the football, even after \$24 billion in farm subsidies for the year 2000 farm income was only \$16,000.

Don't believe it? Don't blame you, and they thought sweat shops were bad. We need to do something. Let's have another fast trick called Market Promotion Authority. Ah, the Big Chief doesn't have the votes for that either.

It was in 1948 when the "it takes a Village" Washington thought up a farm bill that included everything. It was called the Brennen Plan but Congress didn't pass it because it put agriculture into a bureaucratic strait jacket.

But that doesn't keep them from trying again. The way the Tribe (Congress) is spending money on farm subsidies you would think food was a satellite.

Wrong there. If it was—some nuclear scientist would smuggle it to the Peoples Republic of China, and never be arrested.

Well a North Carolina Mafia is more efficient than government. In 1835 the North Carolina legislature declared it illegal to collect protective tariffs for the grand ole lady of big government. It was only when the famous Indian fighter President Andrew Jackson threatened to hang the perpetrators that the question was resolved.



wayne gattshall

• wayne's world

Today we collect import duties that the nuclear corporations call a tax rebate, because they get the money. The Maritime service and the Longshoreman Union collects an export subsidy, that we call free trade.

It is OK because farmers have their subsidies so don't get religious with us Longshoremen.

OK fine, you are right. We think exports and imports should go on American ships. Since we have all these free trade agreements, a cargo of soybeans from South America is no different than a cargo to Hawaii or Alaska.

We will give our food exports away and pay the freight doing it under a half dozen concessional free food exports. But why not the money comes from everyone's designated banker the Department of Agriculture Commodity Credit Corporation—that no one ever pays back.

You dare not call it foreign aid but it is. We use free food exports to subsidize the other guys agriculture, for AIDS prevention and even for them to build up their military.

The 1990s may have been a big party on Wall Street, but the emerging economies in Asia and South America are on the ropes. The US has been the dumping grounds for their over-teched (surplus) Donald Duck exports.

This global of everything with these low commodity prices may be better than a tax cut for the nuclear corporations that have moved to Indonesia, Argentina and Brazil but it is not working. The ones that dollarized its currency have the same

problems the American farmer has. It costs too much to buy their exports in this world of debauched currencies.

President Hoover will always be blamed for causing the great depression. Even then U.S. agriculture was in the cross hairs of the American food processors.

He protected them from foreign competition when he signed the Smoot Hawley tariff bill that singled out increased tariffs on valued added food imports.

There was something else that happened. Not since 1929 has a Federal Reserve cut interest rates seven times in such a short time, until 2001. Oh yes, the Eugene Meyer Federal Reserve interest rate cuts saw the beginning of the great depression. And some fear it will happen again.

But who speaks for farmers? It sure is not our representatives in Congress.

It's kind of silly to hold a commodity checkoff vote that the Secretary of Agriculture decided was not really a vote just a producer preference.

It is just as silly to call another fast trick agreement anything but the slithering snake of protective tariffs.

All these free trade agreements haven't kept the world economy out of the horse tank, either. There is not a single former Soviet Union satellite that doesn't need food produced by the American farmer. Even the World Food Organization in Rome says we are losing the war on famine.

It might be OK in this cyberspace economy to let Mexican trucks onto our highways that may be safe, so why not import the other guy's surpluses under the Mother Jones Act with transportation costs from 50 percent to 300 percent over ocean going rates.

Yeah right when there are windmills in porno bars in California!

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## Foreign lottery scams

Dear Attorney General Stovall:

My grandmother told me about a phone call she received last week where a man called and identified himself as a representative with the United States Customs Service. He said my grandmother had won a Canadian sweepstakes and was, therefore, entitled to a huge sum of money. He told her that in order to receive the winnings she needed to wire him a \$1,500 "duty-fee." Fortunately, my grandmother refused, and she began to ask him all sorts of questions regarding his position with the service and the payment amount. The caller became irritated and told her she would be denied her money if she did not comply with his rules, so she hung up on him. Attorney General Stovall, was this call a scam?

Dear Kansas Consumer:

This call was indeed part of a scam, and my office has received information from other states that their consumers have been called by similar groups. If your grandmother had agreed to send the "representative" the money he requested, she would probably never hear from him again, and most likely would never see her "winnings." There is a slight chance he may have called again saying he needed more money to secure the "winnings," but since the initial amount he asked for was so large he probably would have just moved on to his next potential victim.



carla j. stovall

• consumer corner

Fraudulent telemarketers can get a consumer's phone number from a phone directory, mailing list, or "sucker list" which is a directory of consumers who have already lost money to illegal prize promotions and merchandise sales. Telemarketers such as these employ high-pressure tactics and are not afraid of using them on older people or anyone who seems susceptible to falling for their scheme.

Consumers must remember they do not need to pay for something they have won. The person who called your grandmother violated the Kansas Consumer Protection Act by requesting payment without giving her written notice of the amount she must pay to receive the prize. Further, if your grandmother is 60 years of age or older, the caller could be subject to an enhanced civil penalty of an additional \$10,000. Your grandmother was smart to ask this man questions. When telemarketers call, consumers have a right to ask questions about the product or service involved. They should ask for

information to be mailed to them, and a telemarketer's insistence on immediate payment should raise a red-flag in the consumer's mind\* this is a good sign that a fraud might very well be involved. Remember the well-known saying: if something sounds too good to be true, it probably is.

Attorney General Carla J. Stovall offers this public service to help you avoid becoming a victim of consumer fraud. Although some of the details have been changed, the cases appearing in this column are based on actual complaints. For further information or to file a complaint, please write Attorney General Carla J. Stovall, Consumer Protection Division, 120 SW 10th, 2nd Floor, Topeka, Kansas 66612, or call the toll-free Consumer Hotline, 1-800-432-2310. Leave your name, number and subject of your inquiry with the receptionist and an agent will return your call promptly.

## berry's world

