

commentary

from other pens...

Americans have felt shock, horror before

By Lawrence L. Knutson

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — In a country whose bywords have been optimism and progress and success there have been fleeting moments of helplessness, fear and uncertainty.

One such moment arrived last week on a date now etched in history and memory: Sept. 11, 2001, the morning the twin towers fell and the Pentagon's fortress wall was breached.

On an earlier day of despair, Aug. 24, 1814, an invading British army burned the Capitol and White House to their stone walls. Appalled Washingtonians were left to watch smoke coiling from charred timbers.

But the burning of Washington was not the knockout blow the British intended. Americans rallied. The British navy was soon repulsed at Fort McHenry in Baltimore. Months later the British army was defeated by Gen. Andrew Jackson at New Orleans.

The tiny capital was rebuilt, as it was, where it was. There was more. The Star-Spangled Banner, the shot-torn flag that flew through the night at Fort McHenry, inspired the national anthem, and became a pre-eminent symbol of renewed American pride.

That pride took a beating during the long hours of the Civil War as the telegraph keys stuttered out the story of hard fighting and grim battles. President Lincoln's shoulders slumped and much of the country despaired before the Union was restored.

A century ago this month Americans lost a president, William McKinley, to an anarchist gunman, a terrorist bent on killing the living symbol of a prosperous, successful, optimistic American state.

Then, as now, Americans asked: Who was this enemy among us? How did this happen? What can we do now?

The gunman's shots put Theodore Roosevelt in the White House. And Roosevelt proved to be a bolt of energy who reshaped and repowered the presidency for a new and difficult century.

Pearl Harbor — Dec. 7, 1941 — is the day everyone talks about, the day Japanese aircraft appeared suddenly over Hawaii, decimated the U.S. fleet, killed nearly 2,400 Americans, and swept the world into war.

Then as now there was an instinct for unity in the face of cruel facts. "Always will we remember the character of the onslaught against us," Franklin D. Roosevelt told Congress in words now being recalled and repeated. "We will not only defend ourselves to the uttermost, but will make certain that this form of treachery shall never endanger us again."

President Bush reached to emulate Roosevelt as he addressed the nation last Tuesday evening.

"Terrorist attacks can shake the foundations of our biggest buildings, but they cannot touch the foundations of America," he said. "These acts shatter steel, but they cannot dent the steel of American resolve."

Roosevelt's "day of infamy" speech was to World War II what his "nothing to fear but fear itself" speech had been in the darkest days of the Great Depression.

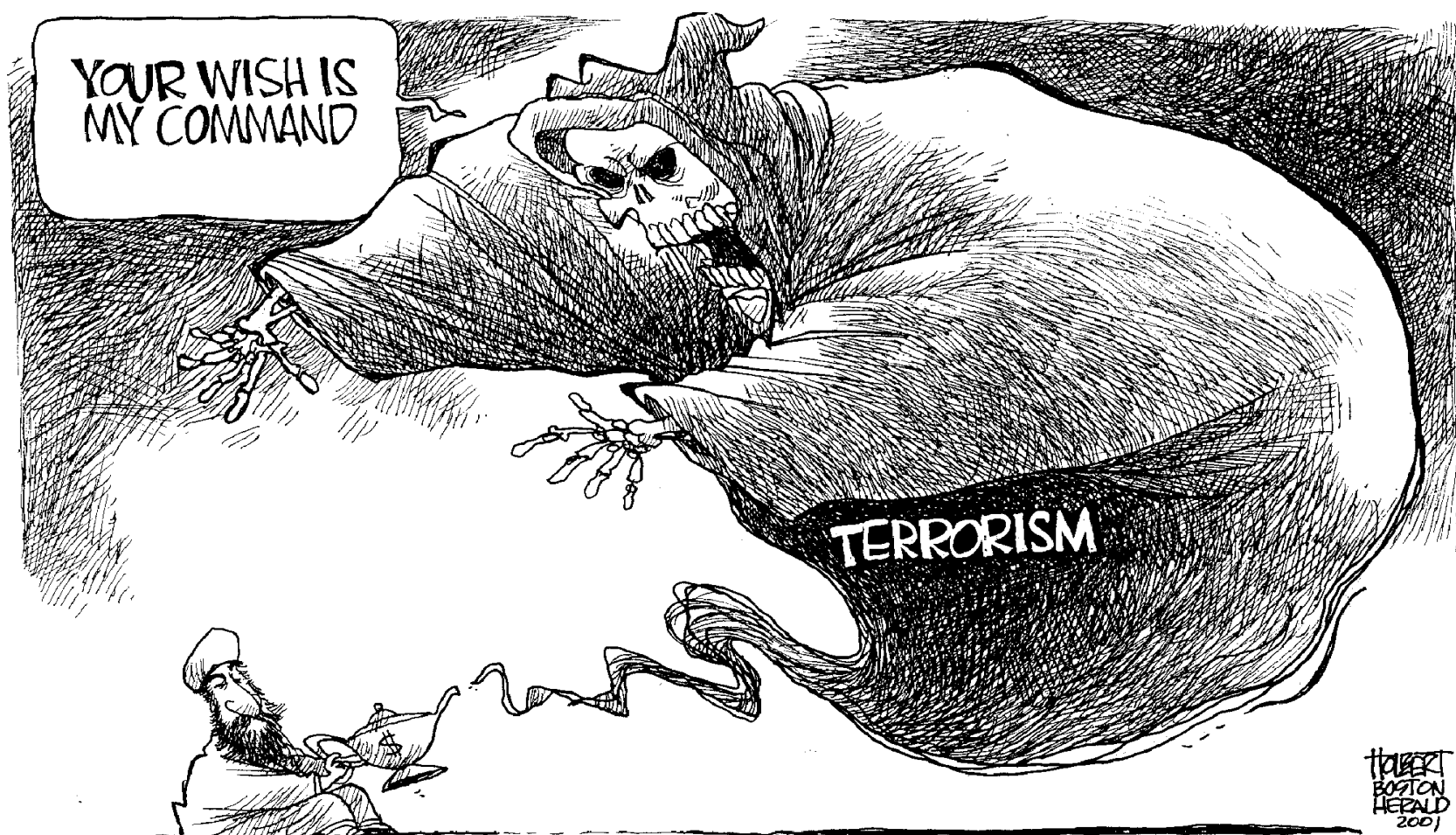
There have been other days when America froze in horror or suspense: When actor John Wilkes Booth shot Abraham Lincoln, the nation waited for the success or failure of the D-Day invasion, President John F. Kennedy was shot, the space shuttle Challenger exploded; a truck bomb destroyed the federal building in Oklahoma City.

"I will show the people at once that the administration of the government will not falter despite the terrible blow," Theodore Roosevelt said after McKinley's death on Sept. 14, 1901.

"You have lost too much, but you have not lost everything," President Clinton told the people of Oklahoma City in 1995. "... "For we will stand with you for as many tomorrows as it takes."

"War has been waged against us," Bush said at a remembrance service at the National Cathedral three days after the attacks in New York and Washington.

EDITOR'S NOTE — Lawrence L. Knutson has covered the White House, Congress and Washington's history for 34 years.



BIN LADEN'S LAMP

What's Greenspan's plan after terrorist attacks?

The World currency crisis made a fool out of Alan Greenspan. In 1997, all he had to do to save American capitalism was to bailout those crazy speculators in world currencies.

Let's see what he does to save the dollar since the suicide bombing of the World Trade Center in New York City. That's easy, the FED has floated \$50 billion greenbacks to save the European banks. Saving money in Washington is hoarding right?

Wonder if this stem cell thing is like crossing Trigger with a jack (male donkey). When you do you get a jacka, I mean a mule. We have tax havens in the Bahamas, for the Wall Street Mafia.

Farmers can't stand the sight of that dung spreading Secretary of Agriculture when she says a commodity checkoff referendum was not a vote. Well, she was not the first to do that. Lyndon B. Johnson did the same thing when he asked the cotton processors to help him pass the cotton-wheat bill in 1964 — and that was the beginning of \$1.20 wheat.

So commodity checkoff votes don't mean a cow chip. America really is in trouble when someone asks what do you use a field cultivator for? Bet they wouldn't know what a hoe was either.

This swamp full of snakes along the Potomac, is about to be drained. The Y2K virus was not about the computers that lost Grandma's money. It's about this world economy that stinks.

First it was the village Queen Katharine Graham that was laid to rest, then it was those white guys Senator Jesse Helms, (R) of North Carolina Senator Strom Thurmond (R) of South Carolina and now Senator Phil Gramm (R) from Texas.

It's not the rearranging of the chairs on the Ti-



wayne gattshall

• wayne's world

tanic any more, it's like rats deserting a sinking ship. Think positive at last Watergate is over, and that's good.

All these white guys was the southern strategy in 1968, and Senator Helms was one of them. He was a stalwart opponent of maritime export subsidies that cost taxpayers three times what it should, under the (Mother) Jones Act. It is a device whereby we give the farmers' grain away and pay the freight doing it. We give it to such countries like Georgia, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Uzbekistan, Moldova and Ukraine.

Sounds like the former Soviet Union. Sure enough and the Maritime Service may be glad Senator Helms is gone, and Elizabeth Dole is running for his seat, too.

Maybe, but she is no Jesse Helms. She was Transportation Secretary when her husband was Senate Majority leader, in the 1980s.

If there was anyone that knew how U.S. maritime rates that ran 50% to 300% over ocean-going rates was better than grain embargoes, it would be the Dole family.

Organized labor figured in this, too. They had always waged a war against a farm block that never did exist. However, recently the attitude of the

president of the Longshoreman Union has undergone an attitude adjustment. No More George Meany of the AFL-CIO ultimatums to the big Chief in the White Teepee, when he said the American labor movement would not load American grain for export unless it was on American flagged ships.

But that was a long time ago. Right you are now, the Maritime service just loves agricultural exports. And why shouldn't they? Their profits are obscene. While farmers need another farm bill, it turns a profit of \$1.14 for every bushel they handle.

It also is true, since the U.S. Department of Agriculture Commodity Credit Corporation is not our Federal Reserve with unlimited funds the rates the Maritime Service charges in very real terms are stealing food from starving people.

When there is more money for them it leaves less for food aid. So what.

It's an America first policy. What's wrong with that?

Why is this important? It is important because our new Ambassador to Canada has just said we need to eliminate our borders. President Vicente Fox of Mexico thinks the same thing. He wants a borderless government and dual citizenship for Mexican nationals.

Yes, it's all settled. We will be one great big happy one Nation of the Americas with another fast track, ah, fast track authority.

So why not use this (Mother) Jones Act to import soybeans, beef and corn. Now that's really being America first.

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Don't get charged for a 'free' product

Dear Attorney General Stovall:

About two months ago I sent for a free pair of clip-on sunglasses I saw advertised in a magazine. They arrived four weeks later. Yesterday I received a pair of sunglasses in the mail from the same company. Also inside the package was a bill for the sunglasses! I called the company and told them I didn't order the sunglasses and there must have been a mistake. They said that by accepting the clip-on glasses I had previously ordered I agreed to receive these sunglasses and pay for them. I had saved the original ad and the material that came with the clip-ons, and none of it says anything about future shipments. Attorney General Stovall, what can I do?

Dear Kansas Consumer:

According to the Federal Trade Commission, if consumers receive any merchandise they did not order, they do not have to pay for it. There are federal laws prohibiting mailing unordered merchandise to consumers and then demanding payment.

You were wise to keep the original advertisement as well as the paperwork enclosed with the clip-on sunglasses. It would have been much more difficult for you to contact the company had you discarded this material.



carla j. stovall

• consumer corner

My office contacted the company and told the representative that Kansas law states that any property delivered that was not affirmatively ordered or requested by the recipient may be deemed a gift. We also let the company know that any attempt to bill for unordered property is a deceptive act or practice under the Kansas Consumer Protection Act. The company assured us you would no longer be billed for these sunglasses and it would not continue this practice in our state.

Consumers are not legally obligated to notify sellers if they decide to keep unordered merchandise they receive. It is a good idea to write a letter to the company and let them know you didn't order the merchandise, and because of your legal rights, you have decided to keep it.

This may discourage the seller from sending bills to you. It may also alert the seller to an honest error that was made.

If you believe the shipment may be the result of an honest mistake, write or call the seller and offer to return the merchandise. The seller should pay for postage and handling. Give the seller a specific and reasonable amount of time to pick up the merchandise or arrange to have it returned at no cost to you. You reserve the right to keep the merchandise or dispose of it after the specific time has passed. Be sure to tell the seller this as it may speed along the process of making arrangements for the return.

There are a few types of products which may be sent legally without a consumer's consent.

These include samples which are clearly marked as free and merchandise from charitable organizations asking for contributions. These shipments are free gifts. Remember, consumers are not to be billed for such shipments if they were sent without the consumer's consent.

If you have encountered problems with unordered merchandise, first try to resolve the issue with the company. If this does not work please contact my Consumer Protection Division at 1-800-432-2310 or (785) 296-3751.

berry's world



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We salute firefighters, officers

To the Editor:

For 50 years, firefighters have been particular heroes of mine, both because of their tremendous fund-raising efforts for the Muscular Dystrophy Association, and for the bravery they exhibit every time they're called upon.

We've all seen this remarkable courage and self-sacrifice in action this week in the wake of the terrorist attacks in New York and Washington.

We salute the fire fighters, and law enforcement and other emergency personnel who've responded so heroically to this unspeakable tragedy — many at the cost of their own lives.

I urge all Americans to rally to the support of these lifesaving heroes during this time, in whatever way they see fit.

One means would be to contribute to the New York Fire 9-11 Relief Fund, established by the International Association of Fire Fighters to provide financial assistance to families of fallen fire fighters and emergency medical personnel.

Send donations to:



from our readers

• to the editor

New York Firefighters 9-11 Disaster Relief Fund
Attention: IAFF General Secretary-Treasurer 1750 New York Ave. NW Washington, D.C. 20006

Our emergency forces have given their all for us, time and again. Now it's time for us to provide them with help and hope.

On behalf of our group, I extend deepest condolences to all those who've lost loved ones, and prayers for those who've suffered grievous injuries in the terrorist attacks.

God bless America as we join hands in strength and hope in these difficult days.

Jerry Lewis, national chairman
Muscular Dystrophy Association