

commentary

from other pens...

U.N. seen as allied with U.S. in terrorism fight

By George Gedda

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — A half century ago, many Americans used bumper stickers to advertise their feelings about the United Nations: “The U.S. out of the U.N. and the U.N. out of the U.S.”

In 1983, Charles Lichenstein, the No. 2 U.S. official at the United Nations, responded to member state complaints about supposed U.S. host country shortcomings by urging them, only half in jest, to relocate the mammoth operation elsewhere.

“We will put no impediment in your way, and we will be at dockside bidding you a farewell as you set off into the sunset,” he said.

Complaints by Americans about the United Nations used to be common but now the world body no longer need fear being uprooted by a wrathful America. In the aftermath of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, there has been an unusual outpouring of support and sympathy for the United States at the world body.

Last Friday, at U.S. urging, the U.N. Security Council approved a resolution demanding that all nations freeze terrorists’ assets, halt their funding and exchange information on their activities.

To guard against foot dragging, the council created a committee to monitor compliance. It took a day for the council to take the action.

“This is an unprecedented resolution against terrorism in the work of the United Nations,” U.S. ambassador John Negroponte exulted.

As a follow-up, the U.N. General Assembly is devoting this week to work on adoption of a new convention on terrorism that would incorporate key elements from a dozen existing legal instruments.

The biggest stumbling block is to come up with a universally acceptable definition of terrorism. One man’s terrorist is another man’s freedom fighter. Thus far at the United Nations, there is no ambiguity about the events of Sept. 11: Terrorists, not freedom fighters, were responsible.

Amid the rallying together behind the United States, it is easy to forget the U.S.-U.N. frictions during the first eight months of the year.

In many cases, it was the United States vs. the World. People started calling the United States “unilateralist” and “isolationist.”

Washington has found itself alone or almost alone on the Kyoto global warming agreement, the International Court of Justice, enforcement of a treaty to ban germ warfare and the U.N. World Conference on Racism. In August, a U.N. conference was able to reach agreement on curbing illegal small arms trafficking but not before it was watered down by the United States to protect the rights of U.S. civilian gun owners.

Next month, the United States will be subjected to its annual clobbering by the General Assembly for the U.S. economic embargo against Cuba. It has become a November ritual.

Timothy Crawford of the Brookings Institution says the General Assembly is essentially powerless so its votes don’t count for much. The Security Council is where the action is, he says, and “often works for our agenda.”

In addition to terrorism, Crawford recalls the Security Council offered support for the U.S. position in the Korean and Persian Gulf wars.

Kim Holmes, a vice president at the Heritage Foundation, said he expects U.N. support for the U.S. on terrorism will erode.

“As the coalition goes on, fissures are bound to develop,” he said. “Some people sitting at the table are part of the problem.”

Americans’ opinion of the United Nations has increased in recent years, with 64 percent now saying they think the organization does a good job, according to an Associated Press poll conducted from Sept. 14-18. That’s about 20 points higher than in the mid-1990s.

Nine in 10 in the poll, conducted for the AP by ICR of Media, Pa., said they think the United Nations should play a major role in pulling countries together to fight terrorism. More than eight in 10 believe the United States should remain in the United Nations.

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



Taking youngster to ball game is enjoyable

It’s been a long time since I’ve been to a baseball game with a youngster. I had forgotten what a fun experience it can be — especially when it’s someone else’s child.

We had Rockies tickets for the next-to-the-last home game of the season on Saturday and we were raring to go. But, we had four tickets, so we invited Steve and Anita to go.

Anita wasn’t able to go but Steve asked if he could bring, his 8-year-old son, Joe.

Joe was ready to go at 4 a.m. His father and mother weren’t quite ready to go that early and talked him into going back to bed. He popped up again at 6 a.m. and this time, the family got up and started the day.

There was plenty of time. It was an afternoon game and we figured if we left at 8:30 a.m. Central Time, we would get there before noon on Mountain Time. The game didn’t start until 1:05 p.m. but we weren’t sure whether the new security procedures might hold us up.

Steve and Joe arrived promptly and we were off to the game. I put the two Steve’s in the front seat to discuss guy stuff and Joe and I got in the back.

Anita has taken her children on lots of trips and she was prepared. Joe had a backpack full of treats and books to keep him busy throughout the drive.

He had bacon in a plastic bag and a baseball in



cynthia haynes

• open season

his pack. When he was reminded that he wouldn’t be able to take the backpack into the game, he transferred the bacon to the pack, which he uses as his school bag during the week, and put the baseball in the plastic bag to see if he could get it signed by a player.

We had a nice ride to the game and got right in. Our seats were right behind home plate. Since we were so early, we decided to look around.

Joe and his dad spotted a player signing autographs and headed that way. Unfortunately, the player had to leave before it was their turn and they returned to the seats. Leaving the baseball, they headed for the concession stand to find lunch.

Almost as soon as they were out of sight, a young player came out and started autographing everything folks handed him — baseballs, gloves, programs and caps.

Since father and son were not around, my Steve took Joe’s bacon ball over and got the autograph.

Rockies hitting sets Hall of Fame records

Maybe the Colorado Rockies pitchers will be able to find out if it’s true that chicks really dig the long ball.

You may remember the commercial a couple of years ago, where the girls go with the sluggers like Mark McGwire and leave the 20-game winners standing in the dust.

But the Rockies pitching staff has 10 homers this season, with six games left to go. Mike Hampton has six of those, tying the National League record for a pitcher.

Saturday, Denny Neagle socked a grand slam into the bullpen during a marathon game (officially 4 hours, eight minutes, but it seemed a lot longer) at Coors Field.

Sunday, John Thompson hit a triple in a 10-0 drubbing of the hapless Milwaukee Brewers.

Maybe now the girls will notice.

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Neagle’s homer was amazing, a no-doubt shot that surprised most everyone at the game. But the event a lot of fans were waiting for didn’t happen until Sunday.

That’s when Todd Helton, the Rocks’ amazing young first baseman, hit a double, making him the only man in major league history to hit 100 or more extra-base hits two years in a row.

He became one of only three players to have 100 extra-base hits twice. The others: Lou Gehrig and Chuck Klein in the 1930s. The list of players who have hit 100 or more for extra bases even once is



steve haynes

• along the sappa

not that long, and it also includes Hank Greenburg, Stan Musial and, the only recent entry, Albert Belle in 1995, hopefully with a legal bat. Babe Ruth holds the record at 119 in 1921, but he passed 100 only once. Gehrig hit 117 in 1927.

Helton wrote a page in baseball history with that hit, but it likely won’t be his last. The quiet, humble first baseman just keeps on getting better. He flirted with a .400 season last year, when he won the league batting championship, and could easily become the only player ever to hit more than 100 extra-baggers three times. His fielding puts him in the running for a Gold Glove as well.

“To think how long this game has been played and all the great players who have played,” Helton said, “and to be the only player to do something, not just in one game, but consecutive seasons, makes it special.”

The Rockies took a lot of heat four years ago when they let their popular first baseman, Andres Galarraga, go as a free agent. Galarraga is now with his third team since then, bouncing from Atlanta to Texas to San Francisco in the twilight of his ca-

It was undoubtedly the best smelling item he signed all day.

The game was long but good. We won 14-12 and saw some nice plays, including a grand slam home run by the pitcher and a double play.

We also saw some plays that will undoubtedly show up on those blooper tapes next year, including one of the first baseman catching a pop fly in front of the dugout just as the rookie catcher ran into him and made him drop the ball.

This is the time of year when teams like the Rockies and Brewers, who have no hopes whatsoever of making the playoffs, call up a lot of young players. It gives the youngsters a chance to see what the big leagues are like. It gives the managers a better look at the younger players. And it gives the television crews fodder for next year’s blooper program.

Joe stayed awake for the whole game, despite his early rising. He was helped by large quantities of sugar and salt in the form of cotton candy, popcorn, pizza and lemonade.

As soon as we returned to the car, however, he was ready to sack out and we weren’t out of the city before he was asleep.

It had been a long but fun day for all of us. On Monday, Joe probably took his baseball to school to show it off, and if both it and his backpack smell like bacon no one was likely to complain.

reer. He’s a great player, a team leader, overcame cancer to play out his final yeas, and still vastly popular with Denver fans.

But with a Hall of Fame quality player coming up and ready for the big leagues, the Rockies really had no choice. Helton is one of those special players, all the more so because he is so down to earth and modest about what he does. Not a flashy leader like the Big Cat, but what a ballplayer.

It would have been nice to see him hit No. 100 on Saturday, but no one was worried that he wouldn’t make it. The real question is, when will he do it again?

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Watching the Rockies, even thought they may well finish last this season, you get to see some great players.

Larry Walker, the Canadian in right field, is just amazing, whether he is fielding or batting. Juan Pierre, in his first full season in center, has managed to hit over .330, with a third of his hits in the infield. He’s soooo fast. Helton is Helton. Jeff Cirillo just gets better at third.

And the pitching staff looks better all the time with Hampton, Neagle and some very good young pitchers.

The season ends Sunday, but it’s not that long until February, at least for the faithful.

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