

# commentary

from other pens...

## Powell forced to change doctrine on intervention

By George Gedda

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — When he became secretary of state, Colin Powell had a clear idea of the kinds of wars the United States should fight and should avoid.

By most of his standards, Afghanistan would have fallen into the “don’t go there” category.

When American forces are committed, Powell has favored “exit strategies” and the use of decisive force to achieve early victories. Another guideline: Stay away from the “quicksand” of nation-building.

None of these preconditions have been met in the American military commitment in Afghanistan, but Powell nonetheless seems to have no qualms about President Bush’s decision to use force.

And why should he? Pessimism about the war has been draining away in recent days as the once-cornered anti-Taliban forces, aided by American air strikes, now control 50 percent of the country. To the extent that the Taliban seemed invincible, that no longer is the case. They have fled the capital.

In Powell’s biography, written two years after he stepped down as chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in 1993, he wrote: “We are currently witnessing the chaos the occurs when states revert to anarchy, tribalism and feudalism, as in Somalia, Rwanda, Burundi, Liberia and Sierra Leone. ... Often, our desire to help collides with the cold calculus of national interest.”

Nowadays, the United States is hip deep in the “anarchy, tribalism and feudalism” of Afghanistan. But unlike the African countries Powell mentioned, “the cold calculus of national interest,” as Powell sees it, dictates a military response in Afghanistan. If there is no exit strategy, so be it. Those responsible for 5,000 Americans killed on Sept. 11 must be held accountable, he believes.

Powell’s cautious view of U.S. military intervention was a product of the war in Vietnam, where he served two tours of duty. During his second tour, in 1968, American soldiers were dying at the rate of more than 100 a week. Eventually, enemy forces prevailed.

Thanks to technology, Americans now can intervene with force without high risk of casualties. There were no U.S. combat casualties in Kosovo during 78 days of aerial bombardment in 1999 and there have been none in Afghanistan since the air war started 38 days ago.

Powell has called the air campaign there an essential element of a multifaceted strategy to defeat terrorists.

Days after the bombing started, Powell made clear his backing for Bush’s decision. “We have destroyed terrorist camps so that they will not be used again, cannot be used again. We have gone after Taliban airfields and other air defense systems so that we have free range over the skies of Afghanistan.

“And we will continue to look for terrorist facilities so that we can destroy them and make them unusable for future terrorist planning, training or actions.”

Powell and his team are making accelerated efforts to form a broad-based government, hoping to end the instability that has plagued Afghanistan for 23 years. This activity is commonly called “nation-building” — a concept that the administration rejected when it took office.

Until now, Powell’s models for military intervention were Panama in 1989 and Iraq in 1991. Massive force was used, U.S. casualties were limited and victory came quickly.

When he was chairman of the Joint Chiefs, Powell saw danger in military involvement in Bosnia.

“My constant unwelcome message at all the meetings on Bosnia was simply that we should not commit military forces until we had a clear political objective,” he said.

At one meeting, Madeleine Albright, the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, lit into Powell, suggesting that U.S. military force was



## I have a full set of meat cleavers — now what?

Just call me Lizzie Borden. I got the tools. My mother moved a couple of months ago and she is still shedding stuff like a snake sheds last year’s skin.

First it was the large pieces of furniture. I now have two extra beds, a dresser, a chest of drawers, several wall mirrors, a gramophone, an old floor radio and several end tables that used to grace her home.

My youngest daughter got away with the washer and dryer and a couple of antique china cabinets. The stove, table and chairs and garage stuff were sold at the yard sale.

I’m not sure what my sister got, but since she got first pick, I figured she got what she wanted.

Son got a clock and some antique jugs and oldest daughter will get the cedar chest whenever we can figure out how to get it to her in Georgia.

With the large items eliminated, Mom is find-



cynthia haynes

• open season

ing the smaller stuff.

She tried to give me my grandmother’s photo album but since most of the shots are of cousins, I suggested she pack it up and send it to my cousin in Waco, Texas. That cousin also gets several paintings done by her mother.

Since my aunt, who did the paintings, has been dead for almost 30 years, I think my cousin will appreciate them.

I got the tablecloth, a set of bowls and a food processor and put them aside for whatever child needs them first.

But what am I going to do with the meat cleavers and knives?

My grandparents ran a neighborhood grocery store when I was young. Grandpa cut meat and he had a set of very large, very heavy cleavers.

Mom gave me the cleavers. I tried to give them to my sister. She just grinned and suggested I get the picture of myself as a little girl sitting out in front of store eating ice cream and have it blown up. I could put it in a shadowbox, she said, and surround it with the knives and cleavers.

Excuse me?

I don’t think so.

I guess the cleavers and knives will go into the closet until one of the children gets the urge to do some really bizarre decorating.

Or maybe, I’ll just put them clear in the bottom of the cedar chest. Then when it gets shipped to Georgia, oldest daughter gets the hardware.

## Taking another trip into the ‘phone zone’

It’s 5 o’clock on Monday afternoon as I write this, and the Norcatur Internet system is working. Finally.

It is one of the stranger tales we’ve run into from what a friend refers to as the “Phone Zone,” which is something like the Twilight Zone without Rod Sterling standing there smoking a cigarette.

But you can get lost just as quickly.

Norcatur’s Internet was running along, working as well as it has worked in four years, which is not too well. That town, any resident will tell you, has one of the worst phone systems in the state.

All Norcatur’s phones run through Norton, using a “remote” switch in Norcatur, limiting modems to 28,800 connections at best. The lines are terrible, full of static which knocks calls down well below that.

And that is on a good day. Thursday was not a good day. The system went dead. It took a full 24 hours to unearth the reasons why.

The story really starts in March when a group called the Association for Community Mental Health gave orders to a third-party phone company called Ionex (used to be Feist, and they were our long distance carrier) to take over its data lines and install them in Topeka. Only the group wasn’t ready for the move, so it was put on hold.

Someone — the shrinks or Ionex or Southwestern Bell, we can’t tell who — put a wrong number on that work order. The number was the one used by our router in Oberlin to transmit Internet traffic to and from Norcatur.

Because it was just a mistake, and no one knew



steve haynes

• along the sappa

it was our line being pulled, no one bothered to tell us. Reviewing the phone bills, though, we discovered that the line had disappeared from our statement in April. But the bill is so large — over \$5,000 a month, for dozens of lines — no one noticed here.

Until Thursday, when Bell got the word to pull the plug.

Zap. Norcatur was out of Internet. Customers started calling to complain. They would be calling all weekend.

At first, Bell said they had no record of our number in our account. By Friday, some good detective work by our account representative revealed the truth.

We called Ionex. The woman who had sent the order to Bell said it came from customer service and it must be right. She was nice, but she said they would have to change it. At that point, Bell could have hooked it up on Friday, but Ionex wasn’t budging.

The supervisor at customer service said she couldn’t let us have the number because they had a signed contract for it. I asked to talk to the manager, but he never bothered to call back. They told me to call the mental health people, who apparently never answer their phones. They have permanent

## Get the U.S. out of the U.N.

To the Editor:  
The growing threats of the United Nations to the United States are immediate, extensive, and serious!

Among those threats are that behind the mask of peace, brotherhood and universal understanding, the United Nations promotes terror and tyranny in order to achieve its real objective, world government.

Following a seemingly innocuous plan for peace through disarmament, the United States has been gradually turning control of the U.S. military over to the United Nations.

Through its proposed subsidiary, the International Criminal Court, the United Nations is plotting the destruction of the American judiciary system.

The goal of United Nation’s disarmament programs is to take weapons away from private citizens as well as national militaries, giving itself a monopoly of power.

By its efforts to abolish the right to private property, the United Nations has shown that it cares nothing for individual freedom.

The advocates of global government are pushing schemes for global taxation as part of the plan to mold the United Nations into a world government.

To U.N. family planners, human life is not sacred, but is a plague afflicting “Mother Earth.”

To create its world socialist dictatorship, the



from our readers

• to the editor

United Nations is working to undermine traditional family values and indoctrinate children with the values and ideology of global government.

Our Founding Fathers set America on a course for peace, security, and friendly relations with all nations. In a world without the United Nations, we can return to this non-interventionist path.

To preserve American independence and freedom we must get the United States out of the United Nations, and the U.N. out of the U. S.!

E.A. Munyan  
Overland Park

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