

# commentary

from other pens...

## No one said the coalition would be free of trouble

By George Gedda

WASHINGTON — The government of Uzbekistan has irked U.S. officials by refusing to open a bridge that could become a lifeline to an estimated 3 million hungry people in Northern Afghanistan.

Trucks could carry 15,000 tons of food across the bridge each month, but U.N. officials are reduced to making deliveries by barge. The process takes time, something the hapless Afghans lack, especially with the onset of winter.

The Uzbeks worry that if the bridge is opened, Taliban militants could use it to escape into Uzbekistan, which would cause security problems. The State Department says an Uzbek rebel group has links with alleged terrorist mastermind Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida network.

Getting cooperation on the humanitarian aid front in Afghanistan, as well as in the overall anti-terrorism campaign, has not been easy for the Bush administration.

Few countries are able to give all-out support. Many show their support in undramatic, politically uncontroversial ways, such as by sharing intelligence or freezing terrorists' assets.

But as the administration has implied, it would be a mistake to ask friendly countries to act in ways that could be politically destabilizing.

No doubt, Spain would do the United States an enormous favor if it were to transfer to U.S. custody eight men, mostly Arab immigrants, who were detained recently and have been charged with belonging to al-Qaida.

But Spain wants guarantees that the United States won't try them in military tribunals and won't execute them. The administration apparently is not prepared to make such concessions.

Spokesman Ari Fleischer disposed of the issue when he said, "Nobody asked Spain to extradite anybody, so it's not a relevant issue."

For his part, Bush seems pleased that Spanish officials were able to corral the eight suspects. Bush said he "can't wait" to thank Spanish Prime Minister Jose Maria Aznar when the two meet Wednesday.

Meanwhile, the United States and Uzbekistan are in the getting-to-know-you stage, and the process has not been easy. Uzbekistan has not loomed large on the U.S. priority list in recent years. In normal times, the country wouldn't get a second glance. But as a neighbor of Afghanistan, California-sized Uzbekistan has been emerging from its previous obscurity.

Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld has visited the country twice since Sept. 11, and news reports — the State Department won't comment — say Secretary of State Colin Powell is due there in early December.

The United States already has some 1,000 troops in Uzbekistan. Although the former Soviet republic has balked at allowing the United States to hit Afghanistan from Uzbek bases, it has agreed that soldiers can be based on its territory for search-and-rescue and humanitarian missions.

The two countries now are acquainted enough to argue. Besides the spat over the bridge along the Afghan border, they are at odds over aid levels.

Powell promised the Uzbeks significant foreign aid, but the two sides are said to be far apart. A senior Uzbek delegation is in Washington this week to discuss the problem.

Lurking beneath the surface in the relationship is human rights. The International Crisis Group, which monitors global hot spots, says Uzbekistan's human rights record is "often abysmal."

The pro-democracy group Freedom House ranks Uzbekistan among the world's least-free countries. It says opposition candidates were barred from competing in January's election against the longtime president, Islam Karimov.

It added that an alternate candidate who was allowed to run voiced support for the incumbent's policies and even said that he himself intended to vote for Karimov.

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

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HULME



## Wild hare turns into working car carrier

I sometimes get what my mother calls a wild hare, or is that hair?

I suppose most folks get these wild ideas, things that seem so logical and simple at the time of conception, but turn into strange beasts or unending battles. At least I hope they do.

I get great ideas all the time. It is Steve's job to find the holes in my plans. The correct title for his job in this regard is "Wet Blanket."

Because of him we're not living in the south of France — we couldn't afford it and neither of us speak French.

Because of him, the front yard is not a wildflower garden — you hate weeding, Cynthia, and you don't even water the house plants.

Because of him — well you get the idea. Sometimes, however, I fool him with an idea that sounds really good, and it isn't until we are deep in the heart of the project that he starts to see the pitfalls and realizes that he has been had.

The car carrier was my latest "wild hare."

I rented a carrier to take my Probe to Colorado this year. I was tired of being stuck at our house in the country while Steve went off fishing. It costs \$70 one way just to hire a little bitty trailer that only held on to two of the car's wheels.



cynthia haynes

• open season

This was outrageous. It would cost me \$140 extra every year to take my car on vacation. I might as well buy a trailer and save the money.

I found out that a new trailer would be \$900-\$1,000.

Let's see, take the nine divided by 140, drop the zeros, carry the one. Nope, it would take too long to pay for itself. I needed a used model.

I put a classified ad in the paper. I soon had several calls, including one from a man in Brewster who had just the trailer for me. I sent Steve out to look.

The trailer was strong and had good tires. We bought it for \$500.

Of course, the lights wouldn't work with the plugs we had put on the truck when we rented the first trailer, so Steve taped his big ol' flashlight to the tail and drug it home.

We left the next day for Colorado to get my car

with the flashlight still taped to the tail of the carrier. It rode well, but by the time we got there, the flashlight battery was on extra low.

On the return trip, we turned on the Probe's tail-lights. By the time we arrived back in Oberlin, the car's battery was running on extra low. We fixed that with jumper cables.

We soon had the carrier and the truck at a shop out on the highway. The result was a nice set of lights that plugs right in to the truck.

Then Steve asked the \$64,000 question — where are we going to keep this thing?

We have three car spots in our parking area. We have three cars. We have no space in the back of front yards and we own no empty land in Kansas. Next summer while the Probe is in Colorado, the carrier can stay on the vacant lot by our house. In the winter, I can drag Mom's car to Texas and the carrier can stay behind her place until spring. But in those in-between times the trailer had no home.

A friend with a farm soon solved our parking problem and the trailer was trotted out to the farm.

As you read this I should be on the road with my mother, sister and car carrier. We are driving Steve's truck and dragging Mom's car to Texas.

What do you do with a wild hare? I like them fried, but frequently end up with half-baked.

## Christ in school not a real good idea

Around this time of the year, it seems, you hear more calls for putting Christ back in the public schools.

As if He ever belonged there.

Separation of church and state, one man argued the other day, is the worst idea we ever had.

And he fails to realize, as a fundamentalist Christian, is that while there are a lot of fundamentalist Christians in this country, they are nowhere near a majority. Even among themselves, they cannot agree on just what Christianity means.

Your editor has learned some of these lessons the hard way, watching schools try to deal with seemingly innocuous injections of church into the state schools.

What pleases one sect offends the next. What seems harmless to some is anathema to others.

The lack of Jesus in public schools has fueled a trend toward both home schooling and stronger church schools. There is nothing wrong with that. In fact, you could argue that the church (whatever



steve haynes

• along the sappa

that means to you) belongs in education.

Just not in public, tax supported education. Out here in western Kansas, most of us who profess a belief in God say we are Christian. We have enough churches, though, to make it impossible to agree on one religion in our schools.

And our country has to be big enough to include Jewish Americans, Muslim Americans, Buddhist Americans, Native Americans, the list is endless.

It might seem that something so simple as a school Christmas program would be easy to agree on, but there are churches that find the very idea offensive.

Separation of church and state under the First

Amendment did away with "official" churches, which had included Congregationalism in New England, Catholicism in Maryland and Anglicanism in the South.

That left us all free to choose how to worship God and made room for the growth of dozens, hundreds of churches in our land, each with its own point of view.

And that is a good thing, not a problem. Freedom is never bad, and freedom to worship is priceless.

Put Christ back in the schools? He was never supposed to be there.

He belongs in the home, at church, in your heart.

The days of church-run school in one-church towns are over, and that is not a bad thing. Our country has grown big enough to accept all kinds of beliefs.

We're lucky to have that.

End separation of church and state? That would mean the end of our freedom to worship, to believe, to serve God. Let's not.

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## Goodland Development works on several projects

To the Editor:

So far to date, the Goodland Development Corp. has been extremely blessed with an outpouring of support for our projects. We are thankful to those individuals, organizations and businesses that have assisted us financially and physically with realizing our goals.

We have only completed two projects, and are still in our infancy, but we are just getting warmed up. So you ask, "What is next for the GDC?" Take a seat.

We are working to build a \$20 million permanent endowment fund. Yes, you read that right — a two followed by a zero and six of his little round friends.

Your first reaction is that of horror due to the thought of your taxes being raised. This will NOT happen. The city, county, and school district will NOT be contributing to this fund. We are seeking money for this endowment fund from private and corporate foundations, charitable trusts, and federal and state programs. We are applying for tax credits through the State of Kansas, so local individuals, organizations, and businesses will have the opportunity to donate and receive tax credits, but will not be required to give any assistance.

Another thought may be that we are shooting way beyond our capabilities, but remember, the moon is a long way away. What does the moon have to do with building an endowment fund? Nothing, except that back in the 1960's, NASA decided to do something that nobody had accomplished before — they decided to land on the moon.

Well, on Sunday, July 20, 1969, they did it. Do you think they ever became frustrated? You bet. Do you think they ever considered quitting? You



from our readers

• to the editor

bet. Do you think they were ever ridiculed and criticized for their far-fetched goals? You bet. Do you think they were ecstatic when they heard Neil Armstrong utter his famous words? You bet.

So, is \$20 million really that far-fetched? Not really. We have to be willing to kick the ball if we hope to ever score a goal. Don't think about the possibility of failing to reach the goal; think about what could be possible if we do reach the goal.

The next question you have is probably, "What will the GDC do with \$20 million?" We plan on investing this amount into stable, safe securities, and distributing 100 percent of the interest income annually to local non-profit organizations to assist with funding their operating expenses, hosting educational seminars, creating a scholarship program for high school students as well as other community members wishing to return to school for their undergraduate degree, and also to support our operations and projects such as the Junk Parade and Genesis Haunted House.

Now that the bush has been completely beaten around, let's cut to the chase. What does the corporation need from you? We need letters of support from local organizations, businesses, government entities, and of course individuals (send to PO Box 622, Goodland). These letters will be used as evidence of support for our grant applications when we start applying to private and corporate founda-

tions, charitable trusts, and federal and state programs. The more support letters we receive, the easier it will hopefully be to build this endowment fund. We don't need anything fancy, just a letter that states your support for the idea and your name.

If you have any questions, or would like to assist us with building the endowment fund, please let me know, or attend one of the our meetings. My phone numbers are 899-2342 (Bankwest) or 899-6200 (our office). The corporation meets at 910 Main Street at 6:30 p.m every Tuesday. There is no membership fee or application to join, and we are always open to new members or visitors.

Schyler Goodwin  
Goodland

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The Goodland Daily News encourages and welcomes letters from readers. Letters should be typewritten, and must include a telephone number and a signature. Unsigned letters will not be published. Form letters will be rejected, as will letters deemed to be of no public interest or considered offensive. We reserve the right to edit letters for length and good taste. We encourage letters, with phone numbers, by e-mail to: [daily@nwkansas.com](mailto:daily@nwkansas.com).