

# commentary

from other pens...

## Foreign policy stands have tradition of change

By Barry Schewid

AP Diplomatic Writer

WASHINGTON — Meaning it as a compliment, George Mitchell remarked the other day President Bush had reversed himself on “nation-building” with his tough policy on Afghanistan. The former Senate Democratic leader said it was to Bush’s credit he did not allow his campaign rhetoric to stop him from using force to counter terrorism and to go on from there to try to rebuild Afghanistan. Switches like that are not unusual. President Clinton’s critics remembered his pursuit of better relations with China after accusing Bush’s father during the 1992 presidential race of coddling the Chinese.

Once Clinton moved into the White House he saw things differently. George W. Bush, struggling with foreign policy issues and trying to strike a balance between Republican isolationists and interventionists, criticized his Democratic opponent, Al Gore, during the 2000 campaign for getting involved in what Bush called “nation building.”

He said Clinton and Gore had overextended U.S. military forces by intervening in places where U.S. security interests were not at stake.

But after the Sept. 11 terrorists attacks Bush all but declared war on Afghanistan’s Taliban rulers for sheltering Osama bin Laden and the al-Qaida terrorist network. Bush is using U.S. troops to root out the Islamic fundamentalist militia and to hunt for bin Laden.

Bush has vowed to pursue terrorism beyond Afghanistan’s borders. However, his tools might be financial and diplomatic, not military.

In any event, U.S. troops are not likely to be part of the gathering international peacekeeping operation in Afghanistan, although the Bush administration is directly involved in trying to reconstruct the country. Bush is falling in line with a long tradition.

Franklin D. Roosevelt, in 1940, capitalized on having kept the United States out of the war in Europe. But his sentiments were clearly anti-Nazi, and the U.S. generously assisted the British war effort until Japan’s attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941 drove America into the war.

John F. Kennedy, in 1960, charged in his campaign against Richard M. Nixon that the Eisenhower administration had permitted a “missile gap” to evolve, giving the Soviet Union a critical security edge. After Kennedy settled into the White House the missile gap vanished.

So did Nixon’s “secret plan” to end the war in Vietnam, which he used in his race in 1968, capitalizing on sentiment against the war. The war went on for years, and if he ever had a secret plan, he never revealed it.

Ronald Reagan, in his 1980 presidential campaign, attacked the process of arms control agreements with the Soviet Union.

After he was elected he refined his opposition and developed the mantra “trust, but verify,” meaning he would continue the process of seeking nuclear weapons reductions through negotiations but make sure agreements with Moscow contained safeguards against cheating.

Barely a year into his presidency, Bush’s views on foreign policy are only beginning to evolve.

Like candidate Reagan, he is suspicious of arms control agreements and already has decided to opt out of a landmark pact outlawing national missile defenses.

Bush, like candidate Clinton before him, pledged to have the U.S. Embassy in Israel moved from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. Last week, Bush exercised an escape clause and delayed it for six months. It would be no surprise if he delayed the move again next year.

On the other hand, Bush vowed during the campaign to act as a benevolent broker Israel and the Arabs toward peace agreements.

He has held to this, agreeing with Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon that violence must be curbed before steps toward peace can be taken.

Bush has taken a hard line on Yasser Arafat, not inviting him to the White House and demanding he dismantle groups that attacked Israelis. At the same time, Bush has endorsed statehood for the Palestinians.

EDITOR’S NOTE — Barry Schewid has covered foreign affairs for The Associated Press since 1973.



## Food permeates holiday festivities, funeral

Now I understand why Santa Claus is so fat. It’s all those Christmas goodies everyone is making.

I haven’t baked a cookie, cooked a batch of candy, stirred up any special drinks or popped a cake or loaf of bread in the oven, but our home and our office are overwhelmed with wonderful, edible things.

This is resulting in tight pants and belts on the last notch.

Then there was the funeral. It’s no accident that funeral and food start with the same letter.

Steve’s uncle died in Denver. We went to the funeral with Steve’s sister and brother. They had a truckful of cheese, crackers, summer sausage and pop. We snacked our way across two states.

In Denver, at Aunt Mary’s house, the family arrived with fried chicken and all the trimmings from the Colonel for supper.

The next day, as soon as the funeral was over everyone went back to Aunt Mary’s for the buffet. All her friends brought over food. There was ham, turkey, cold cuts, bread, salads and desserts.



cynthia haynes

• open season

We talked, cried and laughed the way you do after a funeral, catching up on family gossip — and we ate and ate and ate.

As soon as the food was put away, it was time to go to Cousin Mary Lou’s for the night. Well, not actually, for the night. Not yet, anyway. We dropped our suitcases and headed off for her son’s house to a graduation party.

Second cousin Scott and his wife both graduated from the master’s program at the University of Colorado on Friday, and their friends and brothers and sisters were all at their house to celebrate. There was more food — shrimp, salmon, more ham, more salads, and a bunch more desserts, including a congratulatory cake and cream puffs. And, of course,

there was wine, beer or drinks.

I had the buffet — again — and something with a little wine and a lot of raspberries in it. It was good but made me sleepy. Of course, the fact that I had been eating almost non stop since noon might have had a bit to do with that also.

The next morning, we said good-bye and headed back for Kansas with a quick stop at McDonalds for breakfast.

We got let off in Goodland, where we spent the rest of the day at the paper. They were having a potluck “food day” with ham, cheese balls, sweet potatoes, deviled eggs and surprise, surprise, desserts.

We ate.

The next day, we were in Oberlin to put the paper out early for the holiday.

We had a food day with ham, salads and desserts, and lots of fresh homemade bread.

I wore sweats to work but I think I’m going out next week to look at maternity clothes — I may not be pregnant, but I sure do need something with an expandable waistband.

## Funerals are sad, but bring families together

The odd thing about family funerals is that they are fun, and you can get to feeling a little guilty about that.

No one is particularly happy about the passing, of course, but most families have so few excuses to get together.

We buried my Uncle Lew in Denver the other day, and it was one of those memorable experiences that you cherish and savor. We got to talk with cousins we haven’t seen in years, and meet new cousins-in-law we’d never known.

Lew and my Aunt Mary had lived in the same south Denver house for more than 35 years. Their home has been safe harbor for my brothers and sister since we were kids.

Cynthia and I started stopping off there on our honeymoon.

There was never a day, whether we had called in advance or not, that we weren’t offered lunch or dinner or at least iced tea. Always iced tea.

And a pleasant hour or two of conversation would follow. Sometimes a ham sandwich, sometimes a steak. Always a smile, a kind word and a hug.

Mary and Mom were sisters. They grew up in Tonganoxie, outside of Kansas City, before the



steve haynes

• along the sappa

War. They were more than close, and we grew up thinking of Mary and Lew and their daughter as part of our family.

It was only natural to stop by their house when we were in Denver. When I was in college, they loaned me a car to go up into the mountains. In later years, when they couldn’t get around as much, we took to just stopping by so that Mary wouldn’t try to plan a meal.

It’s been a decade or more since Lew had been in really good health. He smoked most of his life, and his lungs were shot. When he got an oxygen system, though, he was able to get out, and if he couldn’t play golf any more, he could still go to the club and have lunch with the boys.

He loved golf, and he was good at it. He won most amateur events in the west. The wall of his

family room was lined with his trophies, and there was a pile of them in the basement.

He passed his love of the game on to their daughter, Mary Lou, who was nearly as good, and nearly as competitive, as her dad.

Before he got too sick, Lew would greet us with a firm handshake and a smile. In later years, we’d find him in his favorite chair, watching some sport on the television that always seemed to be on.

He had been a successful businessman, running drug stores in Denver with his parents, a propane dealership in Utah and then another drug store back in Denver.

His full name was Stephen Lewis North Jr., which might give you an idea of what my parents thought of him. But he was just Uncle Lew to us.

To his grandsons, and the great-grandchildren, he was Poppy. He was always there when they came to visit, which was often.

He and Mary had 62 years together before his lungs finally gave out. He died peacefully in his own bed, with Mary holding his hand.

We carried him to rest at the plot he had chosen, with a view of his beloved Long’s Peak..

No man could ask for anything more.

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