

# commentary

from other pens...

## Stakes high, U.S. urges armed rivals to cool it

By George Gedda

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — The numbers tell the story of why Secretary of State Colin Powell, worried about a South Asian conflagration, has been on the phone almost daily with leaders of India and Pakistan: 1.3 billion people in India and nearly 150 million in Pakistan.

With that many people, the two nuclear-armed rivals can't afford to let their differences over Kashmir spin out of control.

The reality of their nuclear capability is summed up in a new analysis, based on CIA data, by Anthony Cordesman, of the Center for Strategic and International Studies.

He says India "probably has a small stockpile of nuclear weapons components and could assemble and deploy a few nuclear weapons within a week. The most likely platform are fighter-bomber aircraft."

As for Pakistan, Cordesman says its nuclear weapons also are probably stored in component form. "Pakistan could probably assemble the weapons fairly quickly and has aircraft and possibly ballistic missiles available for delivery," he adds.

The somewhat dry prose tends to conceal the enormity of the stakes in the dispute over the Muslim-dominated Kashmir region in India that produced wars between Pakistan and India in 1948 and 1965. The current dustup is the result of a terrorist attack on the Indian Parliament.

President Bush and Powell have looked on nervously in recent days as the two countries have issued threats, carried out troop movements and suspended land and air contacts, among other actions. This week, however, both sides seem inclined to climb down from the brink.

Pakistan's government arrested a key militant leader accused by India of masterminding the Dec. 13 attack on Parliament, and Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee on Tuesday said his nation was open to dialogue with Pakistan if it shed its "anti-India mentality" and took "effective steps to stop cross-border terrorism."

The Bush administration has selfish motivations for encouraging a peaceful outcome. It is counting on the Pakistan military to help the United States finish off remnants of the al-Qaida/Taliban terrorist nexus that operates in Afghanistan along Pakistan's border to the west.

The U.S. belief is if tensions worsen, Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf will have to redeploy his forces in the west to the country's eastern border with India, setting back the U.S. anti-terrorism effort.

Musharraf is aware that his constituents are far more eager to deal with India than they are about the situation in Afghanistan.

Teresita Schaffer, a former ambassador and an associate at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, says neither Musharraf nor Vajpayee are trigger-happy. She does worry about miscalculations leading to a humanitarian catastrophe.

She says a short-term raid by one side could be interpreted as an invasion by the other. Or a false intelligence report could prompt one side to believe it is in mortal danger, and strike the other with a nuclear blow.

"You don't even like to think about the consequences," Schaffer says.

Given the stakes, she is surprised the Bush administration has not yet sent an envoy to the region to reinforce the telephone diplomacy being practiced by Powell and, to a lesser extent, Bush.

Sumit Ganguly, a South Asia expert at the University of Texas, agrees. He says a U.S. envoy should be dispatched to demand the Pakistanis quickly root out all terror bases in the country.

The envoy also should call on the Indians to begin autonomy negotiations with Kashmiri leaders who oppose violence, Ganguly adds. The goal would be eventual autonomy for the region under the Indian flag.

Administration officials are hinting an envoy may be sent later this month. Bush is more optimistic about the situation, praising the measures Musharraf has taken against radical Islamic groups based in Pakistan.

"He's cracking down hard, and I appreciate his efforts," Bush said.

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



WHAT GOES AROUND COMES AROUND

## Going in circles to find the 'right' direction

When all else fails, read the instructions.

We were on our way to Denver from Goodland and the fancy little readout in brother Doug's truck read SW.

"Your compass is fouled up," big brother Steve said. "We've got to be going due west. There is no way we are going southwest."

Doug replied we were just in the wrong "zone" for his compass. He claimed it would have to be reset and he'd have to drive around in circles to make it right.

"Right," was the response from both Steve and sister Barb.

They both have fancy little compasses in their trucks and they had never heard of having to drive around in circles to set one. And, besides, both of their's worked just fine, thank you.

"Check the owner's manual," Doug said.

Barb dug his out of the glove box and started working her way through. On about the 100th page there it was — how to set your compass. The instructions included setting something on the com-



**cynthia haynes**

• open season

pass itself and then driving around in tight circles at slow speed.

Both Steve and Barb claimed there were no such instructions in their owners manuals and that Doug just had an inferior model. Barb even bet Doug lunch her truck didn't have to go in circles to find out where it was.

We spent three days in Denver and Doug never got lost despite the fact his compass kept telling us the sun was rising in the northwest and setting in the southeast. Of course, the fact he had lived in Denver for several years in his youth might have helped his sense of direction.

When we got home, both Steve and Barb ran for

their trucks and pulled the owners' manuals out.

Guess what? They've both been driving around in circles to check their compasses.

On the way to McCook the next weekend, daughter Lindsay told dad's truck to find out where it was, and the compass wouldn't work *at all* until they went in circles. Something about locating magnetic north for a given longitude.

Anyway, they said it made them a little dizzy, driving in circles seven times, even at 4 miles per hour.

And they were really glad the cops didn't come ask what they were doing.

It all seems a little strange to me — I don't even believe in automatic transmissions—but if it makes them happy, I'm happy.

And there's a reason I don't get fancy gadgets with my vehicles. It doesn't make any difference to me what the compass says. I have no idea what direction I'm heading. I have trouble finding my way around Oberlin.

## Terror attacks make us look at what is important

As a new year arrives, bringing with it more unknown threats and dangers, maybe we should be asking ourselves just what is important.

Americans, in fact, have been doing a lot of that since Sept. 11. And while the death toll is ever dwindling, there is no question about the severity of the blow we took.

We had no idea terrorists could do something like that to us. We thought terrorist attacks were something you dealt with in Israel, or in some other far-off foreign post.

Osama bin Laden was just another Arab nutcase, some guy who kept trying to blow up our embassies and our ships.

But not a threat to real American lives.

Now we are at war, not with the Arab world or the Muslim world, but with a tiny faction, a few thousand strong, who believe that terror and death will somehow make the world right.

When the U.S. responded, the first goal was to force the terrorists from their bases, and almost incidentally, to drive the fanatical Taliban regime from power in Afghanistan. Our success there has been frighteningly quick.

The swift, certain strike of American justice



**steve haynes**

• along the sappa

should be a lesson to terrorists, but remember, these people are almost by definition, nuts. You cannot expect crazy people to take the sane course.

And while the terrorists are a tiny faction, they are spread through the Muslim world, from London to New York, from Morocco to the Philippines, Afghanistan to Palestine. Their fanaticism thrives on death and martyrdom, and remember, it's not just Muslims who believe in terrorism. There are Christian terrorists, American terrorists, Indian terrorists.

How can we defeat terrorism?

At home, we have jacked up security and restricted the movement of every American. Foreigners find it increasingly difficult to move around, like it or not. And yet, our world is so open and so accessible that people still can cross the country virtually undetected.

One question we will have to answer is how much we are willing to give up to protect ourselves. How regimented do we want to become?

Another will be, how far do we go to hunt down terrorists? And how wide should our war be?

All terrorists claim they are fighting for some just cause. Even the Palestinians, long considered the "other" side by most Americans, trace the root of their struggle to the armed Israeli takeover of their homeland after World War II. The Irish Republican Army opposes Protestant British rule, while home-grown terrorists see our government as the enemy.

Will we pursue them all with equal vengeance, or only those who threaten our home? Will we exempt "good" terrorists? And are we willing to become an armed camp to pursue these goals?

Do we chase bin Laden to the ends of the earth, or let him disappear? Mullah Omar? The rest of their gang? And what about terrorists in the Philippines, who kidnap Americans for sport?

As President Bush said at the beginning, this is not going to be a short or simple, war, no matter how it begins.

To know when we have won, we will have to answer some of these questions.

## In wars and terrorist attacks the innocent suffer

To the Editor:

If you have two, three, four wives (or more), each involving another mother-in-law and some squabbling kids, plus a honey-do/want list, would you hope that dying in a holy war could be a relief?

What do President Bush's non-constitutional Afghanistan war (undeclared by Congress), all wars, terrorist strikes, as Twin Towers, Pentagon, Oklahoma City bombing, Waco massacre, Columbine School shootings, gang rumbles, etc., alcohol, tobacco, drugs and abortion have in common? (The Innocent suffer.)

Financially, bingo, lotteries, raffles, government (taxing all the people to benefit one), insurance, gambling and Social Security, all have many losers per winner. All the foregoing, like Herod (who had 2,000 children killed) are spawned by personal greed.

Jesus endorsed capital punishment by submitting to it! No one is prepared to live till they are ready to die. The greatest of all tragedies is to ignore His love, gift of eternal life. • A-dmit you are a helpless hell-bound sinner! • B-elieve the Lord Jesus Christ is thy only hope! • C-ommit thyself to his will for thee! "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation"...Heb. 2:3A

Frank Sowers  
Benkelman

To the Editor:

Congratulations to Sen. Pat Roberts, who has succeeded in stopping a Democratic farm aid proposal that would have added millions of dollars to the Kansas economy and provided a real safety net for farmers. Once again, Pat Roberts shows he is not a friend of farmers.

Sen. Roberts was the principal architect of "Freedom to Farm" in 1996. This change in farm



**from our readers**

• to the editor

policy created record profits for corporations that buy farm commodities and sell supplies to farmers while forcing farmers themselves to beg from the U.S. taxpayer. Sen. Roberts once said he wanted to "get the government out of farming" but today many farmers receive the equivalent of 100 percent of their net income from the government.

When Sen. Roberts and his corporate sponsors created "Freedom to Farm," they knew U.S. farmers would produce far more than could be exported. They knew this would cause commodity prices to fall and farmers would be forced to spend more money to produce more crops of less value in order to repay debt and meet living expenses.

Sen. Roberts' actions weakened the economic foundation and morale of our nation's farmers. Many family farmers are frightened of a future dependent on government assistance. If government farm program payments are cut, then many independent farmers who are trying to earn a living from the land will be bankrupted.

The current U.S. farm policy created by Sen. Roberts must end. New farm policy options must be explored. For example, the Conservation Reserve Program could be expanded to protect our most sensitive and fragile land. Farmers must be given hope for a future where they can make money without begging.

Tim Peterson  
Monument

To the Editor:

I would like to take this opportunity to commend the two police officers who handled the break-in at my house recently. Their mannerisms were professional in conducting this investigation. Their names are Bob Juleson and Bill Fulcher.

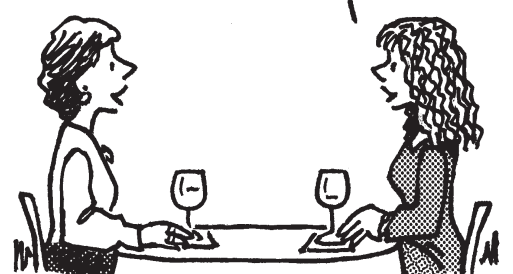
I would like you and them to know how much I appreciate all of their help.

Tom Hellerud, ARNP  
Goodland

### berry's world

HOW ARE YOU DOING WITH YOUR NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS?

JUST FINE!  
I MADE ONLY ONE. THAT WAS TO NOT MAKE ANY NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS



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## The Goodland Daily News

(USPS No. 222-460. ISSN 0893-0562)

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Inland Press Association Colorado Press Association

National Newspaper Association

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Published daily except Saturday and Sunday and the day observed for New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Fourth of July, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day, at 1205 Main St., Goodland, Kan. 67735.

Periodicals postage paid at Goodland, Kan. 67735; entered at the Goodland, Kan., Post Office under the Act of Congress of March 8, 1878.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Goodland Daily News, 1205 Main St., Goodland, Kan. 67735.

TELEPHONE: (785) 899-2338. Editorial e-mail: [daily@nwkansas.com](mailto:daily@nwkansas.com). Advertising questions can be sent to: [gdnadv@nwkansas.com](mailto:gdnadv@nwkansas.com)

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SUBSCRIPTIONS: In Sherman County and adjacent counties: three months, \$22; six months, \$38; 12 months, \$72. By mail in Kansas, Colorado: three months, \$28; six months, \$50; 12 months, \$95. (All tax included.) Out of area, weekly mailing of five issues: three months, \$25; six months, \$40; 12 months, \$75.

Incorporating:

**The Sherman County Herald**

Founded by Thomas McCants  
1935-1989

**THE ST★R**

Founded by Eric and  
Roxie Yonkey  
1994-2001

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Haynes Publishing Company