

commentary

from other pens...

Hardliners to increase pressure on Cuba

Some of Cuban President Fidel Castro's most severe critics are becoming impatient because there has been no discernible toughening of U.S. policy toward Cuba.

One even said President Bush's first year in office was little more than an extension of Clinton era policies toward the island.

It turns out, however, that the Bush team is just getting warmed up. One reason a more assertive policy may be in the offing was the installation in January of Cuban-born Otto J. Reich as the State Department's top official for Latin America.

He joins other Cuban-Americans in key positions who, like Reich, have viewed Castro as a menace for years.

Shortly after Reich took office, the administration began a policy review of Cuba with a view toward determining Cuba's potential for damaging U.S. interests.

One issue under study, according to a senior official, is the role Washington says Cuba plays in international terrorism. Cuba is on the State Department terrorist country list, a designation based on ties Cuba maintains with other countries on the list, including Iraq, and the haven Cuba provides for foreigners linked to alleged terrorist organizations.

As a result of the policy review, the Cuba section of the next State Department terrorism report, due next month, may add to the rationale for keeping Cuba on the list.

A key question is what action the administration would take if the review concludes the island represents a genuine threat to America.

Castro argues Cuba has been the victim of a Miami-based terrorism campaign that dates back 40 years and has claimed, he says, thousands of lives.

In December, Cuba offered to share intelligence with the United States on terrorism but the proposal was never taken seriously.

As part of the review, officials are considering an indictment of Castro for the 1996 shootout with MiG fighters of two private planes near Cuban air space. Three U.S. citizens and one resident alien were killed.

The administration weighed the indictment option last year, and the senior official said the matter has not been dropped.

Also on the agenda is whether Cuba is developing a potential to use the Internet to interrupt U.S. military communications. Vice Adm. Thomas Wilson, director of the Defense Intelligence Agency, told Congress a year ago that Cuba has the potential to use "information warfare or computer network attack" to disrupt "our access or flow of forces to the region."

There has been no public comment on the subject since then but the senior official, discussing the Cuba situation on condition of not being identified by name, said the issue is still alive. Castro has ridiculed Wilson's suggestions as "craziness."

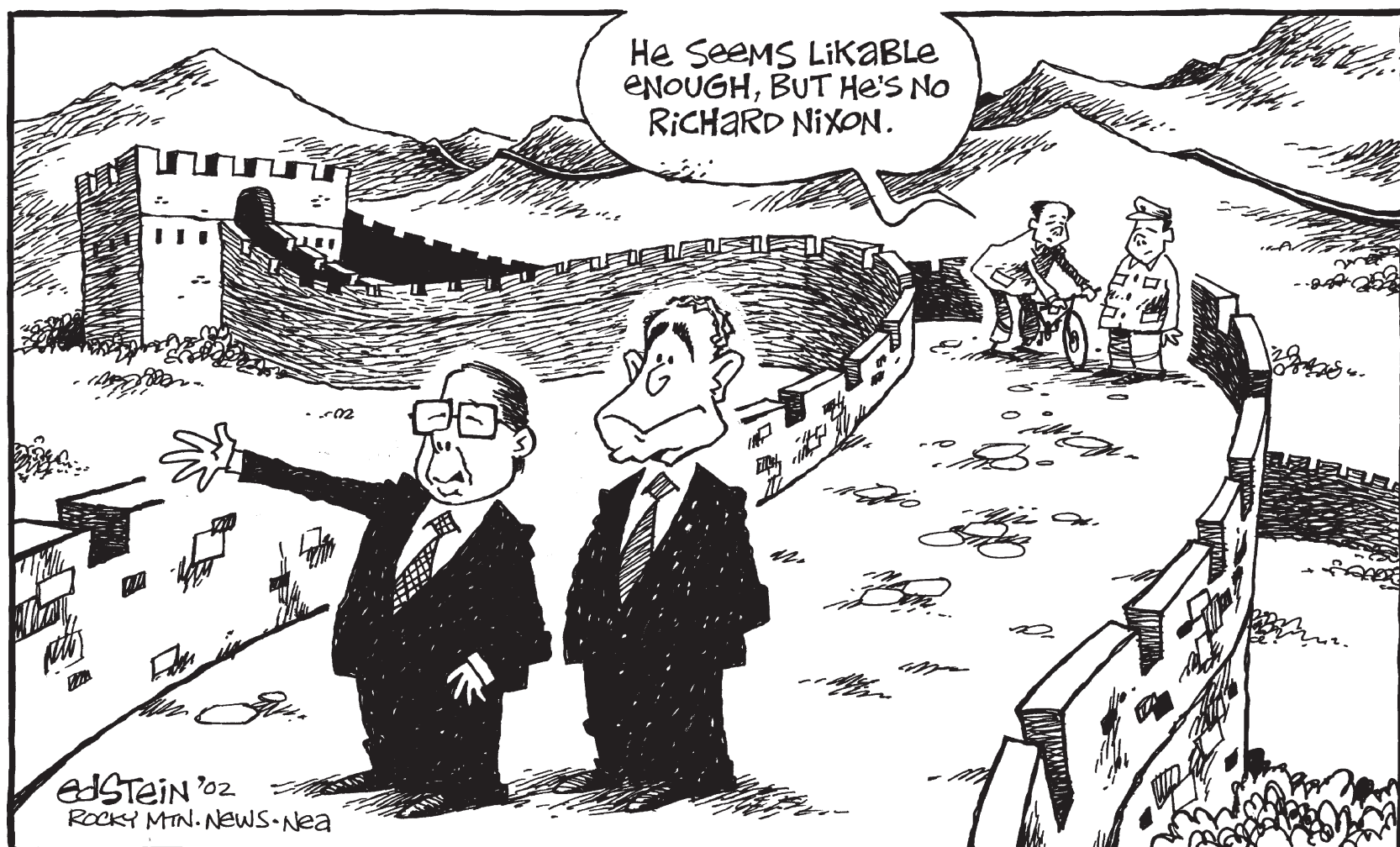
At a time when the administration is poised to tighten up on Cuba, many in Congress want to back off. Farm state lawmakers want to be able to sell their products to Cuba on credit. They believe this would lead to a significant expansion of the of the cash-only trade that has been legal since 2000 and has netted only about \$40 million in sales thus far.

More worrisome to the administration is a proposal before Congress to lift restrictions on travel to Cuba. This would give Castro an economic shot in the arm at a time when his country has been reeling from the effects of Hurricane Michelle, which struck last November.

In an apparent attempt to swell the ranks of congressional dissenters, top Cuban officials have spoken optimistically of a "mutually beneficial rapprochement" between the two countries.

But the senior official warns of a possible presidential veto if travel restrictions are eased. Bush himself has said he will oppose "any effort to weaken sanctions against the Cuban government until it respects Cubans' basic human rights and civil rights, frees political prisoners and holds free and democratic elections."

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



Mom enjoyed return of snowy weather

Mom flew home Feb. 11 and I flew home on Saturday.

After selling her house, this fall Mom decided she needed to talk face-to-face with her tax lady, so she came home from Texas last month.

She plans to fly back on Monday, so she will have had a month in Kansas before returning to the semi-tropical lushness of the Rio Grande Valley in south Texas.

There have been two snow storms since she's been back and she claims to have enjoyed both. Since I've known my mother for more than 50 years, I'm not having her committed, but I am putting her down as one of the few people to ever say they enjoyed a snow storm.

I've heard people say we needed the moisture and even that it needed to be colder because the warm weather was causing the crops to start growing and the trees to bud out. But these folks would be just as happy to have their water pumped in underground and a nice cold front with no ice and snow and no wind to keep the crops in bed for another month or so.



cynthia haynes

• open season

Mother has not had to weather a snowstorm in a long time — not since the year Daddy died. My father died near Thanksgiving and Mom headed for Texas in January. Dad would have gone earlier, she said, but there was so much to do.

My father loved Texas. He loved the warm weather, the trees, the flowers, the beautiful Mexican people. He even liked the place in the summer, when the heat and humidity both go into the 90 plus range.

I enjoy my twice yearly visits to Texas to take Mom down and pick her up. I don't think I'd want to live there, however.

With Mom back in Kansas, I decided I wanted to go see her, but the only time to go was last week-

end. Of course, the first spring storm roared in on Friday. Before I even had a chance to call her, Mom was on the line telling me not to come if the roads were bad. I told her I had been planning to call her to tell her the same thing.

However, I said, I would check in the morning to see how things were.

Saturday morning, dispatch reported the roads mostly dry with patches of ice and some blowing snow.

They were right. U.S. 36 from Oberlin to Concordia looked like a salt lick. By the time I got to Concordia, my car looked like it had been dipped in brine.

We had a lovely weekend and on Sunday I drove home. The roads were even better, but my car still looks like it's been driven through a power factory.

I gotta get a car wash, and I will before it's time to head south to get Mom in Texas. There's no use hurrying. It'll probably just snow again before then and I wouldn't want to mess up a perfectly good car bath.

Turns out I like talking, listening to people

In the past three months working at *The Goodland Daily News*, I have met and talked to more people than in the 2 1/2 years I worked in restaurants here in town.

Well, I may have met more people at the restaurants, but it was more "here's your food, thank you for your business," than sitting down and finding out what people really think.

It is the most enjoyable part of my job. I like covering sports teams, and working on my writing, and laying out the sports page, but what I really enjoy is going out in the town and talking to people. Or more accurately, listening to people.

My favorite stories I've worked on were the features about Ken Yoke's minor league baseball career, and the Hatcher's winning the conservation windbreak award. I went to their homes, they sat me down at their kitchen tables and offered me something to drink. They spoke to me, a total stranger, about their lives. The Yokes told me about their wedding, kids, careers, moving to Goodland and what they've done since they moved here. The Hatcher's talked about living on a farm, what their kids are doing, and the habits of their dog.

Six months ago, I never would have thought about calling up people I don't know and finding



doug stephens

• wisdom from babes

out how they live and what they have done. I've always been a little shy, and there have been times when I would go out of my way to avoid talking to people I didn't know. Or people I do know, for that matter. But so far I've found that most people, if given a chance, enjoy talking about their lives, and if you dig deep enough, it's pretty interesting.

It turns out I like talking to people a lot more than I thought I did. I liked talking to witnesses when the horse trailer caught on fire at the Total station. I liked talking to the director of the arts center about the repairs needed to her building. I enjoy talking to our city manager when I need something cleared up for me. I even like talking to the politicians who stop for a few minutes in our town. I guess that makes sense. Most of them are charismatic.

I can't think of an interview I didn't enjoy to some extent. What makes it easy on me is most people seem to like talking as much as I like lis-

tening. In fact, of all the people I've interviewed, I've run across very few people who didn't want to talk to me. There have been a few, and most of them had been advised by the police, or their attorneys, not to talk about their situations.

It might just be that we live in a small town, or maybe I have run across a basic human truth, but it seems if given a chance, most people try to be friendly — and they like to talk.

Of course, there are drawbacks to meeting and knowing more people. When I mess up, more people give me a hard time about it. It's hard to hide when your name is in print. A radio announcer can make a few mistakes. You hear his voice for a split second, and then go on with your life. But if I mess up, it's in print, on somebody's coffee table, until it withers away with age.

I think it's worth the risk, though. How many jobs are there where a person learns as much as he can, writes it down, and gets paid for it? I mean, geez, I get paid for watching basketball games.

So if I make a mistake, and it seems that half the town calls me on it, I guess that's OK. It'll keep me honest, and at least I know there are people paying attention. And when they call to complain, I get to do some more listening.

Harvest America asks for community's help

To the Editor:

Harvest America Corp. has served low income Kansans for over 20 years with educational and self empowerment programs as well as referrals, technical assistance and advocacy.

We try to assist people in their journey towards self sufficiency. Participants in the Harvest America programs are people just like you and me, doing their best with what they have to raise healthy, happy families.

Unfortunately, situations and circumstances do not always allow us that opportunity. It is during those times of need we as a community have the opportunity to rise to the occasion and help our neighbor.

One of the services Harvest America offers is emergency food assistance through our food pantry. Occasionally, we can apply for federal, state and private anti-hunger grant money to buy food. However, these opportunities are few and far between. The majority of food items in our food pantry come from private donations from community members and organizations like you.

Last month in Goodland, over 25 families needed assistance with food from our food pantry. Our commodities program (which is separate from our food pantry) is another indicator of just how great the need is in our community. At our last commodities distribution, we had over 120 families.

These families are all low-income and made up of mostly the elderly living on fixed incomes or families with small children where the parents are working but just cannot seem make ends meet.

Times have really gotten hard for many families



from our readers

• to the editor

in Goodland. These families are our neighbors, our friends, our relatives and sometimes, it may even be ourselves who suddenly face financial difficulty.

Most of the time these situations do improve and the families who receive food from Harvest America's food pantry never need this type of assistance again. Sometimes, as in the case of some who are disabled or elderly, living on a fixed income and cannot change their financial situation, assistance is required more than once. When this is the case, Harvest America takes into consideration all factors and can give further assistance.

Our food pantry has become almost bare. With no grant money that can be applied for at this time, we are asking the community to rise to the occasion and donate what they can. Please be as generous as your situation allows in donating non-perishable food items, personal hygiene items and

other household items to our food pantry. Your help is truly appreciated.

Harvest America is located at 212 E. 17th. For more information regarding Harvest America, our services or this food drive, please call Barbara Fernandez at 785-899-3878.

Barbara Fernandez
Goodland

berry's world



The Goodland Daily News

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

Member: Kansas Press Association
The Associated Press

Inland Press Association Colorado Press Association
National Newspaper Association
e-mail: daily@nwkansas.com



Steve Haynes, President
Tom Betz, Editor/Editorial Page
Rachel Miscall, Managing Editor
Pat Schiefen, Copy Editor
Doug Stephens, Sports Editor



Sharon Corcoran, Society Editor Skilar Boland, Reporter
Eric Yonkey, Bill Wagoner, Advertising Sales
James Schiefen, Adv. Production Sheila Smith, Office Manager

Nor'west Press

Jim Bowker, General Manager

Richard Westfahl Ron VanLoenen Judy McKnight
Betty Morris Lana Westfahl Lori Weiss

nwkansas.com

N.T. Betz, Director of Internet Services (nbetz@nwkansas.com)
Evan Barnum, Systems Admin. (support@nwkansas.com)

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. Advertising questions can be sent to: gdnadv@nwkansas.com

The Goodland Daily News assumes no liability for mistakes or omissions in advertising or failure to publish beyond the actual cost of the ad.

SUBSCRIPTIONS: In Sherman County and adjacent counties: three months, \$25; six months, \$42; 12 months, \$75. Out of area, weekly mailing of five issues: three months, \$30; six months, \$49; 12 months, \$80. By mail daily in Kansas, Colorado: 12 months, \$115. (All tax included.)

Incorporating:

The Sherman County Herald
Founded by Thomas McCants
1935-1989

THE SHERMAN COUNTY STAR
Founded by Eric and Roxie Yonkey
1994-2001

Nor'West Newspapers

Haynes Publishing Company