

# commentary

from other pens...

## President's last words dutifully recorded

Realistic or sentimental, full of hope or delivered with an eye on the history books, the final words of America's presidents have been dutifully recorded ever since George Washington uttered his on Dec. 14, 1799.

"I die hard, but I am not afraid to go," Washington told his doctor after being stricken with a violent throat infection at his Mount Vernon, Va., estate. He was 67.

John Adams, who lived to be 91, approached his demise with humor. "I have lived in this old and frail tenement a great many years," he wrote. "It is very much dilapidated, and from all I can learn, my landlord doesn't intend to repair it."

Adams' very last words are much quoted. "Thomas Jefferson still lives," Adams said before his death on July 4, 1826. That was exactly 50 years after the publication of the Declaration of Independence he had championed and Jefferson had written. In one of history's great coincidences, Jefferson died the same day asking, "Is it the Fourth?"

James Madison said in 1831 he had traveled far further in time than he had ever anticipated. "Having outlived so many of my contemporaries, I ought not to forget that I may be thought to have outlived myself," he said. The fourth president lived longer, dying five years later at 85.

Woodrow Wilson retained his sense of humor even after a stroke. Told that members of Congress were praying for him, Wilson had a pointed question.

"Which way, senator?" he asked.

William McKinley's actual last words in 1901, coming as they did after he was shot at a public reception in Buffalo, N.Y., were quoted — and acted upon — all over the country.

"His will, not ours, be done," McKinley said on his deathbed. "Nearer my God to Thee, nearer to Thee."

Soon bands and choruses were playing and singing the hymn McKinley had quoted, "Nearer my God to Thee."

Dwight Eisenhower's last thoughts before his death on March 28, 1969, were accepting. "I want to go, God take me," he told his son, John Harry Truman did not see much choice.

"Everybody is headed for the same place, and they are headed on the same train, and under the same engineer," Truman said in March 1951. Truman did not catch his final train until Dec. 26, 1972.

Abraham Lincoln could not speak after he was shot on April 14, 1865, so Edwin Stanton, his secretary of war, got the enduring last words. "Now he belongs to the ages," Stanton said.

Andrew Johnson followed Lincoln to the White House but was impeached and came within a single vote in the Senate of being removed from office. Years later, Johnson was sent to the Senate by his fellow Tennesseans, becoming a member of the body that had weighed his fate.

"When I die, I desire no better winding sheet than the Stars and Stripes, and no softer pillow than the Constitution," he said before his death in 1875.

William Henry Harrison appeared to be offering guidance to Vice President John Tyler before he died on April 4, 1841, just a month after taking office. Tyler was not in the room, but Harrison addressed his successor anyway.

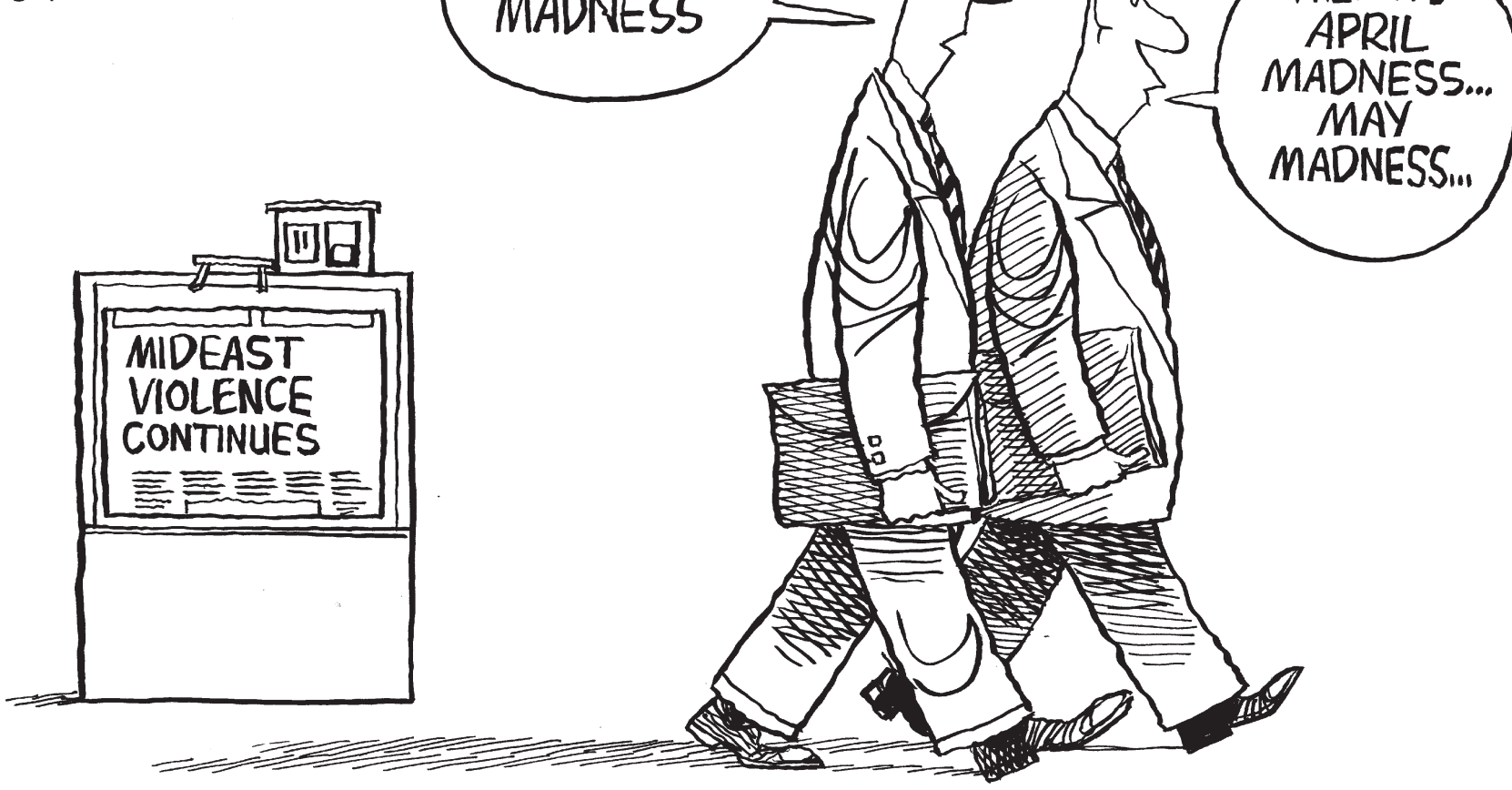
"Sir — I wish you to understand the true principles of government. I wish them carried out. I ask nothing more."

Theodore Roosevelt, who had the last word on many subjects, did not have any of his own. But he came close in a 1918 newspaper editorial. It was written shortly after his son, Quentin, was killed in the skies over France in World War I and some six months before his own death.

"Only those are fit to live who are not afraid to die," Roosevelt wrote. "And none are fit to die who have shrunk from the joy of life and the duty of life. Both life and death are part of the same Great Adventure."

*EDITOR'S NOTE: Lawrence L. Knutson has reported on Congress, the White House and Washington's history for 34 years.*

STAHLER.  
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## Would a loving God sentence people to eternal torment?

Many people believe that good people go to heaven and bad people to hell when they die. Some refer to hell as "that other place" considering it too bad to talk about.

But is it reasonable to think: a loving God would put people in a place of fiery torment for all eternity? and that people could burn eternally and never be entirely burned up? Is hellfire a teaching that is found in the Bible?

Jeremiah 7:31 says, "They (apostate Judeans) have built the high places of Topheth, which is in the valley of the son of Hinnom, in order to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire, a thing that I had not commanded and that had not come up into my heart."

God never even thought of punishing people by putting them into a fire. So what punishment is there for sin?

Romans 6:23 says, "The wages sin pays is death," and Romans 6:7 says, "He who has died has been acquitted from his sin."

These scriptures say that those who sin die — period. Ecclesiastes 9:5, 10 says, "The living are conscious that they will die; but as for the dead, they are conscious of nothing at all... there is no work nor devising nor knowledge nor wisdom in Sheol, the place to which you are going."

If the dead are not conscious, then they could not possibly feel pain. This scripture says the dead will be in Sheol, even those who are avid Bible readers. Sheol is one of the words often translated to



sharon  
corcoran

• use it or lose it

were thrown.

Bodies cast into Gehenna were dead, not live bodies, and they were destroyed in the fire, not tormented continuously. That is consistent with the scriptural reference to Gehenna above and with 2 Thessalonians 1:9 which says, "They shall suffer the punishment of eternal destruction and exclusion from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might."

Those who God determines to have committed unforgivable sins will die and never be seen or heard from again. Those who are righteous or who did not have a chance to know and serve God will be resurrected to the earth.

John 5: 28, 29 says, "Do not marvel at this, because the hour is coming in which all those in the memorial tombs will hear his (Jesus') voice and come out."

Most people are familiar with the "Lord's Prayer" which is found at Matthew 6:9, 10. Jesus taught his followers to pray, "Our Father in the heaven, let your name be sanctified. Let your kingdom come. Let your will take place as in heaven also upon earth."

The righteous will have the opportunity to live on the earth at the time when God's will is done. Those God determines to be wicked will not because His will for the earth is not to allow wickedness to continue.

John 3:4, 8 says, "Everyone who practices sin is also practicing lawlessness, and so sin is lawlessness. He who carries on sin originates with the Devil."

hell, but would it make sense to say "the place to which you are going" referring to everyone if it is a place of punishment for wickedness?

Acts 2:25-27 says, "David speaketh concerning him (Jesus Christ),... Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption."

Why would Jesus go to hell if it was punishment for wickedness? Would God send his own son to such a place? Where was Jesus for three days?

Most Christians and even a lot of people who are not Christians are familiar with the account of Jesus death and his resurrection after three days. For those three days, he was in a tomb. That is where all dead people go, whether they are good or bad.

Jesus warned his hearers, at Matthew 10:28, to "be in fear of him that can destroy both soul and body in Gehenna."

Gehenna is referred to in the Christian Greek Scriptures 12 times and is directly associated with fire five times. Gehenna is the Valley of Hinnom which was outside the walls of Jerusalem. It was a continuously burning fire where garbage and the dead bodies of animals and of executed criminals

## Starting out



red  
green

• north of forty

If any of you younger guys out there are having trouble landing your first job, here are a couple of suggestions. You need to create an impressive resume. Now, I'm not telling you to lie, but you need to "embellish" everything by a factor of three — your prospective employers are only going to believe half of it anyway. If that doesn't lead anywhere, you'll need some short-term training that'll get your foot in the door somewhere. Correspondence schools are a safe bet, because you can work at your own pace. You can even play hooky by mailing in an empty envelope. What you're looking for is vocational training. You need to get certifiable in something — that is very important in the business world. It doesn't matter whether you've got experience or even the slightest idea what you're doing. If you have a certificate, when you screw up, your boss can pass the blame right back to whoever gave you the certification. So, get yourself some training. And if it doesn't work out, just tell prospective employers that you do everything Red Green tells you to. That'll prove you're certifiable.

they've replaced opinions from knowledgeable paid experts with hare-brained theories from under-informed nutbars. I'm one of them, so I know what I'm talking about. People should earn the right to have their opinions presented in a national forum — I'd rather hear what the smart people have to say. Trying to create interactive experiences is where self-serve gas came from.

### FIVE GOOD THINGS ABOUT NOT BEING IMMORTAL

- You can stop dieting.
- You don't have to share your feelings.
- You can trick a creditor with a post-dated check.
- No salesman will call.
- You can downsize your accommodations.

### TIME TO GET ORGANIZED

Most men are not naturally neat. We can't help it. It's genetic. Women have the two "X" chromosomes, a matched set. We have an "X" and a "Y." As far as we're concerned, anything goes with anything else. Disorder is how the human male marks his territory and, all things considered, it's an improvement on most of the other methods available to us. All your life you've thrived on chaos. Remember your locker at school? Remember your first apartment? Remember the first time your mother dropped by your first apartment? Remember the first time you had to administer

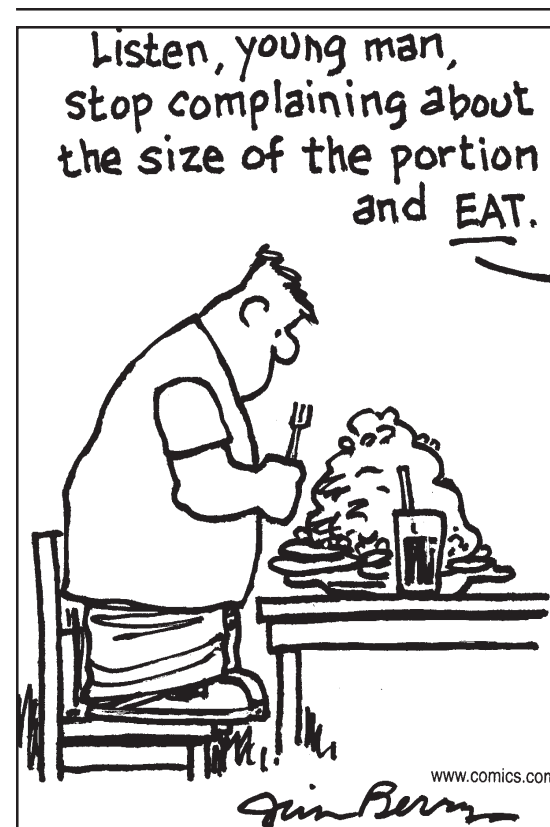
smelling salts? You never put much stock in neatness and organization, but maybe lately you've been feeling strange stirrings. Unfamiliar yearnings like maybe you've passed the shed and thought "I'd like to get that cleaned up" or "A little landscaping would make this place a lot homier." I know it's scary, but don't panic. It doesn't mean that your wife finally managed to take over your mind while you slept. It's just a natural part of the maturing process, like gray hair, middle age spread and senility.

You've come to an age where you've pretty much carved out your place in the world. For better or for worse, you've acquired all the territory you're ever going to conquer so if you can't make it bigger, it makes sense to get it organized. If you're smart, you'll just accept that you're a neater person now. If you're really smart, you'll let your wife think that you're doing it all for her.

QUOTE OF THE DAY: "A woman has the last word in any argument. Anything a man says after that is the beginning of a new argument." — Red Green

Red Green is the star of "The Red Green Show," a television series seen in the U.S. on PBS and in Canada on the CBC Network, and the author of "The Red Green Book" and "Red Green Talks Cars: A Love Story."

## berry's world



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## 'Vegas Night 2002' raises \$12,000

To the Editor:  
Just wanted to say thanks for your contribution to our "Vegas Night 2002" endowment fund-raiser. I am happy to announce that the final dollars for scholarships totaled just over \$12,000.

Your continued support of the Northwest Kansas Technical College and our Endowment Association is appreciated.

Ken Clouse  
Goodland

To the Editor:  
Thank you for your donation to the Wallace County Head Start fund-raiser. The students, parents and staff Sharon Springs



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readers

• to the editor

To the Editor:  
Thank you for donation to the Northwest Kansas Technical College Endowment Association. I was the lucky winner of the one year subscription to The Goodland Daily News.

Your gift helped make "Vegas Night 2002," a real success!  
Carol Lenington  
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