

commentary

from other pens...

Union Station, a door to the capital

Union Station opened in 1908 as a monumental gateway to a capital just beginning to find its way onto the world stage.

For more than half a century railroads brought the world to Washington; the world spilled into the city through the triple arches of a station intended by its designers to stamp the city with the mark of imperial Rome.

Union Station's construction north of the Capitol allowed removal of the tracks and trains and the old rail station that had scarred the National Mall for decades. Removal made possible the ambitious reshaping of the city's ceremonial core in the first decades of the 20th century.

At its early zenith, Union Station was a place of a million stories, a railroad palace that witnessed the arrivals and departures of presidents and kings, of tourists eager to see government at work, of the bureaucrats and lawmakers who staffed it and protesters straining to denounce all of the above.

While presidents had their own private quarters, most passengers arrived and departed by walking past a platoon of stone warriors on guard just below the coffered, gilded and barrel-vaulted ceiling of the mammoth waiting room.

Standing on the broad plaza outside, tour guides pointed out the statues dedicated to Fire, Electricity, Freedom and Imagination. People approaching the station could read the lofty inscriptions cut into the granite wall, including this one:

"He that would bring home the wealth of the Indies must carry the wealth of the Indies with him. So it is in traveling — a man must carry knowledge with him if he would bring home knowledge."

It is Union Station where Jimmy Stewart, playing wide-eyed Sen. Jefferson Smith in Frank Capra's classic 1939 movie, "Mr. Smith Goes to Washington," arrives from the heartland, spies the Capitol dome and, eluding his cynical handlers, sets out among the monuments to give idealism a good name.

But by the 1960s, after a last great surge in train travel during World War II, the steam-whistle age of the passenger railroad yielded to the speed of jet aircraft and the hum of cars on the new Interstate Highway.

Giant railroad stations were suddenly obsolete. Union Station, designed by architect Daniel Burnham as the foundation stone of a classically beautiful city, became an expensive white elephant whose most likely future appeared to be demolition by neglect.

Railroads slashed schedules and began to bulldoze stations that had once been their pride. People began calling Union Station a mausoleum, a quiet catacomb, a "depressing cavern where people no longer come."

Searching for a future for a historic building many people still loved, the government stumbled into a blind alley: The station was converted into a national visitors' center, a headquarters for the celebration of the 1976 Bicentennial, the 200th anniversary of American independence.

Key to making it work was construction of a bus and auto garage behind the station. But the money never flowed and parking never materialized. Little was spent on the repairs needed on the structure itself.

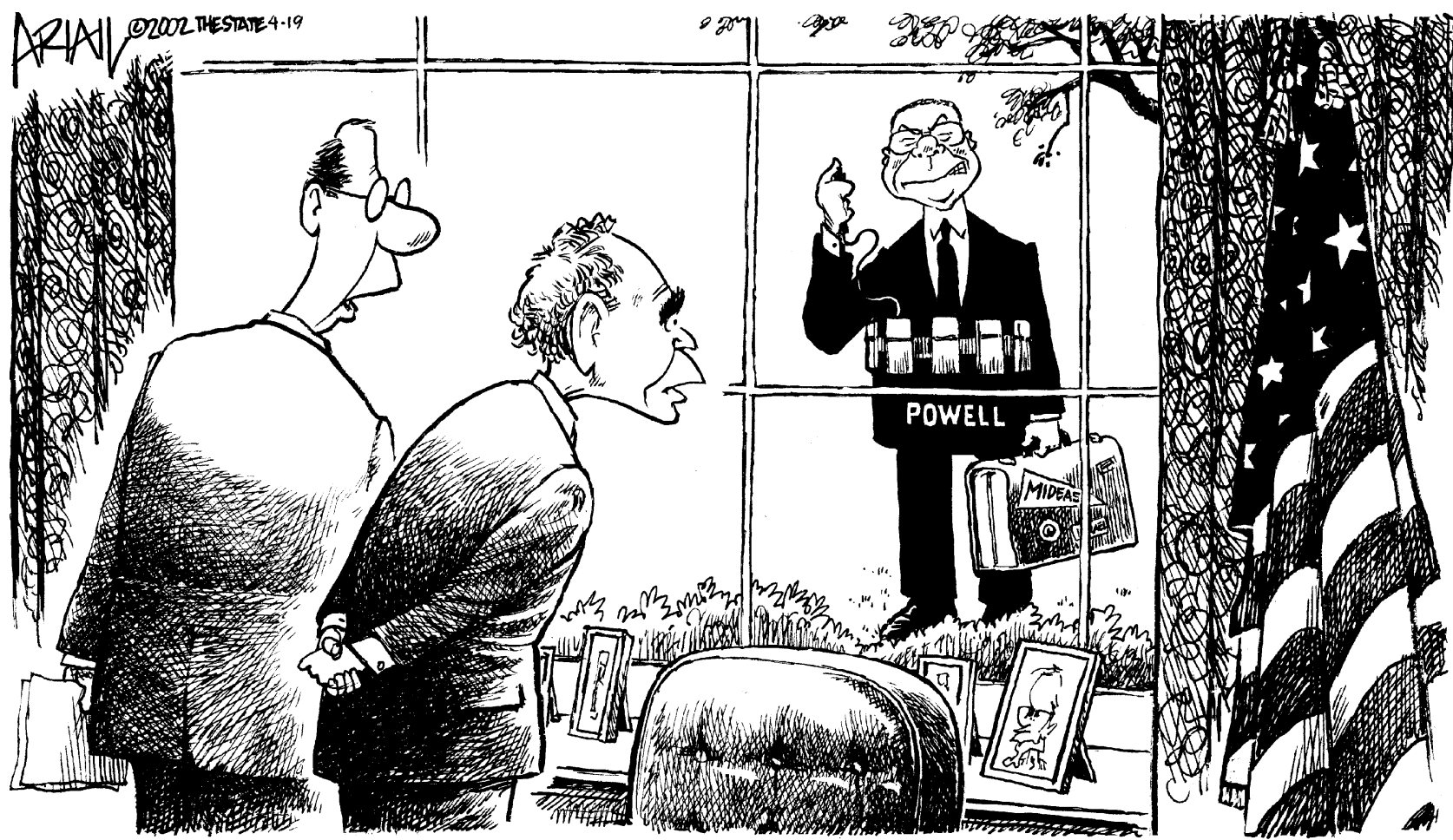
The center's chief feature was a visual orientation center excavated in the floor of the waiting room. Dubbed "the pit," it permitted visitors to descend into semidarkness to view a slide show of the city's sights, including the Capitol dome, which they could see by walking outside.

The visitors center had few visitors. The rail station was exiled in unglamorous quarters a long walk down the tracks.

The "pit" closed in 1979, the visitors center three years later. By then, water was cascading through leaks in the roof, dislodging chunks of plaster. Amtrak passengers were shunted to their trains through a plywood maze.

Union Station rose again in the 1980s, its revival a tale of a private-public enterprise, of repair and careful restoration. When it reopened in 1988 it had shops and restaurants, a food court and a nine-screen theater. It was still a railway station. And again it was a gateway to a capital city.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Lawrence L. Knutson has reported on Congress, the White House and Washington for The Associated Press for 34 years.



"I DON'T THINK THE SECRETARY WANTS TO GO BACK..."

Warm weather ignites grilling fever

Marinades and rubs add differing flavors to beef for the grill.

Marinades are seasoned liquid mixtures that add flavor and can help tenderize meat. To tenderize, a marinade must contain an acidic ingredient such as lemon juice, yogurt, wine or vinegar.

The less-tender cuts of beef, which include top round, eye round, chuck shoulder, skirt and flank steak can be marinated to enhance tenderness. Tender cuts can be marinated for flavor. When marinating for flavor, you need 15 minutes to two hours. To marinate for tenderness, you will need six hours or more. If meat is marinated over 24 hours, it can have a mushy surface texture.

Always marinate in the refrigerator, never at room temperature, or bacteria can grow in the mixture. Be sure to use a plastic or glass dish, not metal, as acids can dissolve metals. Turn meat occasionally so both sides are marinated. Allow 1/4 to 1/2 cup marinade for each 1 to 2 pounds of beef. Here are some recipes:

Teriyaki marinade

- 1/2 cup soy sauce
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 2 tablespoon brown sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon ground ginger
- 2 tablespoon worcestershire sauce
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- Combine and mix well

Southwestern marinade

- 1/4 cup prepared salsa
- 2 tablespoon chopped cilantro
- 2 tablespoon lime juice



pat schiefen

• postscript

- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cumin
- Combine all ingredients and stir well

Rubs are blends of herbs, peppers, spices or seasonings that are blended to add flavor by coating the surface of the meat. Some rubs take the form of a paste by including oil or crushed garlic or other liquids. They can be applied just before grilling or roasting.

Southwestern Rub

- 1 1/2 teaspoons chili powder
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1/2 teaspoon dried oregano leaves, crushed
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cumin
- Combine the ingredients. Use on sirloin, T-Bone, rib eye and top loin. Makes enough to season 2 pounds.

Lemon-Rosemary Rub

- 1 1/2 teaspoons grated lemon peel
- 1 teaspoon dried rosemary leaves, crushed
- 1/4 teaspoon each salt, dried thyme leaves and coarse grind black pepper
- 2 large garlic cloves, minced.

Combine all ingredients. Seasons 2 pounds of meat.

Grilled Asian Beef and Summer Squash

- 1 beef flank or skirt steak (approximately 1 - 1 1/2 pounds)
- 3 medium zucchini or yellow summer squash, cut lengthwise in half
- 1 teaspoon vegetable oil
- Salt and pepper

Marinade:

- 1/4 cup soy sauce
- 1/4 cup finely chopped green onions
- 2 tablespoons water
- 2 tablespoons packed brown sugar
- 1 1/2 tablespoons dark sesame oil
- 1 teaspoon minced garlic
- 1 teaspoon minced fresh ginger
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper

Combine ingredients for marinade in bowl. Remove and save 1/4 cup. Place meat and remaining marinade in plastic bag; turn meat to coat. Close bag securely and marinate in refrigerator six hours up to overnight, turning occasionally.

Remove meat from marinade and discard marinade. Brush squash lightly with oil; salt and pepper to taste. Place meat and squash on grill. Squash takes 15 minutes to become tender.

Put saved marinade in small pan and heat until hot. Cut meat across the grain into thin slices; spoon hot marinade over the top. Serve with squash.

This information and recipes provided by the Kansas Beef Council.

Conditions ripe under dome for lengthy wrap-up

TOPEKA — Long legislative wrap-up sessions are a little like tornadoes: People who've studied them for years know when atmospheric conditions are perfect for them but can't predict exactly when they will occur.

The air under the Statehouse dome these days is roiling with budget and tax issues. Legislators must cover a \$700 million gap between expected revenues and spending required under state and federal law. Many believe tax increases are necessary to eliminate the shortfall.

That turbulence has created the right conditions for a record-long wrap-up — and perhaps even a special session later.

The Legislature is scheduled to reconvene Wednesday after its annual two-week recess. Many members are pessimistic about how long they'll remain in session.

"My guess is that you're looking at two to three weeks," said Rep. Rocky Nichols, D-Topeka, the ranking House Democrat on budget issues.

Tradition dictates a 90-day session, but the state constitution doesn't require it. The constitution places no restrictions on sessions in odd-numbered years, and in even-numbered years, legislators can go longer than the 90 days specified by passing a resolution — and already have this year.

The wrap-up is the unknown. Legislators began scheduling them in 1969, taking a two-week recess to give their staff time to process bills and the governor time to consider them.

The theory was that lawmakers would return to Topeka for a day or two, consider vetoes and pass one last bill to take care of any loose ends with the budget. They also started setting aside another day in late May or early June for a brief adjournment ceremony.

Over time, though, the wrap-up has become the most critical part of the legislative session, when the biggest and toughest issues are resolved.

Last year's wrap-up was a record at 13 days and extended the 2001 session to 98 days. The longest session ever, in 1991, lasted 103 days, with a 12-day wrap-up and business on the day set aside for adjournment.

The target date for finishing is May 11, because lawmakers have set their adjournment ceremony for May 31. They like to give their staff 10 days to process bills, and the constitution gives the governor 10 days to review any legislation.

But leadership aides acknowledge that lawmakers can cheat a few days on processing time and still have a chance to consider gubernatorial vetoes on May 31, if necessary.

Gov. Bill Graves has been pessimistic, suggest-



john hanna

• ap news analysis

LONGEST LEGISLATIVE WRAP-UPS

Year	Wrap-up	Sine Die?	Total Days
2001	13	no	98
1991	12	yes	103
1990	10	no	100
1992	10	no	100
1996	8	no	94

LONGEST LEGISLATIVE SESSIONS

Year	Wrap-up	Sine Die?	Total Days
1991	12	yes	103
1990	10	no	100
1992	10	no	100
1988	7	no	98
1989	7	no	98
2001	13	no	98

Sine Die, Latin for "without day," is a brief ceremony adjourning the legislative session for the year. In some years, legislators have conducted business on that day, and it has counted as a day in session.

Source: AP archives, material compiled from legislative research and journals.

ing earlier this month that legislators won't be able to finish work on an acceptable budget and package of tax increases by mid-May. If they don't, he said, he'll call them back into special session in late June.

"I'm not very optimistic," said Lt. Gov. Gary Sherrer. "There hasn't been any movement to pass any tax increases in any amount, and yet there's a consensus that we can't cut our way out of it."

Three senators and three House members have drafted a compromise \$4.4 billion budget, but it is \$222 million out of balance, requiring tax increases to finance it.

And the plan still contains enough spending cuts that either the House or the Senate could reject it and force more negotiations.

"There's a possibility of three runs at this," said Rep. Melvin Neufeld, R-Ingalls, one of the negotiators.

And even if lawmakers approve the plan — which they were supposed to do before recessing, under their deadlines — their work on the budget won't be done.

The Legislature usually drafts a separate cleanup bill, to correct mistakes and account for changes in revenue estimates — or, in good years, add goodies at the last minute.

If lawmakers won't raise taxes enough to plug the hole in their proposed budget, that cleanup bill

becomes one huge reconciliation measure, and all spending items are open to debate again.

Passing a tax package won't be simple, either. Earlier this month, about 50 conservative lawmakers issued a statement insisting that the state could get by without raising taxes by dipping into its rainy day funds — something Graves opposes.

Other conservatives are willing to vote for some tax increases — to avoid larger ones.

Legislators said no consensus has developed on which taxes should increase, either. Democrats have said they will oppose any package without increases in income and estate taxes — something many Republicans reject.

Neither chamber has approved any tax increase yet.

How tough can it be?

In 1994, lawmakers considered six compromise versions of the final budget cleanup bill, known as the Omnibus Appropriations Act, with another two versions drafted in between, but never considered. One staffer's old file on the legislation is labeled "Omnibus from Hell."

Still, Senate President Dave Kerr insisted recently that legislators ought to be able to finish their work in four days.

"The issues are well-known and obvious," said Kerr, R-Hutchinson. "What is needed are people who will step up and make the difficult votes."

But Kerr also said he plans to introduce a proposal to cut legislative pay off after the fourth day of the wrap-up session, to give lawmakers an incentive to leave.

He understands that atmospheric conditions under the dome are right for a lengthy wrap-up.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Correspondent John Hanna has covered state government and politics for The Associated Press since 1987.

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