

commentary

from other pens...

Cuba policy driven by domestic politics

The United States and Cuba have not had normal relations in 41 years. Judging by the demands President Bush has set forth, it's not going to happen any time soon.

"Full normalization of relations with Cuba will only be possible when Cuba has a new government that is fully democratic, when the rule of law is respected, and when the human rights of all Cubans are fully protected," Bush said.

No other country is asked to meet that standard, and it's doubtful any could. Certainly China couldn't, nor Vietnam nor a host of Arab and African countries with which the United States maintains normal relations.

Last January, the Bush administration tripled U.S. assistance to Uzbekistan just two days after President Islam Karimov conducted a referendum widely criticized as fraudulent. As a neighbor of Afghanistan, Uzbekistan is considered by the administration as a key player in the war on terrorism. It gets plenty of slack from Washington.

Bush outlined his demands about Cuba in two speeches Monday — one a sober address in the White House, the second a stem-winder in Miami that kept the thousands of Cuban-Americans present on their feet, arms thrust upward.

Countries tend to reach out to ideologically opposite regimes at times of national peril. The U.S.-Soviet alliance forged during World War II contributed greatly to Nazi Germany's defeat, and spared the lives of countless American soldiers.

Years later, President Nixon sought detente with China's repressive regime, seeing Beijing as an ally against the Soviet Union.

There are no such compelling national security reasons for seeking accommodation with Cuba. Indeed, there are strong domestic political reasons for not doing so, says Larry Sabato, director of the University of Virginia's Center for Politics.

Sabato says Cuban-Americans have an influence in excess of their numbers because they are concentrated in a state with a large number of electoral votes and which is evenly split, as the 2000 presidential election showed.

There also is what Sabato calls "the double Bush factor." The president not only helps himself in Florida by bashing Cuba's communist president, Fidel Castro, but also helps Bush's younger brother, Gov. Jeb Bush, who happens to be up for re-election in November.

The United States often sees merit in trying to engage unfriendly states. Two of the three members of the Bush's "axis of evil" — North Korea and Iran — fall into this category. Neither is told that democratic reforms are the price for normal relations. But without contact, Washington has no way of influencing them to halt their military buildups.

Double standards tend to be a normal part of statecraft. Castro, for example, has ranted for years about his "imperialist" neighbor to the north. But he applauded the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968 and remained silent when Moscow invaded Afghanistan 11 years later.

For all of Bush's anti-Castro fervor, a new alliance is developing between Cuba and U.S. lawmakers from farm states, which have benefited from a sudden surge of exports — more than \$90 million — to the island over the past few months.

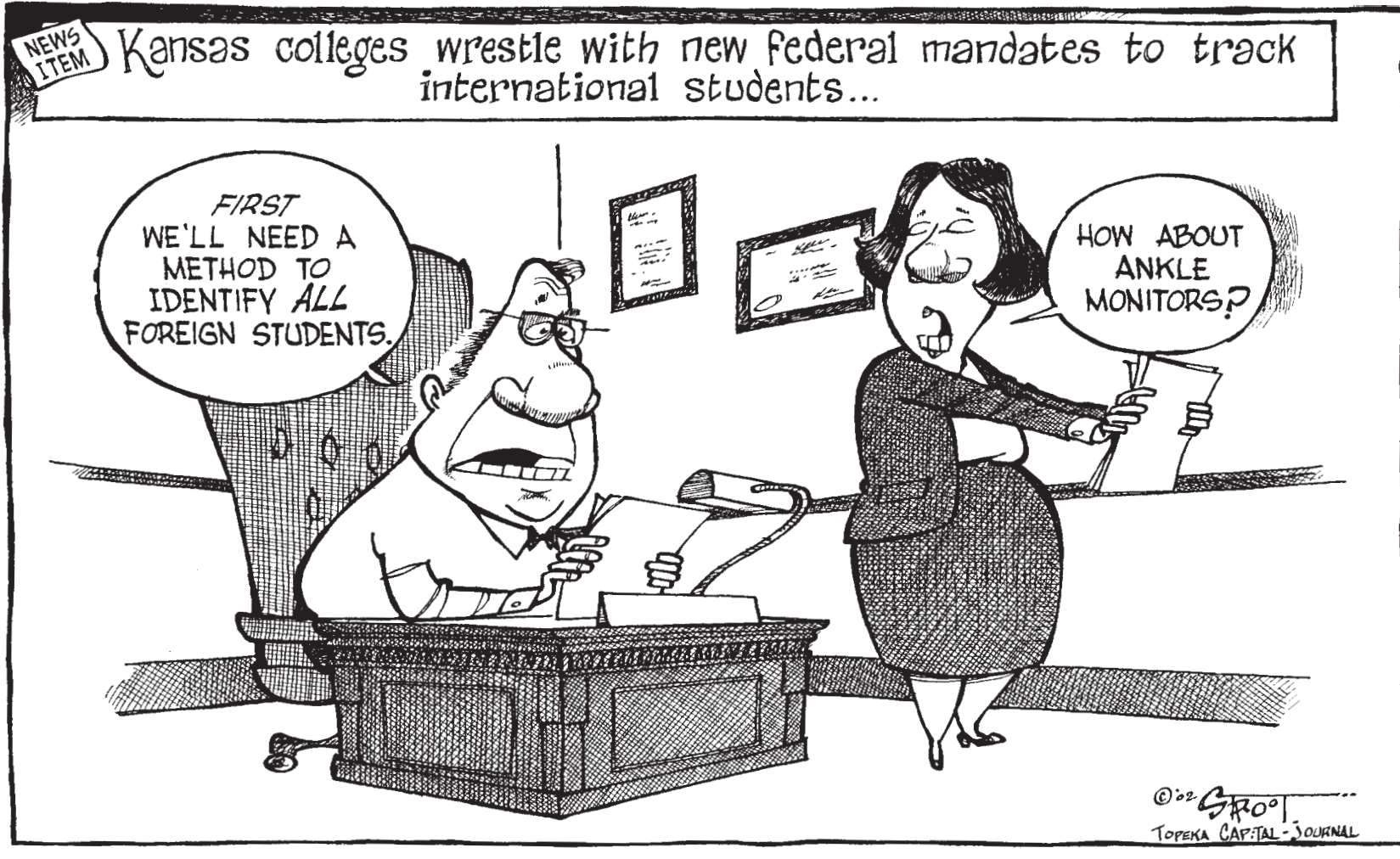
They see 40 years of economic embargo against Cuba as a failure and see no reason why Americans should not be able to travel freely to Cuba. Bush has vowed to veto any bill that eases restrictions in either area.

It's hard to remember a time when forces opposed to the embargo have been stronger.

Sabato believes that if Cuba's market were the same as China's (it's about 100 times smaller), Bush would not be making the kind of speeches he made on Monday. If that were the case, Sabato says, pro-democracy sentiments would fade, and Castro would be seen as a man Americans could do business with.

"My guess is we would make the pragmatic choice," he says.

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



I seem to respond to the flowers of spring

There's something about spring flowers.

My husband sends me roses for Valentine's Day, and they are lovely. The girls at the prom wore and carried gorgeous flowers. The mums in the fall are wonderful.

But something deep inside me responds to the flowers of spring.

It's mostly memories of younger days, I'm sure.

Lilacs always remind me of walking to school as a kid. The neighbors had huge lilac bushes. I would pick the flowers and take them to my teacher, who would put them in a vase before her statue of the Virgin. It never occurred to me that pilloined flowers were probably not the thing to offer at the altar.

My grandmother lived in Arkansas, and everything there was a week or two earlier than our home in northcentral Kansas. She would write (long distance was much too expensive in those days) that her tulips were up when we still had snow out front. As her irises came along, our tulips were blooming.

Grandma was a great gardener. She would go out



cynthia haynes
 • open season

every morning at 5 a.m. to weed, mulch and take care of her flowers. She had a huge iris garden, but didn't do vegetables.

Mother said that when she was young, her father grew vegetables and her mother flowers. Since I never knew my grandfather, I had just figured that flowers were all that grew in Arkansas — particularly irises.

After I was married, Grandma sent me some of her prized irises. I planted them around the house and was out mulching and weeding them when I went into labor with our first baby.

I was two weeks early and the birth was hard. The word breach was never used, but for those not old enough to know about that let's just say our daugh-

ter didn't know her head from her tail and I didn't have a C-section.

I was in the hospital for most of a week — unusually long even back then.

Steve brought me irises picked from our yard. Iris from plants my grandmother had grown in Arkansas and sent to me. And he stuck them all in an empty dish-washing bottle that fell over every time someone came into the room.

Irises are my daughter Felicia's flower. She's had them around her since she was born. She took them with her to Lawrence and to Augusta, Ga. When she moved into an apartment a year or so ago, she dug her plants up and put them in pots. Next month, she will put the descendants of those same irises that grew in Arkansas, Concordia, Kansas City, Colorado, Oberlin and Lawrence back into the ground in Georgia when she moves into her new home.

I love flowers — all flowers. But, there's something about the flowers of spring, especially irises, that calls from mother to daughter down through the generations.

Thank you, Grandma.

Thanks for the National Day of Prayer program

To the Editor:

I want to thank everyone who participated in the National Day of Prayers event at the courthouse on May 2.

It was beautifully presented and so inspiring.

I hope there are many more events where we can come together in prayer for our nation and for our community. What better way for our community to grow and build together?

Daylene O'Harah
 Goodland



from our readers
 • to the editor

right direction, increasing safety equipment usage and decreasing highway injuries and fatalities.

No one likes being pulled over or being ticketed, but if you are cited for a safety belt violation, please remember that officers have your safety at heart. The Kansas Highway Patrol has a serious stance against unbelted motorists because we want to prevent injuries and fatalities on the road.

Ultimately, the choice to buckle up is in the hands of every driver and passenger. Please make the right decision. Buckle up. It's our law and your life.

Colonel Don Brownlee
 Kansas Highway Patrol Superintendent
 Topeka

To the Editor:

Recently I wrote to you asking your readers to send me post cards about your state. I want to thank everyone who sent me something. I received so many nice cards and notes with good information. I have completed my project and I really enjoyed learning about the state. Maybe some day I can come visit.

Please print this so that everyone will know how much help they gave me and how much I appreciated it.

I made a B on my reportcard.
 Brandon Spaulding
 New Smyrna Beach, Fla.

year. Most of our visits are made while traveling in our motorhome.

During these visits, we have bought food and supplies for later use. We have dined in several of your restaurants, and have fueled and gassed up both of our vehicles at your fuel stops. During extended stays in Goodland, we have pulled into the RV park and paid for hook ups.

Now we have been informed that we and all other recreational visitors are not welcome to park and visit our relatives and friends for more than two hours in any 24 hr. time period.

I thought Goodland wanted to bring in visitors to see their Van Gogh, visit the museum, play in the water park and patronize the shops. I cannot see how these parking ordinances can fulfill these needs.

We have traveled in a recreational vehicle for the last 12 years throughout the United States and this is the first time we have been faced with this circumstance. We have stayed in towns which operate recreational vehicle parks with hook ups and only ask for donations for their use. They are making it easy for RVers to stay in their towns and spend money in their shops.

I believe the city of Goodland should reevaluate their parking ordinances and try to make visitors welcome instead of alienating them!

I am a member of the Family Motor Coach Association and a life member of Good Sam Club. I have sent a letter and copies of the parking ordinances to both of these organizations as well as to Motor Home Magazine.

Roger W. Summer
 Elizabeth, Colo.

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
 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 Skilar Boland Lana Westfahl

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, \$79. Out of area, weekly mailing of five issues: three months, \$30; six months, \$45; 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 **STAR**
 Founded by Eric and Roxie Yonkey
 1994-2001

Nor'West Newspapers
 Haynes Publishing Company

