

# commentary

from other pens...

## Lawsuit challenges state election process

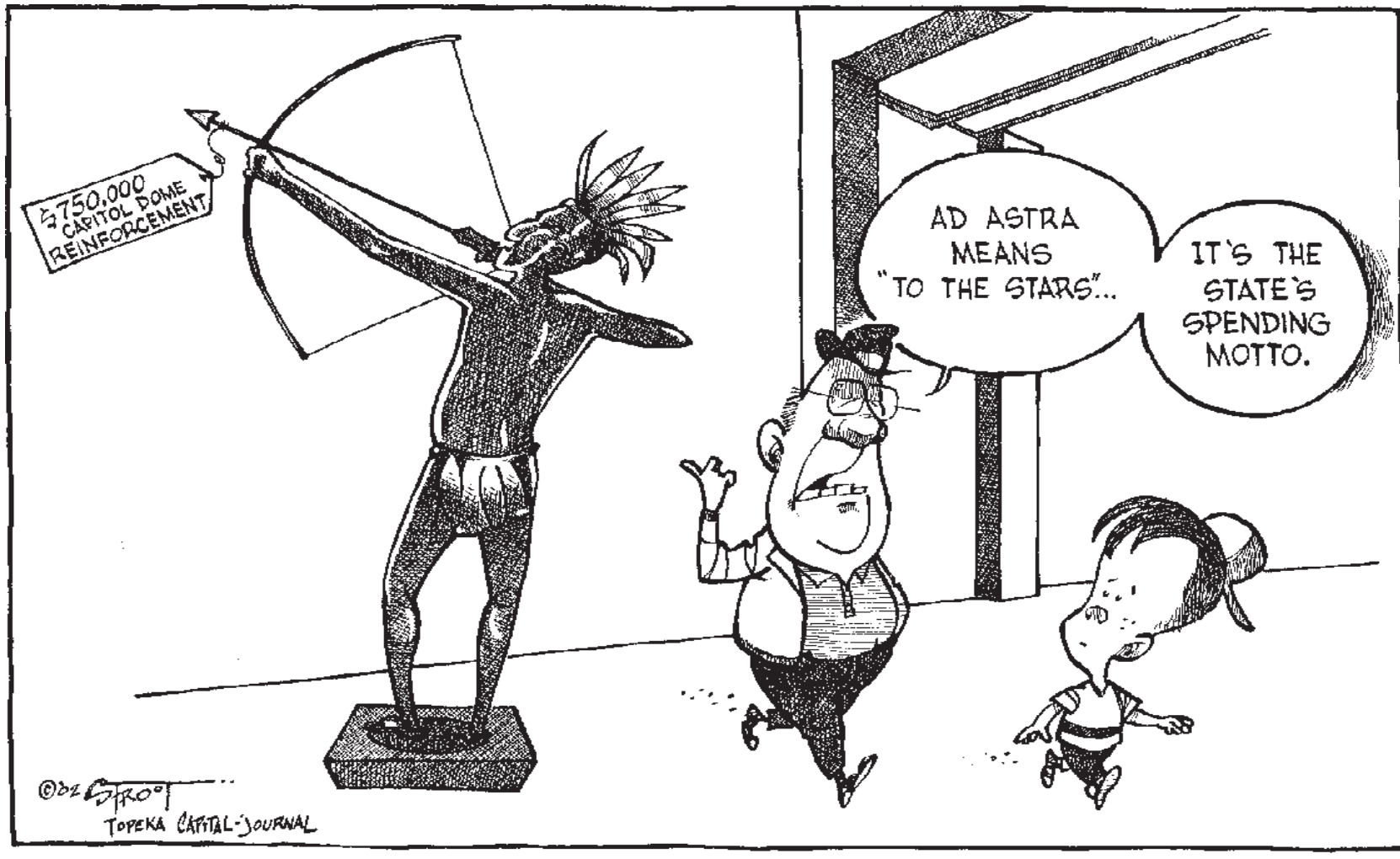
**The Garden City Telegram on congressional redistricting:**  
 Kansans are scheduled to go to the polls Aug. 6 to whittle selections for various local, state and federal offices. But a challenge to the state's congressional redistricting plan could delay the primary.  
 The three-judge panel deliberating the redistricting appeal should move diligently so the primary can take place as scheduled. ...  
 The timeline is thin, given the notice requirements and other logistics necessary to conduct an election.  
 The lawsuit puts in the judges' hands the fate of the state's four congressional districts. Lawmakers' gerrymandering created a split in certain areas that upset many residents, especially those in Junction City, who were separated from the nearby Fort Riley. Attorney General Carla Stovall said the separation of the military town from the fort disrupted a major community of interest.  
 Democrats were upset that the city of Lawrence was split between two districts.  
 The district boundary issue obviously must be settled before any primary election can be held.  
 Pushing the primary back narrows the window from the primary to November's general election, slicing into the time voters have to assess the credentials of each party's candidate for significant offices.  
 The judges will hear arguments in early July. A swift decision would be in the best interest of the candidates, as well as voters.

**The Emporia Gazette on economic development:**  
 Great news came ... with the announcement that another company has decided to make Emporia its home.  
 Ingenium Packaging, a manufacturer of innovative light aluminum cans, expects to employ 73 people, have a \$2.5 million payroll and make a \$31 million capital investment in building and equipment. Plant construction will begin this summer in Industrial Park III.  
 Emporia's economic-development program was started in 1995 in hopes of persuading Cessna to build its new small-plane plant in Emporia. The Cessna plant went to Independence, but Emporia learned a lot from the selection process about attracting industry. Since then, the community has had an excellent track record in recruiting companies to town.  
 Companies such as Lenze, Menu, Caterpillar and Norfolk Iron & Metal are here because of the city's economic-development program. ... They have created more than 405 jobs with a combined payroll of \$11.7 million.  
 In August 2000, voters wisely approved extending the half-cent sales tax for economic development through 2014.  
 Communities around the state are envious of Emporia's economic growth and have even coined a name for our recruiting practices: "The Emporia Method."

Emporians should be proud of what we are accomplishing in economic development. After all, our future depends on it.

### where to write

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- U.S. Sen. Sam Brownback**, 303 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington D.C. 20510. (202) 224-6521
- U.S. Rep. Jerry Moran**, 1217 Longworth House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510. (202) 225-2715
- State Rep. Jim Morrison**, State Capitol Building Rm. 174-W, Topeka, KS 66612. (785) 296-7676
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## Hong Kong is one of those fabled cities

Observations from Hong Kong:  
 • I never did quite get over the shock of actually being in Hong Kong. It's one of those fabled cities like New York, Geneva or Rome. But, I thought, with a lot less chance of me getting there.  
 • While founded on its famous harbor, Hong Kong is a high-rise city. If you buy a postcard, it will be a picture of tall buildings. Everything is high rise — the stores, hotels and apartments.  
 • The harbor, in contrast, is shrinking. The city is extending itself onto "reclaimed land." That is, land made out of the harbor by dumping "stuff" into it to fill it in and then building on it. One diplomat claimed that the harbor gets narrower and narrower every time he visits the city. We still took a harbor cruise — it didn't seem right to go to a city long famous for its waterway and not get out on it.  
 • The Red Chinese took over the city in 1997. People who were there before and after say there is little difference. The mainland has kept its hands off of Hong Kong, declaring it a "special administrative district." Government officials like to tell everyone how free the island is. Their slogan is, "one country — two systems." They also say that they pay no taxes to the mainland.  
 I'm still trying to figure out how the mainland benefits from having the island, apart from the



**cynthia haynes**  
 • open season

prestige and happiness at being rid of the British. I'm sure there is some economic gain and it might just be trade with Taiwan, most of which passes through Hong Kong since the two Chinese governments don't talk to each other.  
 • You can still see the old colonial influence. At the fabled Peninsula Hotel, which was right in front of ours, we went to high tea. The hotel is a throwback from the days of empire — all gilded, with wide staircases and a grand lobby.  
 • We took the required tram ride to the top of Victoria Peak. The ride is about like a roller coaster. It rises at a 27-degree grade. That feels like straight up. The ride is about eight minutes and takes you from the canyon at the bottom of all those high-rise buildings to the top of the peak through beautiful trees. As you look out the windows, you can see everything laid out — the bay, the buildings, the parks — it's beautiful. At the top, it's Estes Park at high season. They have food, drink and trinkets for

sale everywhere. There is both a Madame Tussauds and a Ripley's Believe it or Not.  
 How do you say "tourist trap" in Chinese?  
 • Our day off was Sunday. We wandered all over. Everywhere we went, there were young women sitting on the sidewalks, on low walls, in the parks. They were among the 240,000 Filipino maids who work in Hong Kong. Sunday is their day off and they picnic and gather in small groups to enjoy it.  
 At St. John's Anglican Cathedral, a sign offers services for Filipino immigrants. It's their big mission.  
 • We also got to see a protest. Our trolley was stopped for a short time while a group of protesters crossed the tracks. Sunday is protest day in Hong Kong, we were told. People protest everything. This shows how free they are, we were told. A young policeman on a motorcycle escorted the protest. He grinned when we smiled at him. It was just another Sunday on protest patrol, I guess.  
 • Hong Kong is bustling city where you can buy anything — and I do mean anything. It never sleeps. The people seem to be lively, happy and always busy. They live in cramped little apartments but get outdoors and enjoy their parks and public places.  
 It's a great place to visit, and I'm still not sure I can believe I was there.

## 'True reform' for Palestine



**morton kondracke**  
 • commentary

"Palestinian reform" has proved wildly successful as a Middle East mantra. But as a strategy for peace — so far — it's a bust.  
 Everyone — Arabs, Israelis, Europeans and Americans — agrees that Yasser Arafat's Palestinian Authority is corrupt, inefficient, undemocratic and in need of reform.  
 A recent poll by the Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research, as reported Sunday in The New York Times, shows that 91 percent of Palestinians want "fundamental change" in their government.  
 Arafat's approval rating among his own people is only 35 percent. Eighty-three percent believe that his government is corrupt, and 95 percent want his ministers dismissed.  
 The problem is that Arafat is co-opting the reform idea and is using it to consolidate his power. That's not what President Bush had in mind when he began talking several weeks ago about the need for new security forces to stop terrorism against Israel, a new Palestinian constitution and an honest, open, elected government.  
 "Constitutional reform" is generally considered — even by Palestinians — to be code for turning Arafat into a figurehead president, with a prime minister exercising real power.  
 But now it's clear that Arafat, while embracing "reform," is using it to divide his rivals and keep himself in power.  
 He's announced a cabinet shake-up but no plans to diminish his own authority. He's appointed a crony, Maj. Gen. Ahmed Razak Yehiyeh, to be in charge of security.  
 That move seems designed to prevent two potential successors to Arafat, former Gaza security chief Muhammad Dahlan and West Bank security chief Jabril Rajoub, from consolidating power.  
 Both Dahlan and Rajoub supported former President Bill Clinton's Camp David peace plan in 2000 — which Arafat rejected — and are thought to be amenable to peace with Israel.  
 As part of his reform charade, Arafat also has hinted that he'll call parliamentary and presidential elections, but likely as not he'll permit only token opposition to take part.  
 His plan seems to be to get himself re-elected and claim once more to be the chosen leader of the Palestinian people — this time, with a mandate — thus forcing the world to deal with him.  
 That would perpetuate the status quo — corruption, authoritarian rule and continued terrorism by radicals whom Arafat either can't or won't control.  
 Before all this unfolds, Bush has to do something to forestall it or his Mideast diplomacy will be worse off than it is now.  
 Bush currently is juggling four separate Mideast initiatives. It's not clear how they fit into a coherent strategy.  
 They are (1) reform; (2) his promise to make a Mideast "vision" speech soon, outlining his plans

for creating a Palestinian state; (3) the idea of a Mideast peace conference; and (4) the prospect of a peace "timetable."  
 Arab countries want Bush to call for a conference that would endorse Saudi Arabia's plan for total withdrawal from territories captured in 1967 and to lay out a timetable for the withdrawals and Palestinian statehood.  
 Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak said last weekend that, as to reform, Arafat should have "a chance to prove that he's going to deliver, or not."  
 Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon favors a conference, but envisions drawn-out negotiations — without Arafat or a timetable — and no return to the 1967 lines.  
 Within the Bush administration, the State Department is understood to favor a specific Bush vision, a timetable, a conference and keeping Arafat as the top Palestinian negotiator.  
 How should Bush put all these elements together into a coherent plan?  
 He should make a speech reiterating support for a Palestinian state and promising to work for Israel's return to the 1967 borders — modified, however, to ensure Israel's security.  
 He should call upon Israel to withdraw its settlements from the West Bank and Gaza, but defend Israel's right to use force in the territories to combat terrorism.  
 He should call for a conference of foreign ministers to get Israel, Palestinians, Arab countries, the United States and Europe working on economic and diplomatic plans for peace, but reject a specific timetable that might encourage Palestinians to stall in making concessions.  
 Above all, he should speak to the Palestinian

people, telling them that all their hopes for a state, for peace and for prosperity depend on "true reform."  
 He can hold out a promise of massive European and U.S. aid — but only if the Palestinian government is a dependable custodian of it.  
 Presumably, he can't say, "Arafat has to go," but he certainly can imply it, citing a familiar litany of promises unkept and hopes dashed.  
 Such a comprehensive Bush initiative might not work because radicalism is ascendant among the Palestinians, and no one may be able to control suicide bombing.  
 Israel's only hope for security may be to build a barrier separating its territory from the Palestinians and conduct pre-emptive and reprisal raids against terrorists.  
 But a major initiative by Bush is worth a try, if only to get the Mideast parties working on peace while he returns to his primary strategic objective — toppling Iraq's Saddam Hussein.  
 Morton Kondracke is executive editor of Roll Call, the newspaper of Capitol Hill.

### berry's world



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