

commentary

from other pens...

Choice on Iraq recalls other earlier decisions

Harry Truman and the atomic bomb. John F. Kennedy and the Cuban missile crisis. George W. Bush and Iraq.

Bush's decision to attack Iraq — or not to attack — ranks among the most difficult any president has faced over the past several decades.

Lee Edwards, an analyst of presidential decision-making at the Heritage Foundation, said there is a common thread to all debates over the use of massive force: "You have to ask yourself what the alternatives are."

What seems to be lacking in the Iraq case is the clear provocation that Truman confronted against Japan and Kennedy against the Soviet Union and their Cuban allies.

There is the strong suspicion Saddam Hussein has the means and the motives to do something nasty against the United States, but is that justification enough?

Norman Ornstein, a scholar at the American Enterprise Institute, acknowledges that the difficulties in going after Saddam militarily are great but he believes the risks are worth it.

"I think we have to do something," he said. "He (Saddam) does pose a threat. We have to do something because we said we would do something."

Ivo Daalder of the Brookings Institution said Bush seems to have made a decision to take on Saddam without thinking through the consequences.

"He's been stuck with the decision ever since he made it," Daalder said. Alluding to what he called the Bush's "analytical emptiness" regarding Iraq, he said it is possible that "the most likely way in which Saddam would use weapons of mass destruction (against Americans) is if we attack them."

Daalder says there is a stark difference between Bush's dilemma and the one Kennedy faced in 1962 at the time of the Cuban missile crisis.

Forty years ago, he said, "There was an imminent threat, it was clearly identified and had to be dealt with," a reference to the offensive missiles Moscow installed in western Cuba.

Kennedy chose not to attack but instead imposed a "quarantine" around Cuba, blocking the entry of Soviet vessels to the island.

An anxious world waited 13 days before the superpowers were able to resolve the conflict peacefully. It was the closest the world came to a nuclear exchange.

Ornstein said Truman's decision to use the atomic bomb against Japan in August 1945 was momentous because of the unprecedented loss of life he knew it would cause.

What made the decision easier was that Truman also knew the alternative to the bomb — continued conventional warfare with "immense bloodshed on both sides," Ornstein said. According to estimates, the number of dead would have exceeded those killed at Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

There were other momentous presidential decisions: Truman sending troops to South Korea in 1950, President Johnson escalating the Vietnam War by carrying the fight into North Vietnam in 1965 and President George H.W. Bush leading an international coalition to drive Iraq out of Kuwait in 1991.

The protagonists from 1990-91 are back for a return engagement: Colin Powell, presiding at the State Department; Dick Cheney, now vice president; and Paul Wolfowitz, now No. 2 at the Pentagon. All had different but critical roles in the earlier confrontation. And once again, Saddam is the black-hatted guy from the Iraqi badlands, as he was in 1990-91.

But the situation the younger Bush faces is far different from that era, when it was relatively easy to rally international support against Saddam following his takeover of Kuwait.

Eleven years later, the coalition against Iraq is nowhere to be found. But Edwards, of the Heritage Foundation, believes the case against Saddam is strong and that the earlier coalition can be rebuilt in large measure.

"It's true the allies now have cold feet," he says. But he believes Powell can turn things around, and he predicts the secretary will be doing that all over Europe in the months ahead.

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



Sprouts and more

Sprouting dried beans doesn't take a lot of work or a green thumb either. Sprouting changes beans from a starch which is indigestible to a vegetable sugar that is easily digested. Any amount of dried beans, legumes, peas or lentils can be used to sprout. Whole peas are easier to sprout than split peas. Large beans such as lima, navy, kidney and black beans have low yields and spoil quickly. During processing the husks of oats, barley, and millet are commonly removed so they will not sprout. Use fresh packaged beans. Some packaged beans are sterilized and will not sprout. Also roasted, salted and processed seeds will not sprout.

To sprout beans, place in a large bowl, rinse and drain in a colander. Return beans to the bowl and cover with several inches of water. Let them soak overnight or 8 to 12 hours. Drain beans in a colander and cover with a damp towel so they don't dry out. Rinse every morning and evening with water at room temperature to remove any bacteria, mold, or fungus build up. Keep in indirect light and at a temperature no lower than 70 degrees. For use when sprouted the tails need to be 3/4 to 1 inch long. This will take 3 to 4 days for most beans. Sprout only one variety of beans at a time as different beans sprout at different rates.

Cooking Sprouted Beans

4 cups sprouted beans
Place beans in pan and add water to cover by 1 inch. Bring to a boil. Continue boiling, uncovered, for about 10 minutes. Add water as needed. Reduce heat and simmer for 30-50 minutes or until tender. Drain excess liquid into container and retain for soup stock. 4 servings.

The cooking time of sprouted beans is usually half of regular beans. Cooked beans may be frozen for future use.

pat schiefen

• postscript



5 cups sprouted kidney beans
1 1/2 cups water
1 large onion
1/4 cup chopped chili peppers
1 clove garlic, chopped
1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper
1/4 teaspoon cumin seeds
1 cup yogurt or kefir

Refried Beans

In a pan simmer beans, water, onion, chili peppers, garlic, cayenne and cumin seeds for 30 minutes. Cool slightly. Puree the bean mixture with yogurt in a blender. Pour mixture into a skillet and cook at low heat for at least 5 minutes, scraping the bottom of the pan constantly until the beans hold together. Remove from the heat and let stand for 30 minutes. 4 servings.

Sprouted Bean and Tomato Bisque

3 medium tomatoes (1 1/4 pound) or one 16 ounce can chopped tomatoes
1 large chopped onion
1 clove garlic, minced
2 large carrots (1/2 pound)
4 cups cooked sprouted pinto beans
2 cans vegetable broth (14 1/2 ounce cans) or 4 cups homemade

1/3 cup fresh basil leaves or coriander salt and pepper
pinch of maple sugar

In a 5 quart pan add 1 tablespoon butter, onion and garlic. Stir over high heat until onion is slightly browned (about 6-8 minutes). Add chopped tomatoes, carrots, pinto beans and broth. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer, covered, until carrots are very soft (about 10 minutes). In a blender puree soup a portion at a time. Return to pan, add salt and pepper to taste. Add a pinch of maple sugar or teaspoon of maple syrup if bisque is too acidic. Warm soup and serve. May be refrigerated for up to two days.

Sprouted Bean Dip

2 cups cooked sprouted beans
1 clove garlic
1/4 cup dried tomatoes, reconstituted
1/2 cup water from tomatoes
Pour 1 cup boiling water over dried tomatoes and let soak until soft (about 20 minutes). Drain, reserving liquid. With food processor running add garlic, beans, and 1/2 cup reserved tomato water and process until smooth. Add tomatoes, salt and pepper and mix. Add more tomato water if too thick. Scrape into a bowl. 8 servings.

The recipes and information about sprouts is from "Essential Eating" by Janie Quinn. It is aimed at people wanting to diet and eat healthy. The book suggests different stages of eating starting with the foods most easily digested and gradually adding in harder to digest foods. It does not use sugar or a sugar substitute instead it uses varying forms of real maple syrup. The book also uses a modular system of food preparation. Preparing a week's worth of components to be used for a whole week.

I almost missed the election last week

I almost missed voting last week. It'd have been a first for me. I've voted in primaries where there were no contests at all, just check the boxes down the line.

But I fell victim to the mantra of the times. It was a busy week, a busy day. Fair was starting in both my counties, and there was a lot going on.

As I was about to leave home, I got a call asking me to pick up some inserts in Oberlin and haul them to Goodland. And though it made me late, I did, because there were people waiting on them.

And in rushing out of town, I forgot to stop by the polling booth.

That didn't exactly put me in bad company. Despite hot and heavy contests for governor and state representative, two-thirds of the registered voters stayed away.

What made me different, I guess, is that half an hour out of town I realized what I'd done. I thought I was sunk, because we have a staff meeting at 4:30 Tuesdays in Goodland that lasts until 5:30 Mountain Time, and that's 6:30 in Oberlin, and 90 miles, and there was no way I'd get back to vote.

I was kicking myself, because with advance voting, there's no excuse not to mark a ballot. Except not caring enough to take the time.

My problem worked itself out. I told people I needed to leave, we started the meeting early and I snuck out, which is hard to do when you're the

steve haynes

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chair, but there was this hot discussion on cameras. I got back in plenty of time, despite a couple of stops, to cast a ballot. I even had a little time to read in the hammock before results started coming in at the courthouse, and I had to go back to work.

But I wonder, am I just old-fashioned? Most people, it appears, would rather be at the fair or the lake or work or the television, than vote.

I'd be the first to admit that politics isn't as much fun as it used to be. I grew up in the days of candidate caravans and gavel-to-gavel television at national conventions, of potlucks and stump speeches and all-night counts.

I remember seeing Ike on the back platform of a train and meeting candidates for governor who stopped through town. And I remember, we loved it.

Today conventions are stage-managed, counts are predicted within minutes (sometimes wrong, of course) and there's not a lot of mystery or excitement, at least for most people, in elections.

The Goodland Daily News

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

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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

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

Nor'West Newspapers
Haynes Publishing Company



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