

commentary

from other pens...

President still preach from the bully pulpit

For Theodore Roosevelt the presidency was "the bully pulpit," the ultimate high ground in a constant campaign for the public's ear and eye. President Bush stepped into bully pulpit territory this month when he stood before Mount Rushmore's stone-carved presidential images and assailed the Senate for binding his hands in red tape with its version of a new Department of Homeland Security.

The granite face of Theodore Roosevelt rose on the mountainside above him as Bush let the cameras drink in the presidential images and told the country: "I need the flexibility to be able to protect the homeland against an enemy that hates us."

Senate Democratic Leader Tom Daschle, an invited guest as South Dakota's senior senator, seized the moment to mount his own pulpit. Congress, he told reporters nearby, "should not give this president or any president the dictatorial powers I think compromise the checks and balances that our Founding Fathers recognized."

Nonetheless, the focus of the moment was on the president and his message, not on the majority leader and his.

Skillful use of the bully pulpit is one reason Theodore Roosevelt, TR to the headline writers, got his place on the mountain next to Washington, Jefferson and Lincoln. And at Mount Rushmore it was clear the 43rd president was playing from the book written by the 26th.

Many other presidents have used Roosevelt's pulpit and used it well. —Franklin Delano Roosevelt, TR's distant cousin, adopted it in his 1933 inaugural address when he injected a fear-not burst of optimism into a nation beset by the Great Depression. FDR, perfected its use in his nationally broadcast "fireside chats."

—John F. Kennedy showed his skill in Berlin as he told a cheering crowd that he stood with them in their Cold War struggle because "Ich bin ein Berliner!"

—Ronald Reagan, dubbed "the great communicator," proved he had mastered the form when he returned to Berlin, stood before the concrete and steel barrier separating East Berlin from the West and exclaimed, "Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall!"

Not all attempts are as successful.

Woodrow Wilson stumbled as he sought after World War I to rally support for American membership in the League of Nations but failed to crack the Senate's stony opposition.

Theodore Roosevelt not only named the bully pulpit, he used it as often and as effectively as any of them.

TR used it symbolically when he sent the American fleet around the world as signal that the U.S. had joined the family of great powers. He used it with similar effect when he was photographed operating the controls of a steam shovel helping dig the Panama Canal.

Roosevelt was in the bully pulpit when he inveighed against "malefactors of great wealth" and when he advised his country to "speak softly and carry a big stick."

Widely considered the first truly modern president, Roosevelt galloped into office after William McKinley's assassination in 1901 and never stopped running. He used his office to express his strong opinions on literature, art, morals, marriage, divorce and his vision of "the strenuous life." He used it to promote the program of reforms he called "the Square Deal."

"Bully" was a muscular word he used all his life, referring to a "bully" time or a "bully" trip. But while everyone knew TR had coined the phrase "bully pulpit," few were able to pin down when he first used the phrase.

New York Times columnist and word sleuth William Safire found one such use. In 1982, with the aid of his readers, Safire discovered an account of a conversation between the president and friend George Haven Putnam, who accused Roosevelt of a tendency to preach.

"Yes," Roosevelt agreed. "Most of us enjoy preaching, and I've got such a bully pulpit."

EDITOR'S NOTE—Lawrence L. Knutson has reported on Congress, the White House and Washington's history for 35 years.



For quick meals try www.burgertown.com

When time is running short here are some recipes from www.burgertown.com that all take 30 minutes or less. that will really well for families. This website is provided by the National Cattlemen's Beef Association.

Cheese "Steak" Pizza

- 1 pound ground beef
- 1 small green or red bell pepper, cut into thin strips
- 1 small onion, thinly sliced, separated into rings
- 3/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon pepper
- 1 large (16 ounces) pre-baked pizza crust (12 inch diameter)
- 2 cups shredded mozzarella cheese

Heat oven to 400 degrees. Brown ground beef in large skillet. Add pepper and onion and cook until beef is no longer pink and vegetables are crisp but tender. Season with salt and pepper.

Place pizza crust on baking sheet. Using slotted spoon remove beef and vegetables from skillet and arrange on top of the pizza crust. Sprinkle with cheese. Bake in 400 degree oven 8 to 10 minutes until cheese is melted. Cut and serve. Makes four servings.

Mexi-Chili Mac

- 1 pound ground beef
- 1/2 cup chopped green bell pepper
- 1/4 cup chopped onion
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 can (14 1/2 ounces) Mexican style diced tomatoes, undrained
- 1 can (8 ounces) tomato sauce
- 3/4 cup water
- 3/4 cup uncooked elbow macaroni
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 2 teaspoons Spicy Seasoning Mix
- Brown ground beef with bell pepper, onion and



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garlic in pan until beef is no longer pink, breaking beef up into crumbles. Pour off drippings. Stir in remaining ingredients and bring to a boil. Reduce heat, cover and simmer 15 minutes. Remove from heat, cover and let stand 5 minutes before servings. Makes 4 servings.

Spicy Seasoning Mix

- 3 tablespoons chili powder
- 2 teaspoons ground cumin
- 1 1/2 teaspoons garlic powder
- 3/4 teaspoon dried oregano leaves, crushed
- 1/2 teaspoon ground red pepper

Combine all ingredients. Cover and store in airtight container. Shake before using. Makes 1/3 cup.

Beef Chili 'N Cheddar Topped Potatoes
 1 1/2 pounds ground beef
 4 medium baking potatoes (about 8 ounces)
 1 tablespoon chili powder
 1/2 teaspoon salt
 1 can (15 ounces) hot chili beans, undrained
 1 1/2 cup shredded mild Cheddar cheese
 1/4 cup sliced green onions
 Pierce potatoes in several places and microwave until tender. Brown ground beef in skillet until beef is no longer pink breaking in to crumbles. Pour off drippings. Stir in chili powder and salt. Add beans and 1 cup of cheese. Cook and stir until heated all the way through. Cut slit in potatoes and fluff with fork. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Spoon beef mixture evenly over potatoes and sprinkle with

green onions and remaining cheese. Makes four servings.

Salisbury Steak

- 1 pound ground beef
- 1/3 cup finely chopped onion
- 1/4 cup saltine cracker crumbs
- 1 egg white, slightly beaten
- 2 tablespoons milk
- 1 tablespoon prepared horseradish
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/8 teaspoon pepper
- 1 jar (12 ounces) mushroom gravy

Combine ground beef, onion, cracker crumbs, egg white, milk, horseradish, salt and pepper in a bowl. Mix thoroughly. Shape into 1/2 inch thick oval patties. Cook patties in a skillet until done, turning once. Remove from skillet. Add gravy to skillet and heat through. Serve with Salisbury steak and dill mashed potatoes. Serves 4.

Dill Mashed Potatoes

- 2 cups hot mashed potatoes
- 1 1/2 teaspoons dried dill weed, salt and pepper

Combine potato ingredients in bowl and keep warm. Serves 4.

Easy Steak Milanese

- 4 beef cubed steaks
- 1 egg
- 1 tablespoon water
- salt and pepper
- coating - 1/2 cup seasoned dry bread crumbs and 2 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese topping - 1/4 cup chopped tomato and chopped parsley

Beat egg and water in dish until blended. Combine coating ingredients in shallow dish. Season steaks with salt and pepper. Dip steaks into egg mixture and then into coating mixture to coat both sides. Cook in a skillet with small amount of oil turning once until done. Sprinkle with tomato and parsley. Serves 4.

Invading Iraq looks like a stupid war

WASHINGTON — The American people are not wholeheartedly committed to a U.S. invasion of Iraq.

Cheney's staff is. Rumsfeld's deputies are. The White House's speechwriting office is. The guys they're working under are.

But what about the families of those who will do the actual fighting? What about the country that will have to suffer the casualties and bitterness that are the wreckage of every war?

A new Washington Post/ABC poll finds that 57 percent of us back a ground attack on Baghdad.

But that's if there are no significant casualties. Faced with that hard-to-ignore prospect, 51 percent oppose it.

Is this a strong popular base from which to launch a pre-emptive attack on a country at the other side of the world? To send several hundred thousand U.S. service people on a mission to take over a country, remove its political leadership from power and install one of our choosing?

It's time to recall the Powell doctrine. It's even more important to recall the two words that gave it historic resonance: Vietnam and Beirut.

With memories of those misconceived missions fresh and painful, then-Secretary of Defense, Caspar Weinberger, and his then-chief military assistant, Gen. Colin Powell, drafted new criteria for overseas military involvement.

War, they agreed, should be a last resort. It should be undertaken only in the presence of precise political and military goals, with clear popular support from the American public and the Congress. There must be a clear exit strategy, and an unhesitating will to deploy overwhelming force.

"War should be the politics of last resort," Powell re-asserted in his autobiography. "And when we go to war, we should have a purpose that our people understand and support; we should mobilize the country's resources to fulfill that mission and then go in to win. In Vietnam, we had entered into a halfhearted half-war, with much of the nation opposed or indifferent, while a small fraction carried the burden."

Powell condemned the ambiguous mission objectives that led to the 1983 Lebanon fiasco that cost us the lives of so many young Marines:

"When the political objective is important, clearly defined and understood, when the risks are acceptable, and when the use of force can be ef-



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fectively combined with diplomatic and economic policies, then clear and unambiguous objectives must be given to armed forces. These objectives must be firmly linked with the political objectives. We must not, for example, send military forces into a crisis with an unclear mission they cannot accomplish — such as we did when we sent the U.S. Marines into Lebanon in 1983. We inserted those proud warriors into the middle of a five-faction civil war complete with terrorists, hostage-takes and a dozen spies in every camp, and said, 'Gentlemen, be a buffer.' ... When we use (force), we should not be equivocal; we should win and win decisively."

The great danger, Powell understood, lay in sending American troops with a narrowly defined mission and then expanding their role once in the field. The term is "mission creep."

So we drop tens of thousands of airborne troops into Baghdad. We lay siege to the governmental offices. We begin rounding up anyone who looks like they're important. We face down snipers in the streets. We look for Saddam Hussein. We wear gas masks to protect us from whatever chemical and biological weapons the Iraqi leader has stockpiled for just this occasion. A threatened Israel mobilizes for war.

All this comes to pass against the backdrop of an Arab and Islamic world in riot. In Cairo, Mubarak must tighten his grip and ignites even more popular opposition. Jordan's King Abdullah joins his country's Palestinian majority in condemning the attack. The Saudi Arabian royals are silent. The Muslims and anti-war elements of Europe take to the boulevards. Their governments agree that America has lost its global perspective.

Then comes the messy part. Our troops in Baghdad morph into a nervous constabulary force. Their mission: guard the streets, shoot snipers, arrest the suspicious, keep order, find the Hussein loyalists, round up the members of his ruling party, root out plots and

battle the terrorists.

But for how long? How long were we in Beirut before that lame-brained "peacekeeping" mission ended with a barracks being blown sky-high by a suicide bomber? How long were we in Saigon before we gave up trying to decide where our mission was less popular: at home or in Vietnam?

This invasion of Iraq, if it goes off, will join the Bay of Pigs, Vietnam, Desert One, Beirut and Somalia in the history of military catastrophes.

What will set it apart, distinguishing it for all time, is the immense — and transparent — political stupidity.

A mission to attack one isolated enemy will end up isolating us. A mission justified by the fight against terrorism will give birth to millions of terrorist-supporting haters. In every cafe from Manila to Casablanca just whom do you think they'll be rooting for? Just whom will their kids be killing themselves for?

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