

from our viewpoint...

## Iraqi violence shows true colors of killing

The latest bombings in Iraq show the true colors of the killing in the Mideast.

Two men dressed as Moslem clerics, or ministers, walked into the offices of two Kurdish political parties in Irbil. The suicide bombers took advantage of crowds celebrating the Feast of Sacrifice, a Muslim holiday that recalls Abraham's sacrifice.

At least 56 people died and more than 236 were hurt in this vicious killing. While the wire services focused on the fact the Kurdish parties are strong allies of the Americans, that's hardly important.

Nearly 300 human beings were killed or maimed in an instant that only symbolizes the violence in Iraq. Thousands of Iraqis have died, far more than the 523 American soldiers killed since March.

It's as if someone dressed as a Catholic priest had entered a Christmas party at Republican headquarters in Topeka, then blown the place to bits. It makes that much sense, but hate runs deep in the Cradle of Civilization.

Maybe the bombers really were Islamic clergy. Maybe they were impostors taking advantage of the holiday mood. What difference does it make?

The violence tells us a lot. It tells us that if we are doing something, anything, to bring peace and freedom to Iraq, then our cause is just.

It tells us the enemies of peace and freedom will go to any length to stop not just us, but anyone who opposes them. The Kurds, remember, are a persecuted minority, a "third wheel" in a country where the two largest sects can't get along.

It tells us this isn't going to get any easier, that the killing and bombing won't stop anytime soon. If we are going to help Iraq have a stable and fair government, we might as well start now.

It tells us there is a certain amount of desperation among our foes that they would be willing to take this kind of action.

It tells us we will have to be strong to push this war through to the kind of conclusion that it deserves.

The truth is, whatever our government's motives or flaws, we've done the world and Iraq a favor by getting rid of Saddam Hussein. Now we have to get on with replacing him with something better.

Even after our troops leave, there will be violence in Iraq. You have only to read the Bible to know that someone has been fighting someone in this land since the dawn of time. It won't stop anytime soon.

But remember, our forces were hailed as liberators when they arrived and when they helped the crowd pull down Saddam's statues. Most Iraqis probably think so still.

But they surely cry out for peace as well, and that's something we may not have the power to grant.

We will do our best, and hopefully leave Iraq a better place than we found it. That's all we can hope for. — *Steve Haynes*

## The Goodland Star-News

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

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Published every Tuesday and Friday except the days observed for New Year's Day and Christmas Day, at 1205 Main Ave., 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 Star-News, 1205 Main Ave., Goodland, Kan. 67735. TELEPHONE: (785) 899-2338. Editorial e-mail: [star-news@nwkanssas.com](mailto:star-news@nwkanssas.com). Advertising questions can be sent to: [goodlandads@nwkanssas.com](mailto:goodlandads@nwkanssas.com)

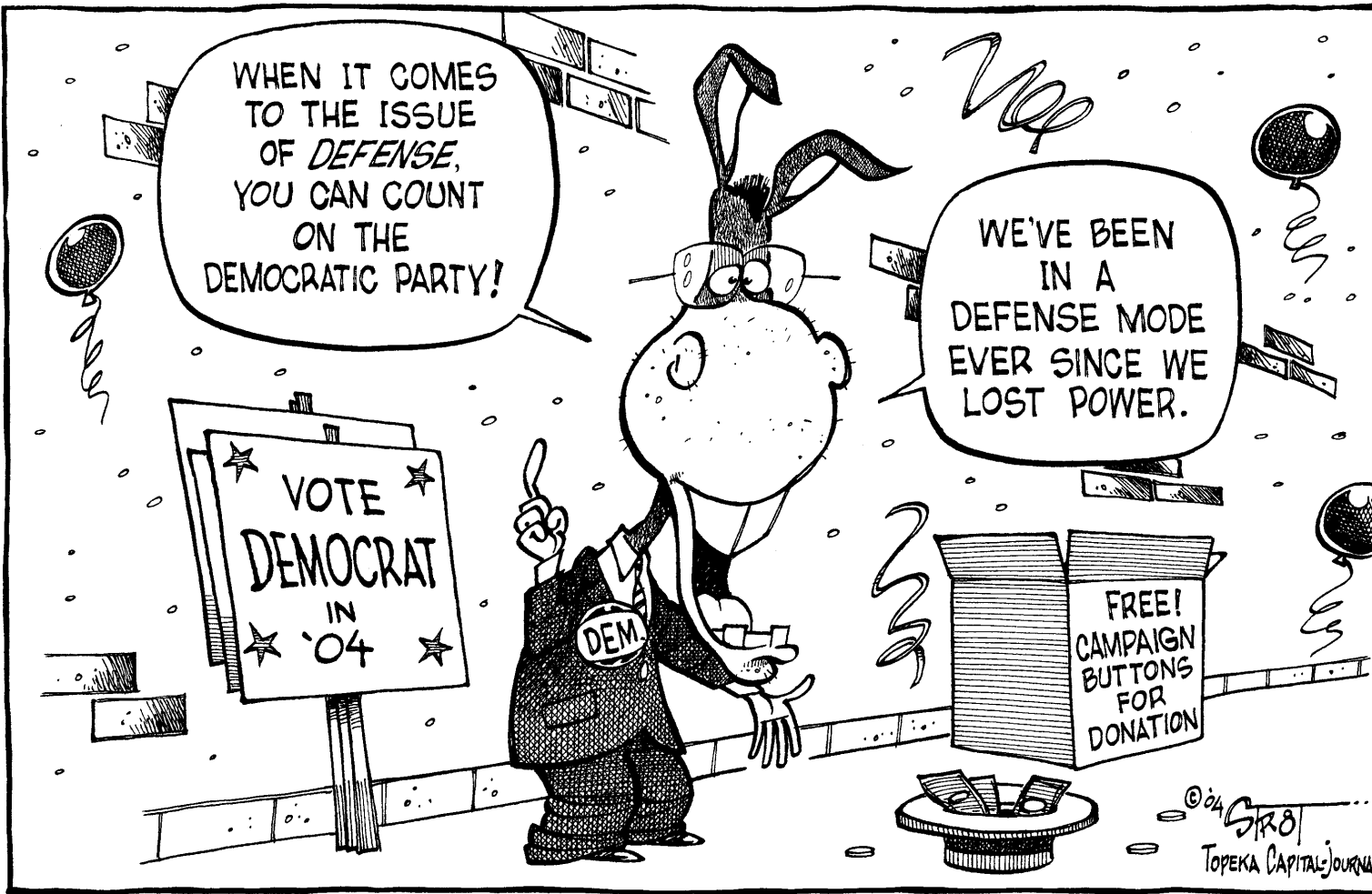
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Founded by Thomas McCants  
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Founded by Eric and Roxie Yonkey  
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Haynes Publishing Company



## That mantel of white covers all the ugliness

I don't know about you, but I'm looking out my window this morning at a beautiful, diamond-studded world.

God covered this world with his all-forgiving snow.

Gone is the ugliness that humans have made of it. It glitters and entices everyone to enjoy it.

Yet, I'm also sitting here, torn between appreciation and trepidation. Normally, on a day like this, I would settle in my cozy home and not think of venturing beyond its walls. But I have much to do today and am wondering how it will all be done.

Somehow I'm going to have to get into the city to catch an airplane early tomorrow morning.

Should I get up very early in the morning, when the roads are bound to be slick, and drive to the airport, or should I go in tonight, when the snow will be either moved by snowplows or worn down by many other cars?



**lorna  
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• commentary

That's the biggest decision to make. Packing suitcases is the biggest task to accomplish.

Yesterday was rainy, but had been forecast to be a large snowstorm, so many people used it as an excuse to stay home from church. Our attendance was down by more than a third. (Bet they still went to their Super Bowl parties later in the day though.)

My mind worked the storm problem all night, worrying that there might be overnight snow so deep that even snowplows would be stranded.

I didn't sleep well. The weather forecasts alarmed me. When you've paid a large amount

of money to go on a cruise, you don't want to even think of missing your plane.

All the hyperbole we get from weather people today creates more concern than warning.

I've looked forward to my cruise up the Mississippi River on a riverboat, and let my anticipation be spoiled with thoughts of our having to dodge icebergs!

But here today dawns, and we have had a beautiful snowfall. And bright sun to make it glorious.

Everything looks better in the morning light.

This is just another example of my trying to control my life instead of fully trusting God's kindness.

Why did I let dire conjectures manipulate my consciousness?

I should have remembered all along that God is good and wants the best for his children.

I also have a couple of generous friends who have graciously offered chauffeuring services in their 4-wheel drive!

## Support group to monitor school board

To the Editor:  
Education 1st is the theme of a support group being organized in our community.

This group hopes to become more aware (and make you aware) of decisions, problems, strengths and weaknesses in our educational system. We have administrators and elected school board members who direct our community educational process, and most of the time do a fine job.

Occasionally, however, some feel decisions are made which are not in the best interest of all students. When that happens it is because you and I as parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles, taxpayers, teachers and students have not educated ourselves in our local academic education process.

This would include classroom conditions, adequate materials such as sufficient textbooks and supplies, up-to-date equipment, funding of academic groups and programs, teacher support and accountability.

If we are not aware of the funding, problems and decisions to be made affecting the academic education of our youth, how can we advise our administrators and board of our desires and ideas? We all know the most valuable resource in our community is our youth, and often it seems we base our decisions on what we



**from our  
readers**

• to the editor

as adults want rather than what our youth need when it comes to educational tools.

Two proposals are before our school board now which I feel are worthy of serious consideration for those whose priority is academic excellence. The school board will probably vote on these issues Monday evening.

One is an athletic issue — the addition of another competitive team. It does not seem reasonable at a time when school finances are questionable that this should even be considered. Teachers' budgets have been cut and some classes do not have enough textbooks.

How can a student prepare for a class when they don't even have a textbook for their personal use? Attendance is another problem because of all the various athletic teams being taken out of the classroom to leave early for games and matches — and sometimes gone for a whole day. Athletics are a wonderful benefit of the educational system for the youth and the community, but our priority should be the edu-

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